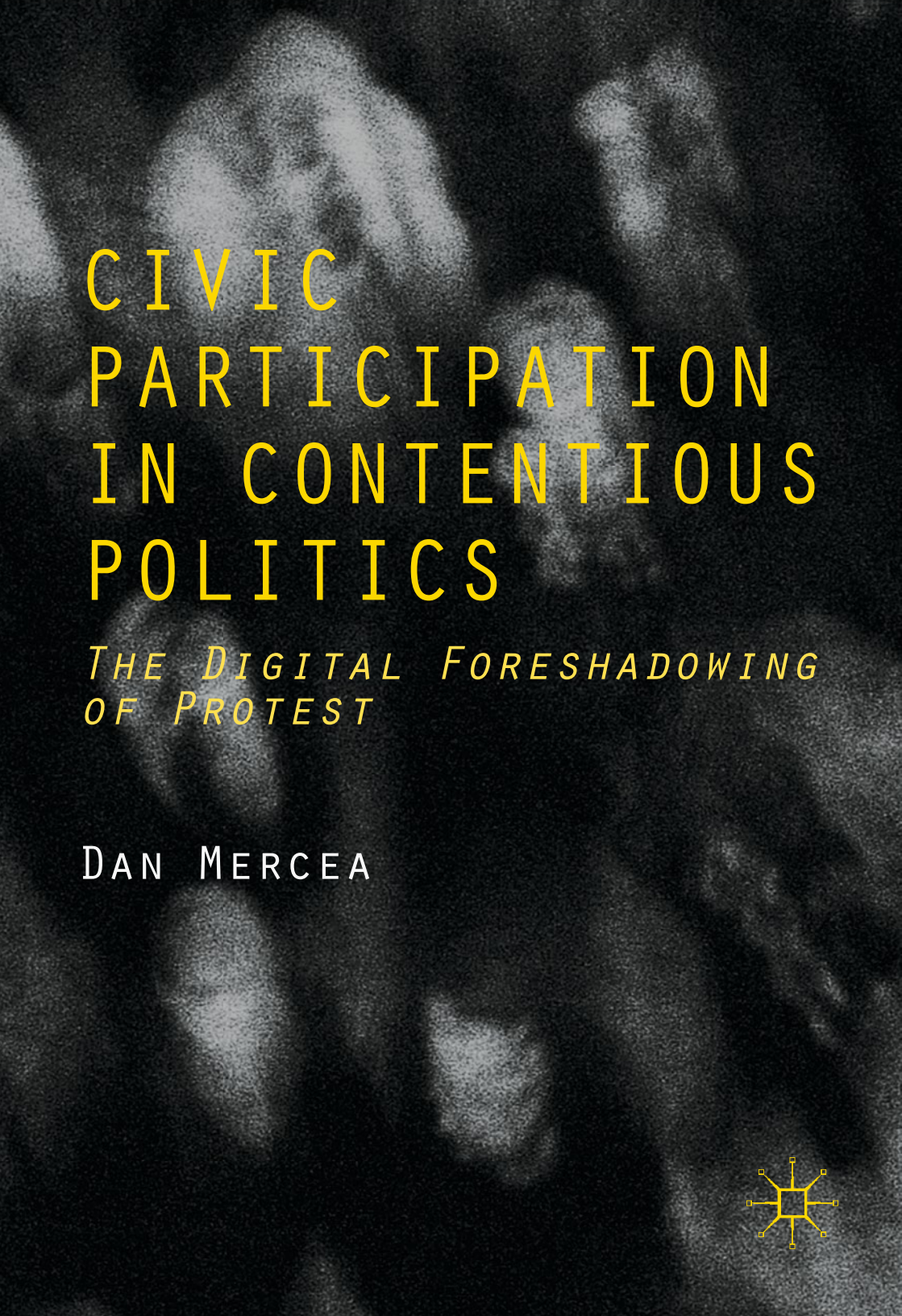

CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

The Digital Foreshadowing of Protest

Dan Mercea

Civic Participation in Contentious Politics

Dan Mercea

Civic Participation in Contentious Politics

The Digital Foreshadowing of Protest

palgrave
macmillan

Dan Mercea
City University London
London, UK

Civic Participation in Contentious Politics
ISBN 978-1-137-50868-3 ISBN 978-1-137-50869-0 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016940847

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd. London

For Ben

Acknowledgments

This book marks the endpoint of a long journey that commenced in the latter stages of my doctoral degree. Many friends and colleagues have guided and supported me along the way. I am particularly grateful to Brian Loader, Frank Webster, Dave Beer, Paul Nixon, Mark Beeson, Joe Pamphilon, John Scottt, Joanna Redden and Eleftheria Lekakis. Thanks go also to Ştefania Simion, Luminiţa Dejeu, Eugen David, Roxana Pencea, Ramona Duminicioiu, Tudor Brădăţan and Stephanie Roth for the inspiration I drew from their activism and their personal examples of steadfastness. Closer to the present day, I owe a debt of gratitude to Anne Kaun for her pointed comments on early versions of some of the chapters in the book. The anonymous reviewers have equally helped me sharpen the analysis. Last but not least, I thank my wife, Suzi, for subjecting my ideas to a critical scrutiny coming from outside my disciplinary area (and my comfort zone) and matching it with the love and kindness that have enabled me to complete this project.

Parts of this book have previously been available as journal articles. In an earlier iteration, Chap. 3 was published as 'Digital prefigurative participation: The entwinement of online communication and offline participation in protest events' in *New Media and Society*, 14(1), pp. 151–167. The argument in Chap. 4 was first introduced in 'Towards a conceptualization of casual protest participation: Parsing a case from the Save Rosia Montana campaign' published in *East European Politics and Societies*, 28(2), pp. 386–410. An earlier version of the analysis presented in Chap. 5 came out in *Information, Communication and Society*, 16(8), pp. 1306–1327 and was titled "Probing the implications of Facebook

use for the organizational form of social movement organizations". In Chap. 6, I draw on D. Mercea and A. Funk (2014) 'The social media overture of the pan-European Stop-ACTA protest: An empirical examination of participatory coordination in connective action', *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, DOI: 10.1177/1354856514563663. Finally, I first put forward the contention in Chap. 7 in 'Making sense of democratic institutions intertextually: Communication on social media as a civic literacy event preceding collective action', *The Communication Review*, 18(3), pp. 189–211.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The Networked Communication of Contentious Politics

There is perhaps one assessment on which observers of contentious politics of late would agree. There has been a flurry of political protest engulfing both democratic and authoritarian regimes; a cascading upsurge of 'acts of public defiance and rebellion' (Biekart and Fowler 2013, p. 528; Gerbaudo 2013). Protests were prompted by either the policy of public austerity in the wake of the latest economic crisis, closely coupled with a deeper-seated disgruntlement with capitalism (epitomised by the Indignados and Occupy Movement and more recently the UK People's Assembly against Austerity); or a revolutionary fervent against authoritarianism in North Africa and the Middle East (i.e. The Arab Spring). The apparent transnational wave of vocal disaffection has been the source of renewed deliberation surrounding the diffusion of contention[1] marked by a persistent preoccupation with networked communication (Christensen 2011; Castells 2012; Biekart and Fowler 2013; Gerbaudo 2013). Far from new, the interest in the degree to which the distributed communication architecture of new and now social media is propping up collective action is as popular and divisive as ever among academics (see the work of Lance Bennett 2003; Bennett and Toft 2008; Howard and Parks 2012; Bennett and Segerberg 2013; Earl et al. 2013; Neumayer and Rossi 2015 for an overview of the research area; Theocharis 2015) and media pundits alike (Gladwell 2010).

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_1

It is into the latter arena that I step with this volume. Going down this route, one immediately notices that substantial attention is paid to ramifications for democratic participation derived from the embracement of social media by variegated protest actors—both individual and collective (Earl and Kimport 2011; Bimber et al. 2012; Gerbaudo 2012; Bennett and Segerberg 2013). Notably, democratic citizenship and its attainment through practice (Biesta 2007) have piqued interest as street protests attract substantial numbers of followers who prime and narrate their involvement or reflect on the claims and the implications of collective action on social media platforms (Caren and Gaby 2011, p. 12; Papacharissi and Fatima Oliveira 2012; Gleason 2013). Furthermore, a boost has been observed in the coordination capacity of actors that lack the organisational resources of erstwhile bureaucratic movement organisations (Bimber et al. 2005; Flanagin et al. 2006; Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Castells 2012; Thorson et al. 2013, p. 3). The networked communication of contention on social media is thereby portrayed as a levelling force that overcomes geo-spatial and temporal specificities (van Laer and van Aelst 2010; Lievrouw 2011). Equally, it stands accused of converting singularities of place and time into mere props in a political 'spectacle' of 'hyper-visibility' (Shah 2012). Yet other commentators have argued that networked communication is necessarily rooted in place-based complexities—of time, strategy or organisation to name a few (Mattoni and Treré 2014)—that moderate or even belie its instrumentality for collective action (Gerbaudo 2013; Kaun 2015). In this book, I seek to tie these debates together and weave them into the larger fabric of the scholarship on civic participation. I contemplate civic or non-electoral participation (Hickerson 2013) within the field of contentious politics.

Contentious politics are an articulation of disenchantment with the practice and institutional configuration of the liberal-democratic polity. The concept sutures three fundamental areas of social movement research: the *politics* (the structural opportunities for group-based attempts to usher social change, Tarrow 1998); the *contention* (the framing of the divisive issue prompting the collective response, Benford and Snow 2000) and finally, *collective action* (the orchestration of and form taken by group efforts at social change, Olson 1965; McAdam et al. 1996; Flanagin et al. 2006). In Tilly and Tarrow's words (2007, p. 4), contentious politics designates a set of 'interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims

or third parties'. Contentious politics encompass a potentially indefinite spectrum of forms of collective action from revolutions to social movements, strikes or lockouts (Tilly 1997, p. 56).

Contention pertains to *claims-making* or the expression of a demand with various degrees of forcefulness by one party or subject and addressed at another, namely the object of the claim. If, on any level, either directly or indirectly, the claim involves the government, the contention can be regarded as political. Accordingly, contentious politics represent a contest for power to effect or prevent the change envisioned in the demand (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007 p. 5). Resting on this premise, the collective action I pore over in this volume is steeped in claims that engage governments by various means, both extra (e.g. demonstrations, petitions) as well as inter-institutional (e.g. lobbying, litigation). This is an important disambiguation to undertake so as to highlight that my primary interest will not be to elucidate the methods claim-makers adopt as they mount their contentions. Consequently, the often tenuous distinction between institutionalised and non-institutionalised politics (van Deth 2014) may be side-stepped.[2] This is a necessary condition for two reasons. Firstly, because contentious politics may thus be distinguished as a mode of voluntary participation by citizens, on an equal footing with other participatory practices (van Deth 2014, p. 357, including institutional ones such as public consultations or voting).[3] Secondly, one may conceive of collective action that might not meet all criteria required for it to qualify as a social movement.

The preference for contentious politics over social movements as the conceptual centrepiece to this book is informed by the contrast drawn between the two by Tilly and Tarrow (2007, p. 8). In their analysis, social movements are defined by *sustained efforts*—elapsing over extensive periods of time and carried out repeatedly—to effect social change by means of varied *repertoires of action* (including marches, demonstrations, public meetings, petitions or lobbying etc.). To this end, movements rely on *social movement bases* (emphases added), namely an organisational and social network infrastructure that is generative as well as being the vessel of traditions and ties that foment collective action. As I will go on to show in the following chapter, not all the collective actors I have studied meet all these criteria, all at once. Whilst this is reason enough to foreground the notion of contentious politics, the observation also alludes to a possible transformation in the character of collective action which I will try to evidence whilst duly acknowledging the fact that the intellectual process

has already been set in train by Lance Bennett and Alexandra Segerberg (2013) in their theorisation of *connective action*.

One indication that contentious politics are due a revisitation is the by now commonplace notion that the legitimacy of liberal democracy is eroding. The most cited symptom for this ailment is a documented withdrawal from the conventional politics of organised participation in parties or civic associations (Putnam 2000; Dalton 2006; Rosanvallon and Goldhammer 2008). We have, however, been advised that this malaise has begun to be offset by what Manuel Castells (1997, 2012) called 'insurgent politics'. The term refers to the ground-up mobilisation of a spectrum of actors—chief among which are social movements—seeking civic alternatives to current political institutions.[4] At this point, I would only note that considerable angst exists about the democratic credentials of social movement actors themselves (della Porta and Diani 2006). Many movements are an assorted collection of stakeholders, lacking a visible leadership structure and recognisable organisational infrastructures. In recent mobilisations, those structures have been substituted by a contingent horizontality of public assemblies matched with multi-faceted communication reinforcing them on social media (Juris 2012; Gonzalez-Bailon et al. 2013; Bastos et al. 2015). The Spanish Indignados and the Occupy Movements (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Chomsky 2012; Graeber 2014; Kreiss and Tufekci 2013) are cases in point.

In this and the following chapters, I proceed to an evidence-based disentanglement of the networked communication that foreshadows the physical enactment of contentious politics. I have developed this line of inquiry across several empirical studies to which I now return with a critical eye and the benefit of hindsight. In doing so, I cross a number of analytical boundaries. I draw on multiple insights, which often do not speak to each other to unveil the fertile ground that contentious politics are for civic participation. I bridge the two research fields with an overview of how networked communication has seeped into the collective action of aggrieved groups, the controversies fuelled by this process. By the end of this introduction, I lay out the hypotheses that I go on to deliberate in the coming chapters for why the networked communication of contention may help reassess and revitalise democracy.

My intention is to unravel aspects of networked communication that precedes or runs alongside physical manifestations of contentious politics such as protest camps and demonstrations. In this undertaking I have been guided by Hannah Arendt's conceptualisation of the

relationship between action and speech (1958), which I tie together with her concept of *preparation* (1977). Arendt's theory of action evinces the human capacity to *begin*, to instigate the unique project that is oneself. Speech is the faculty that enables one to situate the singular individual amongst peers who are revealed through communication as being endowed with the same capacity for action (1958, p. 178). Such disclosure[5] allows for individuals to 'act together', thereby engendering a public realm of individual action premised on mutual recognition.[6] This perspective on the relationship between action and speech, as I explicate later in this introduction, invites an empirical treatment of the networked communication of collective action—including of practices contributing to its preparation—coupled with interpretations of their implications for democracy.

The theory of democracy has stressed the normativity on which the institutions and procedures of this form of government rest (Whitehead 2002). The beliefs and values[7] that sustain the institutional edifice of democracy are articulated in discourse and enacted in social action systematically occurring outside institutional confines (Putnam 2000[8]; Dahlgren 2009; Papacharissi 2010). Democracy as lived experience abstracted from the act of governance carried out by institutions is emplaced in the physical coordinates of public sites wherein face-to-face interaction is contiguous to networked communication (the two often also being in dialectical opposition to each other, Hampton et al. 2010; Lim 2013; Agarwal et al. 2014). Such colocation has prompted the view that the panoply of public sites of collective action has been enlarged with liminal locales engendered by the mediatisation of politics (Couldry 2008, p. 376) and networked communication practices of the citizenry at large (Castells 2007). Mapping out what might be hybrid sites of citizenship practices (Chadwick 2013) occupying interwoven temporal planes (e.g. a Facebook event page created in the run-up to a protest, used in advance, during and in the wake of it), the book situates them within the conceptual framework of contentious politics. In this, the book assays the networked communication of contentious politics as a vehicle for individuals to become immersed in collective processes (e.g. of deliberation, decision-making, organisation, della Porta 2011, p. 812) that firm up their adherence to principles of democratic governance (della Porta 2013, p. 9).

In Donatella della Porta's (2011) account, a hands-on involvement in the workings of collective action is the fruit of an 'open space method',

whereby social movements stimulate individual investment in collective action. Hybrid sites where the 'open space method' might be practiced are inevitably marked by wider social inequalities, not least of which is access and ability to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) (Haight et al. 2014). The concern here is with a purported 'activating effect' from networked communication to forms of participation ranging from electronic petitions to demonstrations (Serup Christensen and Bengtsson 2011, p. 906). Quizzing the directionality of the effect as well as its probable causes is not a deterministic approach rooted in an assumption that once ICTs become ubiquitous, they imminently change the face of democratic politics (Keane 2013). Rather, it is an attempt to surmount such teleology in favour of a grounded analysis of networked communication in the domain of contentious politics. Its upshot will be an evaluation of the 'participatory cultures [comprising] practices, tools, ideologies and technologies' (Kelty 2013, p. 39) encountered in the course of my field studies. It is within such *participatory cultures* that the power of democratic citizens to act politically in a non-institutional mode (individually and collectively) is delineated.

Liberal Democracy, Contentious Politics and Citizenship

There is much to be said about the democratic politics of our age whilst steering a course that evades the bombast of either downhearted despondency or unbridled optimism. Reverberations of earlier anxiety about a downturn in voter turnout and associational membership (Putnam 2000; Dalton 2006; Norris 2002) may have stimulated an ongoing project to reconceptualise both civic and political participation (Bennett et al. 2009a, b; van Deth 2014; Zuckerman 2014). A most disputed topic to have emerged out of this preoccupation has been that of the locus where political acts are performed (van Deth 2014, p. 353). The digital convergence of media technologies coupled with the Internet connectivity of computer terminals[9] constitute a prime canvas where political participation has been repainted. A flurry of analyses has unpicked technological possibilities, social dynamics and cultural practices, the latter querying the categorical boundaries of the concept (Dahlgren 2009). With technology in constant transformation (Keane 2013), the Internet turning social and users embracing myriad possibilities to interact and collaborate (Bruns 2008), participation often

appears as a collage of actions that confound entrenched demarcations between the public and the private (Papacharissi 2010), the civic and the political (Zukin et al. 2006), the conventional and the unconventional (van Deth 2014), instead unfolding as a synthesis or a hybrid of the above (Chadwick 2013).

The urgency to take account of these observations becomes tangible against the seismic socio-economic realignments gripping nation states wrought by the global circulation of capital, goods, services and individuals. This momentous *mobility* (Urry 2000) has precipitated the dissolution of long-standing forms of group solidarity (work- or place-based, of filial bonds, religion and entrenched ideologies, Offe 1985) raising further questions about the collective capacity to enact one's politics (Bennett 2003). In this vein, Bennett (2003, p. 146) impressed the necessity to turn one's attention to networked forms of collective organisation underpinned by interpersonal connections. The latter, he posited, would grow independently of organisational infrastructures, renewing collective identities as a dense fabric of personal narratives (of discontent). The Internet was a key but not exclusive medium whereby the articulation, endorsement and distribution of thus re-clustered collectivities would come to pass.

The poignancy of this multidimensional debate comes into relief against the backdrop of the continuing crisis of legitimacy engulfing liberal democracy, heightened by the latest crippling economic recession (della Porta 2013). In particular, faced with a pressing need to grapple with the mediatisation of culture (Hepp 2013)—the adaptation of societal processes to the possibilities and logic of interconnectivity afforded by the media—the democratic edifice seems deeply eroded by an endemic deficit of trust.[10] Trust—the confidence invested in another to take a certain course of action (Kohn 2008, p. 8)—is a social outcome. Trust in the political system has been regarded as a prerequisite to political participation (Almond and Verba 1963). The mediatisation of politics has long stood accused of corroding trust among stakeholders suspicious of each other's motives—be it of media organisations' pursuit of newsworthiness and market share (Schiller 1996; Bourdieu 1998; McChesney 2013), or the massaging of public information by professional spin doctors in the pay of political leaders (Gaber 2000). A similar predicament, we are advised, has afflicted much of the fabric of networked communication, which has expanded exponentially under commercial impetus resulting in a distorted public service (Goldberg 2011; Andrejevic 2014).

Liberal democracies have thus had to contend with a climate of rising suspicion, including over the ability of political institutions to reinvigorate social trust in the system itself (della Porta 2013). The task has been fundamentally complicated by the neoliberal politics that dominated the decades on either side of the millennium. Neoliberalism has sought the retrenchment of government to make room for the market as the principal public arena for resource allocation and preference-making (Crouch 2004). The imperfect lubrication of the political system with trust in the wake of the neoliberal onslaught, some have submitted, has whetted an appetite for contentious politics (Levi and Stoker 2000). Yet others have shown that distrust feeds into a scrutinising attitude of the citizenry towards the political elite, which safeguards the accountability of the former (Rosanvallon and Goldhammer 2008). Indeed, distrust has been a cause of contentious political activism (Hooghe and Marien 2013, p. 145).

Democratic Citizenship: From Norm to Practice

Notwithstanding the structural and moral tribulations of liberal democracies, citizens continue to find themselves buffeted by demands to be dutiful voters, active members of the community and good consumers. One's performance as citizen is measured against a set of desirable outcomes with citizenship being a condition to be attained (Lawy and Biesta's *citizenship-as-achievement* 2006, p. 37). In this light, citizenship is a norm of public conduct though as such it is one that has not gone unchallenged. This has been due to the persistent predicament in which it finds itself. Historically, citizenship has represented a moving equilibrium between, on the one hand, civic and political rights together with social entitlements; and, on the other, matching duties (Marshall 1950). Set against the complicating background of globalisation, dogged by the neoliberal reform of the welfare state and the latest economic recession, the remit of the term remains an object of contention as social groups (from trade unions to economic migrants, gender, age or disability groups) vie for combinations of entitlements, rights and duties that best suit them.

One key battleground where the normativity of citizenship is tested is in the practice of citizenship. Defined as an 'inclusive and relational concept', *citizenship-as-practice* is a step sideways from the prescriptiveness of dutiful citizenship principally inculcated through the educational system (Lawy and Biesta 2006). The latter is susceptible of reproducing the hegemony of the political powerholders.[11] Conversely, citizenship-as-practice represents an organic notion engendered by reflexivity and inter-

action that is not confined to predetermined time and space coordinates (i.e. embodied in the adult individual who has successfully completed and followed through the edicts of her school-years' civic education, Lawy and Biesta 2006, p. 43).

The allure of this alternative conception of citizenship derives from the amenability of practices to empirical scrutiny.[12] Practices are regular actions that cumulatively contribute to a 'background order' that in turn makes action continuously possible (Couldry 2012, p. 94). They are social constructions inasfar as they enmesh individual mannerisms into an interlocking 'world of capacities, constraints and power' that converge to form the background order (2013, p. 96). Thus, the empirical treatment of *citizenship-as-practice* is a task whereby one sets out to establish any correspondence or otherwise between alterations in the conditions of action for citizens and the contingent adaptation of their actions.

Illustratively, I have previously contended (Mercea 2014) that individuals who miss an organisational context wherein to galvanise one's readiness to take part in collective action may, under certain conditions, be able to compensate for these shortcomings through their networked communication with other organisationally unaffiliated friends. An empirical examination of the said conditions and the individual actions undertaken towards civic participation is an approach that may reveal not only the specificities of one's engagement trajectory but also the reasons why digitally *prepared* collective action may be (and gain traction as) a citizenship practice.

To return to Hannah Arendt, she invested the term *preparation* with an educational valence. In her philosophical conception, education is a developmental process that instills in children a sense of the surrounding world whilst presenting them with the possibilities for action generative of 'something new, something unforeseen by us' (1977, p. 196). In this manner, education is a shielded site of experimentation that takes place within predetermined parameters. Holding the developmental coordinates in check (i.e. thinking outside the framework of education imparted by adults to children), one may begin to distinguish the currency that *preparation* holds in the scholarship probing the formation of citizenship practices in informal settings (Bennett et al. 2009a, b) and mundane political talk (Dahlgren 2009). The latter backdrops arguably encompass social media outlets such as a Facebook event page of a protest camp or the hashtagged Twitter feed of a demonstration. Insofar as in those settings an 'engagement with the conditions [of one's life]' permeates communication (Lawy and Biesta 2006, p. 43), the latter holds out the possibility of becoming *transformative*

of citizenship when occasioning the imagination of 'changes in the temper of political life and in the conduct of politics' (Axford 2001, p. 2).

In claiming these origins for my enquiry, I situate my work inside a body of literature that has largely shunned arguments about the state of democracy measured against taxonomies of participation (Dalton 2006) in favour of an interpretivist account, concentrating instead on the attribution of meaning by research subjects capable of initiating the actions surveyed in this book; or who may be exposed to those actions; who may suffer but also ponder their consequences (Arendt 1977). There is, though, an undercurrent of musings on the shape of liberal democracy, of 'really existing democracy' (Held 2006) and the disillusionment its institutions have caused that I have to avow. To paraphrase David Graeber (2014, p. xiv), a leading intellectual of the Occupy Movement, the sentiment I reference avers that democracy has yet to come into its own.

A Double Bind: The Individualisation of Participation and the Digital Aura of Collective Action

Charting the research terrain where the collective action of contentious politics and networked communication meet is necessary due to the wide spectrum of contrasting claims that have marked this field. At one end of the continuum sits a deep-rooted scepticism about the notion that the diffusion of the Internet may have a palpable bearing on civic participation (Morozov 2011). As I deliberate this argument, I visit an analytical strand in political science that alerts one to a wider shift in political action related to the post-industrial erosion of traditional work- and place-based collective grievance organisation that has been partly offset by individualised forms of action, as exhibited by political consumerism (Micheletti 2003). Micheletti contrasts political consumerism with group-based participation to show how organisationally *thin* links have developed to sustain moral and post-materialist activism. If this realignment was initially primarily the province of an activist elite better resourced and more readily available for collective action, there have been growing signs of multiple conduits to participation and layered connections between activist organisations and their support bases (Bimber et al. 2012).

In line with a growing body of literature, I propose that warnings about the numbing effect of networked communication on engagement in collective action is becoming increasingly untenable as technological

usage patterns reflect their deepening roots in everyday practice (Bimber and Copeland 2013; Couldry 2012; Xenos and Moy 2007). That, however, is not tantamount to arguing that technological diffusion amounts to a levelling of the playing field of civic participation. On the contrary, there is ample proof of entrenched inequalities being reproduced online (Halford and Savage 2010; Haight et al. 2014) whose root causes can solely be addressed with systematic social policies (Wessels 2010); and, more specifically, that the messiness of the multiple processes that underpin collective action (from fraught decision-making to the potential harm that may come with direct action) may become reduced to disembodied communication strictly at the risk of diluting the shared capacity to articulate and negotiate one's politics (Fenton and Barassi 2011).

In the last instance, this is a disputation over the scope of the possible shift in the dominant culture of civic engagement sparked by the digital avatar of activist undertakings collectively derided as *clicktivism*. In a nutshell, as aptly captured by Halupka (2014, p. 117), the concept encapsulates a heightened ontological anxiety about 'simplified forms of engagement and solidary … [seen to] encourage apathy and normalise easy (read: ineffective) political participation'. Such apprehension came also in the backwash of political consumerism. It merits the attention afforded to it below if for no other reason than because in its turn, political consumerism did not detract from more entrenched political participation, to wit, voting, party and associational membership (Stolle et al. 2005, p. 260).

Individualisation

Enquiries that have taken up the apathy hypothesis—the supposition that levels of civic and political participation are in historical decline—point to a possible shift rather than a decline in engagement (Dalton 2006; Norris 2002; Zukin et al. 2006). Such trends have proved more conspicuous in the US than Europe (van Deth and Elff 2000). Over the past decade, they have pertained to an expressive personalisation of politics (Bennett 2003; Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Norris and Curtice 2004), taking deeper roots in an expanding engagement ecology. As this process was seemingly in train, it became a source of timid anticipation of a resilient penchant for politics albeit of multiple denominations (Micheletti 2003). Conversely, it prompted unease about an evinced retrenchment from electoral politics (Zukin et al. 2006) channelled through traditional organisations such as parties and formal associations (Norris and Curtice 2004).

The post-industrial individualisation of political participation was exposed by research into participatory modes lying beyond the fulfilment of electoral duties. Such participation has not been galvanised through previously dominant avenues of solidarity as were once trade unions or civic associations (Giddens 1991; Putnam 2000; Bennett 2003). Moreover, it has transgressed an earlier focus on collective entitlements, be they socio-economic or political (Melucci 1996). Instead, a growing number of intersecting concerns with global risks (e.g. environmental degradation, economic globalisation, nuclear proliferation; Beck 2000) were met with renewed approaches to collective organisation and the attendant expression of identities, sub- and counter-cultures, all encapsulated by the term *New Social Movements* (Melucci 1989). Political consumerism—the ethically and politically motivated acquisition of consumer goods—has been a prominent example of a symbolic act contributing to the widening of the participation spectrum (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Micheletti 2003). It has typified an elite-challenging activity (Inglehart 1997) that fits uneasily with a canonical definition of political participation. The latter centres on the protocols and practices that bring the body politic in contact with the democratic institutions that represent their interests (Whitehead 2002).

As an expressive manifestation of a life choice by individuals with loose connections to each other or to civic associations, political consumerism was not immediately seen as a political action of consequence in contemporary democratic polities (Ward and de Vreese 2011). Nonetheless, this individualised action of the citizen-consumer has been described as scalable in scope, e.g., in boycotts transgressing multiple boundaries of location and time, cultural and political jurisdiction. In this manner, it has been able to mirror the networked structure of organisation and influence that has characterised multinational corporations or transnational governance regimes (Micheletti 2003). Most relevantly, the diffusion of political consumerism has happened on a backbone of digital communication technologies and services closely coupled with a shared narrative of decentralised, cumulative contributions to a common cause by groups and individuals (Bennett and Toft 2008).

Political consumerism is one possible substantiation of a notion of cosmopolitan citizenship predicated on a deterritorialised democratic political culture (Dahlgren 2006). The original conceptualisation of political culture as dispositions towards the political system and one's relationship to it (Almond and Verba 1963) would thus acquire a new incarnation as an expansive though unequally distributed acuity for global risks and their

myriad political implications (Dahlgren 2013). This sensitivity has been stimulated by media—both the reporting organisations and user-centred services such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and so on. These services have been harnessed for transnational political expression (Pickerill and Krinsky 2012) forming around such issues as the democratisation of North-African authoritarian regimes brought into sight by the Arab Spring uprisings (Papacharissi and Fatima Oliveira 2012; Tufekci and Wilson 2012); or social justice as advocated by the global Occupy Movement (Kreiss and Tufekci 2013; Thorson et al. 2013).

By recapping below some of the latest scholarship to have addressed the digital inflection of activism, I shun what I see as an essentialist standpoint that operates with a rigid hierarchy of participation pivoting on embodied action. Conversely, I take a cue from actor-network theory as I survey the *partial possibilities* (Law 2003, p. 2) for collective action and follow in the steps of authors (Farrell 2014; Halupka 2014) who have recently restated the case for imbricating technology (read ICTs) firmly with individual action and social practice. Concurrently, then, I ask how networked communication is interpreted and embedded into collective action as well as whether as an alternative environment to physical interaction it complements or threatens the latter.

The Digital Aura of Collective Action

Retrieving the roots of exuberant expectations about the transformative potential of new (Mosco 2005) and social media (for an overview see Fuchs 2014), one encounters a raft of earlier controversies stirred up specifically by the notion that activism had gained a digital aura with the advent of networked communication (Lievrouw 2011). An ethereal, alternative space unfettered from material bonds had emerged on the Internet where activists could congregate and build collectivity by referencing shared identities and culture, and where they would voice standpoints and personal narratives (Bennett and Toft 2008; Bennett and Segerberg 2013) that countered and mobilised against the hegemony of the political mainstream. This vision was backed by the hacktivist practice and ethos of liberating the Internet from an aggressive commercial encroachment and establishing cooperative oases where creativity and free speech would remain sovereign (Jordan 2001). Inevitably, such *heterotopia* (or countersites, as Lievrouw aptly termed them, 2011, p. 63) was contested as largely self-referential and uncivic due to an

express lack of concern for the gamut of issues faced by contemporary democratic polities (Sunstein 2007). In addition, questions about any ability of digitally networked activists to speak for the interests of those without this additional public voice figured prominently among critical assessments (Fenton and Barassi 2011). Accordingly, activists whose actions crystallised on and increasingly through the Internet were simultaneously seen to subvert elites and their domination of the economy, politics and social relations, and in their turn to form a distinct digital elite (Wolfson 2014).[13]

A recognised exception to this assessment may have been the Zapatista Movement, which grew from the grassroots up, gaining prominence and attracting support—in the form of the Global Justice Movement—through its networked communication (Russell 2005). However, by the time of the Arab Spring and in close connection with a wider critique of a participatory rhetoric associated with the booming social media of the day (Fuchs 2012), circumspection about the civic import of digital activism was rife. Thus, a purportedly participatory first principle native to social media started to be debunked as the ideological encoding of an individualistic ethos that serves to monetise data transacted by individuals (Andrejevic 2014) as well as to discipline their conduct (Maltby et al. 2015). Cautionary tales warned of the restricted latitude for unfiltered communication (undistorted by inbuilt sorting algorithms) through commercial social media (van Dijck 2013; Poell 2014).

Ironically, an upshot for collective processes has been that they are not easier to entrain and negotiate with social media when these hinge on an individualist and performative ontology (Fenton and Barassi 2011, p. 190; Kavada 2015; Milan 2015). Moreover, networked communication has not seemed to move participation beyond perennial divides among experience-rich activists and experience-poor or first-time protest participants. It was, for instance, principally the former who drew on Internet applications to prime their participation in physical protests (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009; van Laer 2010). Finally, the follow-through of political vociferation on the same media into institutional politics or any challenge to institutions articulated therewith was equally doubtful (Lovink 2011), especially in the context of non-liberal countries. Concurrently, exhibitionist, cacophonic (Morozov 2011) and neoliberal post-ideologically sanitised chatter (Dean 2013), lauded as an ability to 'tell truth to power', was seen as a fetish and a distraction from civic and political action.

I engage with the finer details of these sobering analyses in subsequent chapters. Admittedly, they have unveiled the problem of clicktivism and its principal causes. Yet, as I have already alluded, other observers have proposed that the suspected shortcomings of clicktivism can be read under at least three competing lights (Halupka 2014). First, a key attribute that diminishes clicktivism is its ethereality, which makes it eschew many of the costs and risks attached to the human body when immersed in acts of participation ranging from voting to attending a demonstration. Yet, as already stated, one's social media 'data double' (Lyon 2008) is becoming the object of increasingly more stringent monitoring and regulation.[14]

Second, the ethereality of clicktivism has been associated with noncommittal (Skoric 2012) or shallow dabbling into actions and causes orchestrated with far greater effort by others. Examples to this effect are not short in supply (see, for example, Harsin 2013 for an insight into the Stop Kony campaign). Counter-evidence is surfacing, too. Together with my colleague Marco Toledo Bastos (2015), we have located a contingent of highly prolific activist communicators on Twitter who, over extensive periods of time ranging from one to more than four years, plied themselves to relaying and amplifying messages of dissent from flashpoint of protests flaring around the world. Referring to them as *serial activists*, we showed how they tended to be deeply sceptical of electoral politics (i.e. depressed with the state of liberal democracy), with many of them involved in civic and social associations but not political parties. Their existence goes some way towards substantiating the assertion that networked activist communication fits into a widening repertoire of participatory practices, which, significantly, also exhibits reflexivity (Halupka 2014, p. 119). The active selection of content that serial activists chose to endorse and circulate was a practice that involved a discerning (and in their case, also sustained) application of 'experience, predisposition and knowledge' that determines one to act politically or otherwise (2014, p. 120).

In the last instance, varying in acrimony, the debate on the ramifications of activist communication for civic participation will remain unsettled for some time to come. A good indication of this comes from a recent attempt to historicise the relationship by returning to crystalising moments of erstwhile social movements (Couldry 2015). Couldry posits that much as with the emergence of the British working class as a conscious social force, such historical achievement is the product of multiple interacting variables among which the collective means of communication may be a prominent one.

Book Overview

This research monograph is not a broad-stroke overview of digital activism (Lievrouw 2010) or a primarily conceptual encounter digesting kindred theory and secondary data on the germinal affordances of ICTs for civic participation (Hands 2011). Nor is it fundamentally a contextual and thick description of strategies for harnessing latent potentials of those technologies (Gerbaudo 2012); or an exhaustive perusal of a singular organisational form, e.g., the protest camp (Feigenbaum et al. 2013). Rather, it is an interdisciplinary conversation with the participant-user and her/his civic trajectory that is increasingly a media practice (Couldry 2012; Mattoni and Treré 2014), namely of submersion, organisation and participation in contentious politics by means of networked communication with Internet applications.[15] Thus, each of the four cases examined in the substantive chapters—the Climate Camp in the UK, the Save Roşia Montană campaign in Romania, Occupy the Netherlands and the pan-European Stop ACTA (Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement) campaign—provides a unique tapestry of contingencies and trials flowing from local circumstances at a time when contention becomes pervasive, resonant and distributed across political and geographical borders (Castells 2009).

To begin with, in Chap. 2 I present the case studies at the heart of this book, outlining the conditions that informed case selection. Next, in Chap. 3 I begin to delve into the networked communication of collective action choreographed by Social Movement Organisations (SMOs). Drawing on various Internet applications, SMOs have been able to enhance their capacity to coordinate collective action (Ayres 1999; van Aelst and Walgrave 2002) and diversify their action repertoires (van de Donk et al. 2004), challenging long-standing conceptualisations of political activism (McCaughey and Ayers 2003, p. 5). By the same means, SMOs have come into closer contact with participants in their actions, transcending previous spatial, temporal and socio-cultural confines (Castells 2009; van Laer and van Aelst 2010; Lievrouw 2011; Howard and Hussain 2013). In the attempt to continue in this line of research, in Chap. 3 I introduce a three-pronged enquiry looking into whether networked communication aids to galvanise the mobilisation of new cohorts into protest events; whether it enables those cohorts to build a shared identity and finally if it may constitute an avenue for active involvement in the organisation of protests. The three types of action may be viewed as forms of participation: in the physical act of protest, in the interpretation of collective action and finally in the

organisation of collective action. In their online guise, they are qualified as digital prefigurative participation that foreshadows physical protests. The three participatory processes were first considered against data collected in the contrasting circumstances of high- and low-risk protest events in Romania and the UK respectively, two countries with disparate levels of civic participation.

Digital prefigurative participation was a proof of concept I coined to capture the precedence in time as well as the possible imprint of networked communication on involvement in physical protests. The high/low-risk differential revealed that organisational affiliation was a fundamental determinant of participation in collective action. In particular, affiliation is key to recruitment into high-risk protest (McAdam 1986; Klandermans and Oegema 1987). The high/low risk distinction remained marginal to studies of networked communication in contentious politics. In my analysis, I focused on individuals who were not affiliated to activist organisations who would potentially find a substitute for organisational membership in their networked communication. The empirical treatment of this hypothesis is ongoing (Bennett and Segerberg 2012) and it remains open to query.

Having previously tried to encapsulate this dynamic with the term *digital prefigurative participation* (2012), I reassess and develop the earlier analysis throughout this book. Cognate monographs have highlighted the privileged social standing of the digitally connected activist (Gerbaudo 2012). As valuable as this observation is as a qualifier for any hyperbolic rhetoric obfuscating the material conditions of ICT access and usage, it falls short of a systematic scrutiny of the question whether networked communication offers any redress to the cross-cutting problem of accentuated political disengagement from conventional politics and organisations. Research findings revealed digital prefigurative participation as elemental to the induction of unaffiliates to protest at the low-risk event; conversely, digital prefigurative participation was the preserve of the affiliated at the high-risk protest. Such participation, nevertheless, did not seem to open the way for the online constituency of the SMOs to become immersed in the organisation of collective action in which many sought to partake. The point is further explored in Chap. 5.

Continuing in the same vein, in Chap. 4 I get to grips with what I take to be a *casual* modality of participation in collective action aided by the social media usage of individuals with an accumulated stock of participatory experience that are nonetheless not involved in any activist organisation. The casual participation of experience-rich individuals confounds

expectations pertaining to a net contribution of networked communication to the participation of newcomers to protest, as proposed in Chap. 3.

Chapter 4 builds on the foregoing investigation into mobilisation and identity-building. Rather than to assess general levels of political activism on a particular social media platform (Valenzula et al. 2012; Vissers and Stolle 2012), I explore protest participants' usage of social media to prime their protest participation. I undertook this analytical task with cognisance that there is currently an empirical gap in the literature on protest participation in liberal democracies which has overwhelmingly focused on Western Europe and North America, inter alia at the expense of Eastern Europe. To contribute to closing that gap, the chapter reviews findings from a multi-method follow-up field study conducted at FânFest in 2012. By contrast to its Western counterparts, Romania has seen markedly lower levels of involvement in voluntary organisations. Concurrently, experience with participation in physical protests has also been very limited amongst Romanians.

In the chapter, I ask whether collective identity might ensue from the networked communication preceding protest events and discuss the form a thus emerging shared notion may take. This is done in order to interrogate the possibility that in a context of low organisational affiliation, such as that of post-communist Romania, collective identities that are not principally associated with any activist organisations may emerge from networked communication (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009). Kindred books have singled out collective identity as a prime catalyst for mobilisation, instilling a twofold sense of unity and distinction that currently forms in a composite ecology of broadcast and interpersonal networked communication (Lievrouw 2010, pp. 155–156). Moreover, collective identity may be the object of personalised (re)configuration as it criss-crosses the terrain of established organisations and individual networks (Bennett and Segerberg 2013). In my attempt to add to these insights, I build on evidence of a permeable notion of collective identity (Harlow and Harp 2012) to call attention to fellowship identities that turn on shared practice rather than organisational membership.

In their books Earl and Kimport (2011) and Bimber and colleagues (2012) scrutinised distributed forms of collective organisation that were not orchestrated by SMOs. The first two authors (2011, p. 159) introduce the postulate that Internet applications such as dedicated websites are drawn upon by solitary or small and informal clusters of actors to further collective action whilst they remain organisationally independent

from social movements. In my approach to this topic, which forms a central plank of the theory of connective action (Bennett and Segerberg 2013), I start from the opposite end of the lens, looking into organisational upshots of Facebook connectivity for extant activist entities. The first reflection thus generated alludes to the instrumental utilisation of Facebook as a serviceable access point to an untapped mobilisation potential (a projected body of sympathisers, Klandermans and Oegema 1987, p. 519). Seeking to verify the purported renewed latitude for the formation of loosely articulated networked organisations (Lovink 2011; Bennett and Segerberg 2013), in Chap. 5 I posit that social media activist constituencies may represent a peripheral and possibly disenfranchised area of a movement organisation called upon to enact decisions on collective action in whose making they will not partake.

Stemming from the enquiry in Chap. 3, the chapter charts the communication of two horizontally coordinated protest camps in the Netherlands and the UK with their Facebook audiences. The latter have been hailed for the renewed opportunities they afford to meet new people, connect with friends and acquaintances, to socialise, share information, debate and collaborate (BaeBrandtzaeg and Heim 2009). Specifically, the chapter probes the scope for renewed democratic engagement (Östman 2012) via the single most popular social networking service of the late 2000s. It engages with the question of the latitude for deliberative decision-making with ICTs in a social movement context (della Porta 2011; Loader and Mercea 2011).

The two protest camps—The Camp for Climate Action in the UK and Occupy Den Haag in the Netherlands—were akin to each other in their open and horizontal organisational structure, their consensus-seeking decision-making routines and their adoption of Facebook as a platform to communicate externally. Their communication on Facebook catalysed deliberation, information sharing and mobilisation. Further, I discuss evidence pointing to the use of Facebook for the self-organisation of protest participation by the support bases the platform made visible. The Facebook following of the two camps had, nonetheless, little to contribute to decision-making within the organisations themselves. This is a potentially sensitive finding as it turns a mirror onto the democratic credentials of the network communication by social movement actors. The investigation responds to the continued preoccupation with the democratic ramifications of networked communication inside social movements (Mosca 2008; della Porta 2011, 2013).

A second opportunity for contemplation occasioned by the theory of connective action related to its reliance on the notion of collective action frames. Although ostensibly the object of personalisation in networked communication (Bennett and Segerberg 2012), historically frames have been interpretive schemata designed by SMOs (Hunt et al. 1994, p. 191). The pre-eminence of SMOs in the development of frames may be called into question by the latitude for distributed development of shared interpretations through networked communication (Bennett and Toft 2008). Consequently, in Chap. 6, I probe the scope for the articulation of participant motivations and the designation of requisite resources for collective action on Facebook and Twitter. The cornerstone of the chapter and the main object of critical reflection is the concept of *participatory coordination*.

Coordination through networked communication has been principally considered in relation to the accomplishment of collective activities (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 749). Second, it has been discussed in reference to the formation of participant commitment to collective action (Garrett 2006). Participatory coordination is divided along the two dimensions of motivations and resources necessary for collective action. Chapter 6 speaks to both interests by scrutinising the theoretical possibility of a coextensive rather than choreographed development of requisite motivations and resources for collective action through networked communication (Flanagin et al. 2006).

I tested the robustness of the concept together with my colleague Andreas Funk on research data we collected in the run-up to the last Stop ACTA demonstrations of 9 June 2012. The Europe-wide Stop ACTA movement erupted onto the global political stage in late January 2012, in the wake of the Occupy Movement that endorsed it (Occupy Wall Street 2012). The Stop ACTA movement disputed the encroachment of intellectual property rights, a key mechanism of economic globalisation, onto individual rights regarded as universal, such as online freedom of expression.

Results pointed to a rational, resource-oriented mode of communication figuring prominently on both Facebook and Twitter. Moreover, they indicated that the time-distribution of motivational and resource-directed talk confounded earlier claims about the differential use of Facebook and Twitter in collective action (Earl et al. 2013). Lastly, judging by platform-specific reactions to them, namely the amassed number of Facebook 'likes' or Twitter re-postings (i.e. retweets), motivational posts had a higher impact than resource-oriented talk on both platforms. This was deemed as

a measure of their particularly positive reception among the Stop ACTA contingents on the two social media platforms.

Last but not least, the book re-evaluates and applies conceptions of informal civic learning in the context of the networked communication that precedes or runs alongside physical protest events. Whilst a conspicuous activist reliance on Internet applications for deliberation or consciousness-raising has already been highlighted (Castells 2009, 2012; Lievrouw 2010), at the individual level, they have enabled the social expression of citizenship that does not pivot on a deference to established institutional organisations (Almond and Verba 1963; Bennett et al. 2009a, b; Vromen 2011; Ward 2011). Among students of civic education a prevalent perspective has been that individuals are 'schooled' into a predetermined set of democratic norms, values and skills that stimulate their capacity for independent rational thought (Biesta 2007, p. 742). Whilst this pathway to democratic citizenship may be critiqued from various angles, including for being hegemonic and instrumental in the deployment of schools as institutions that narrowly reproduce a dominant order, it is noted for inscribing civic participation as a personal duty fulfilled through news consumption and membership in established civic organisations (Bennett et al. 2009a, p. 838). Moreover, it prescribes a participatory mode rooted in membership of traditional, hierarchical organisations—a civic substructure of clubs, unions, community and church groups—that provide predefined trajectories into political action (Bennett et al. 2009a, p. 842). These organisations were praised for their role in engendering a climate of democratic engagement grounded in interpersonal trust and the shared values of tolerance, cooperation and reciprocity (Putnam 2000).

Conversely, a competing model of civic education and participation has been unveiled in what Norris and Curtice (2004, pp. 7–8) described as issue-based cause activism. Cause activism was viewed as corrosive for democracy because of its association with a retreat from conventional forms of participation seen as paramount to the continuity of democratic systems (Norris and Curtice 2004, p. 1). Other observers, however, regarded cause activism as a distinct participatory approach involving 'personal engagement with peer networks that pool (crowd source) information and organise civic action using social technologies that maximise individual expression' (Bennett et al. 2009a, p. 839). This expressive approach defies the entrenched individualistic, instrumental and dutiful conception of democratic participation devised to reproduce uncritically dominant political institutions.

Tellingly, the uprisings in the wake of the 2008 economic crisis—the Indignados or the Occupy Movement—were berated for their limited institutional impact (Kreiss and Tufekci 2013). Yet, those movements stand out for questioning participatory mechanisms and accountability processes in contemporary liberal democracies (Juris 2012). Accordingly, the Occupy Movement advanced what is arguably a civic learning model wherein participants were subjects in practice-based citizenship aimed at reimagining democratic institutions (Graeber 2014).

This informal modality of civic learning was left out of the seminal studies that circumscribed citizenship education to institutional settings (Almond and Verba 1963; Torney-Purta et al. 2001). According to Schugurensky and Myers (2008, p. 75), informal civic learning designates an interactional process whereby the exchange and acquisition of citizen knowledge, skills, beliefs and values is performed outside the confines of educational (formal) and social (non-formal) institutions. A salient instance of investigations into informal civic learning, Schugurensky and Myers's study covered 'mediation spaces', which were conceived as ad hoc meeting points for local authority and civil society actors (2008, p. 74). According to those authors, mediation spaces form where issues of public concern are mooted in the vein of the public sphere. In their turn, Bennett et al. (2009a,) looked at online mediation spaces such as the websites of youth organisations and online-only youth portals for civic and political engagement. Focusing on attempts to kindle explicit informal learning (Livingstone 1999), in Chap. 7 I try to shine a light on the enunciation of citizenship knowledge (including any critique of extant political institutions), of the skills to prepare and undertake collective action (adapted from Bennett et al. 2009a, pp. 840–841).

In that chapter I again parse the Stop ACTA communication that unfolded on Facebook and Twitter in the attempt to discern the scope and potential patterns of informal civic learning. I begin the process by gauging the possibility and potential patterns of informal civic learning whilst deploying and querying the online civic learning schema designed by Bennett et al. (2009a, b). Second, I develop a grounded model for informal civic learning on social media protest outlets to generate a critical assessment of its meaning for transnational civic participation. The chapter aids to further pinpoint a cultural impact a digitally networked and horizontal movement like Stop ACTA has on democratic institutions and practices by showing how it elicited criticality and reflexivity directed at dominant political institutions. The communicative exchanges I encoun-

tered spotlighted democratic institutions helping to clarify their operations and to imagine their reconstitution.

Finally, in Chap. 8, I stake the claim that we have to countenance the many signs of a demotic mode of civic participation. The process is coterminous with heightened digital connectivity and renewed political expressivity. Earlier generations of social movement actors have historically been effective at ushering in dramatic systemic changes in liberal democracies (Tarrow 1998). Current generations face both immense opportunities and towering obstacles that accrue from their networked communication in a post-industrial social landscape of de-organised solidarity, flash mobilisation and transient collective identities. Established institutions have been guilty of rash and unreflective clamp-downs on such amorphous collective action (Klein 2002). Militarised crack-downs can only compound democracy's crisis of legitimacy (Graham 2009).

Alternatively, there have been instances where movement organisations have undergone a process of political institutionalisation resulting in their involvement in policy-making (della Porta and Diani 2006) and the implementation of some of their visions in government. However, institutionalisation has had its fair bit of discontents who have questioned the effectiveness of such co-optation as opposed to continued contention (Doherty 2002). Ultimately, this tension invites further inquiry into more diffuse, yet deeper-seated agonistic and informal civic participation and learning that can mount a permanent and participatory critical challenge to democratic institutions with networked communication as a stable component of it.

Notes

1. See Givan et al. (2010) for a theoretical grounding of the topic.
2. Such delimitations valorise 'conventional' modes of participation (Barnes and Kaase 1979, pp. 409–477) deemed to bolster 'incumbent' democracy. They stand in contrast to 'unconventional' participation that expounds a 'critical' democracy hostile towards government (Blaug 2002). A sharp separation of these two forms of participation has, however, historically been disputed on the grounds that 'by now much of these originally unconventional modes of participation have become largely conventional (Hooghe and Marien 2013, p. 133). Moreover, a cultural disposition in liberal democracies which is favourable to unconventional participation evidenced in the rising number of protest events and the scope of involvement in them has been recorded with terms such as 'demonstration democracy' (Etzioni 1970).

3. Contentious politics as defined in this volume is part-and-parcel of the catalogue of 'voluntary activities by citizens usually related to government, politics and the state' (van Deth 2014, p. 353) or which 'are targeted at that sphere [so as to] attract attention to problems that have either not been perceived as problematic or have not been recognised as problems requiring government/state involvement so far' (2014, p. 357).
4. Although 'insurgent politics' was intended as a heuristic for capturing a renewed impetus to challenge the neoliberal status quo of the 1990s and the 2000s, 'contentious politics' is a more sophisticated analytical tool that is better equipped to grapple with the amorphousness of mobilisations of the present decade (Biekart and Fowler 2013).
5. In speech, the human individual 'identifies himself (sic) as the actor, announcing what he (sic) does, has done and intends to do' (1978, p. 179).
6. Interpersonal relations are not shielded from deception and dissimulation that conceal another's capacity for action and therefore dehumanise them.
7. Though not a prescriptive concept to the degree that its definition would comprise a checklist of attributes the epitome of which would be the Freedom House Democracy Scores (Dawson 2014). The latter are aggregate measures for the comparative empirical study of political regimes.
8. See Putnam (2000) who clamours precisely the erosion of the social groundwork that supports that edifice.
9. According to the website Internet Livestats, which compiles data on global Internet diffusion released by the International Telecommunications Union and the UN Population Division, there were more than 3 billion people online in early 2015. For more details see: http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users/.
10. The term *mediatisation* represents an invitation to grapple with the progressive encoding of fundamental societal and cultural institutions and processes by the media, understood broadly as agents of 'communicative construction of sociocultural reality' (Matoni and Treré 2014, p. 261) rather than a type of content producer (e.g. a media corporation) or a particular technology (e.g. television or social networking services).
11. For example, the neoliberal conception of the individualistic entrepreneurial citizen for whom choice and autonomy would trump a disposition to see social entitlements as enablers of civic and political virtue (Olssen 1996).
12. I am, however, mindful that a critique of the effectiveness of civic education carried out through the educational system can very easily play right into the hands of its neoliberal detractors. These may invoke precisely such arguments to call for the scaling back and rearticulation of formal civic education at an elusive community level (inter alia, proposing to instill volunteering as a cardinal social virtue as envisioned in David Cameron's Big Society Programme sooner than a critical conscience conducive to

contention, Kinsby 2010). Therefore, in line with Lawy and Biesta (2006, p. 47), I should stress that I view formal civic education as a bridge that can be extended into politically peripheral constituencies (such as young people) in order to bring them in closer contact with democratic institutions.

13. A similar indictment was levelled against networked individualism more widely which posits that person-to-person connectivity takes precedence over place or group-based connectivity (Rainie and Wellman 2012; Chua 2013).
14. Proposed legislation designed to enhance the surveillance capability of the British Intelligence Services, dubbed the 'Snooper's Charter', is the most recent case in point, Travis et al. (2015).
15. Media practices encompass interactions of media subjects (journalists, activist spokespersons) who produce and circulate messages for public consumption with media objects (smart-phones, laptops and all the way to newspapers, Mattoni and Treré 2014, p. 259). Media practices are at the same time habitual and creative tactics wherewith one may partake in mediatisation.

References

Agarwal, S., Barthel, M. L., Rost, C., Borning, A., Bennett, W. L., & Johnson, C. N. (2014). Grassroots organizing in the digital age: Considering values and technology in Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(3), 326–341.

Almond, G., & Verba, S. (1963). *The civic culture: Political attitudes and democracy in five nations.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Andrejevic, M. (2014). *Infoglut.* London: Routledge.

Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Arendt, H. (1977). *Between past and future: Eight exercises in political thought.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Axford, B. (2001). The transformation of politics or anti-politics. In Barrie Axford & Richard Huggins (Eds.), *New Media and Politics* (pp. 1–30). London: Sage.

Ayres, J. M. (1999). From the streets to the Internet: The cyber-diffusion of contention. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 566*(1), 132–143.

BaeBrandtzaeg, P., & Heim, J. (2009). Why people use social network sites. In A. A. Ozok & P. Zaphiris (Eds.), *Online communities* (LNCS, Vol. 5621, pp. 143–152). Berlin: Springer.

Barnes, S., & Kaase, M. K. (1979). *Political action: Mass participation in five western democracies.* Beverly Hills: Sage.

Bastos, M. T., Mercea, D., & Charpentier, A. (2015). Tweets, tents, and events: The interplay between street protests and social media. *Journal of Communication*. doi:10.1111/jcom.12145.

Beck, U. (2000). The cosmopolitan perspective: Sociology of the second age of modernity. *British Journal of Sociology, 51*(1), 79–105.

Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26*, 611–639.

Bennett, W. L. (2003). Communicating global activism.*Information, Communication & Society, 6*(2), 143–168.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(5), 739–768.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2013). *The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bennett, W. L., & Toft, A. (2008). Identity, technology and narratives: Transnational activism and social movements. In A. Chadwick & P. N. Howard (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of Internet politics* (pp. 246–260). London: Routledge.

Bennett, W. L., Wells, C., & Freelon, D. (2009a). Communicating civic engagement: Contrasting models of citizenship in the youth web sphere. *Journal of Communication, 61*, 836–856.

Bennett, W. L., Wells, C., & Rank, A. (2009b). Young citizens and civic learning: Two paradigms of citizenship in the digital age. *Citizenship Studies, 13*(2), 105–120.

Biekart, K., & Fowler, A. (2013). Transforming activism 2010+: Exploring ways and waves. *Development and Change, 44*(3), 527–546.

Biesta, G. (2007). Education and the democratic person: Towards a political conception of democratic education. *Teachers College Record, 109*(3), 740–769.

Bimber, B., & Copeland, L. (2013). Digital media and traditional political participation over time in the U.S. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 10*(2), 125–137.

Bimber, B., Flanagin, A., & Stohl, C. (2005). Reconceptualizing collective action in the contemporary media environment. *Communication Theory, 15*(4), 389–413.

Bimber, B., Flanagin, A., & Stohl, C. (2012). *Collective action in organization: Interaction and engagement in an era of technological change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blaug, R. (2002). Engineering democracy. *Political Studies, 50*(1), 102–116.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *On television*. New York: The New Press.

Bruns, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, second life, and beyond: From production to produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.

Caren, N., & Gaby, S. (2011). Occupy online: Facebook and the spread of occupy Wall Street. *Social Science Research Network*. Retrieved September 9, 2013, from http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1943168

Castells, M. (1997). *The power of identity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
Castells, M. (2007). Communication, power and counter-power in the network society. *International Journal of Communication, 1*, 238–266.
Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Castells, M. (2012). *Networks of outrage and hope: Social movements in the Internet age*. Cambridge: Polity.
Chadwick, A. (2013). *The hybrid media system*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Chomsky, N. (2012). *Occupy*. London: Penguin.
Christensen, C. (2011). Twitter revolutions? Addressing social media and dissent. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 155–157.
Chua, V. (2013). Contextualizing 'networked individualism': The interplay of social categories, role relationships and tasks. *Current Sociology, 61*(5–6), 602–625.
Couldry, N. (2008). Mediatization or mediation? Alternative understandings of the emergent space of digital storytelling. *New Media and Society, 10*(3), 373–391.
Couldry, N. (2012). *Media, society, world*. Cambridge: Polity.
Couldry, N. (2015). The myth of 'us': Digital networks, political change and the production of collectivity. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2014.979216.
Crouch, C. (2004). *Post-democracy*. Cambridge: Polity.
Dahlgren, P. (2006). Doing citizenship: The cultural origins of civic agency in the public sphere. *European Journal of Cultural Studies, 9*(3), 267–286.
Dahlgren, P. (2009). *Media and political engagement: Citizen, communication and democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Dahlgren, P. (2013). Online journalism and civic cosmopolitanism. *Journalism Studies, 14*(2), 156–171.
Dalton, R. J. (2006). *Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced industrial democracies*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
Dawson, J. (2014). *Cultures of democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.
Dean, J. (2013). *The communist horizon*. London: Verso Books.
della Porta, D. (2011). Communication in movement. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 800–819.
della Porta, D. (2013). *Can democracy be saved? Participation, deliberation and social movements*. Cambridge: Polity.
della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
Doherty, B. (2002). *Ideas and actions in the green movement*. London: Routledge.
Farrell, H. (2014) New problems, new publics? Dewey and new media. *Policy and the Internet,* 6(2), 176-191.
Earl, J., Hurwitz McKee, H., Mejia Mesinas, A., Tolan, M., & Arlotti, A. (2013). This protest will be tweeted. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(4), 459–478.

Earl, J., & Kimport, K. (2011). *Digitally enabled social change: Activism in the Internet age*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Etzioni, A. (1970). *Demonstration democracy*. New York: Gordon and Breach.

Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). *Protest camps*. London: Zed Books.

Fenton, N., & Barassi, V. (2011). Alternative media and social network sites: The politics of individuation and political participation. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 179–196.

Flanagin, A. J., Stohl, C., & Bimber, B. (2006). Modeling the structure of collective action. *Communication Monographs, 73*(1), 29–54.

Fuchs, C. (2012). The political economy of privacy on Facebook. *Television and New Media, 13*(2), 139–159.

Fuchs, C. (2014). *Social media: A critical introduction*. London: Sage.

Gaber, I. (2000). Government by spin: An analysis of the process. *Media, Culture and Society, 22*(4), 507–518.

Garrett, R. K. (2006). Protest in an information society: A review of literature on social movements and new ICTs. *Information, Communication & Society, 9*(2), 202–224.

Gerbaudo, P. (2012). *Tweets and the streets: Social media and contemporary activism*. London: Pluto Press.

Gerbaudo, P. (2013). Protest diffusion and cultural resonance in the 2011 protest wave. *The International Spectator, 48*(4), 86–101.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Givan, R. K., Roberts, K. M., & Soule, S. A. (2010). *The diffusion of social movements: Actors, mechanisms and political effects*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gladwell, M. (2010). Why the revolution will not be tweeted. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved January 10, 2011, from http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell?currentPage=1

Gleason, B. (2013). #Occupy Wall Street: Exploring informal learning about a social movement on Twitter. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 966–982.

Goldberg, G. (2011). Rethinking the public/virtual sphere: The problem with participation. *New Media and Society, 13*(5), 739–754.

Gonzalez-Bailon, S., Borge-Holthoefer, J., & Moreno, Y. (2013). Broadcasters and hidden influential in online protest diffusion. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 943–965.

Graeber, D. (2014). *The democracy project*. London: Penguin.

Graham, S. (2009) The urban 'battlespace' *Theory, Culture and Society*, 26(7-8), 278-288.

Haight, M., Quan-Haase, A., & Corbett, B. A. (2014). Revisiting the digital divide in Canada: The impact of demographic factors on access to the Internet,

level of online activity, and social networking site usage. *Information, Communication & Society, 17*(4), 503–519.
Halford, S., & Savage, M. (2010). Reconceptualizing digital social inequality. *Information, Communication and Society, 13*(7), 937–955.
Halupka, M. (2014). Clicktivism: A systematic heuristic. *Policy and the Internet, 6*(2), 115–132.
Hampton, K., Livio, O., & Sessions Goulet, L. (2010). The social life of wireless urban spaces: internet use, social networks, and the public realm. *Journal of Communication, 60*(4), 701–722.
Hands, J. (2011). *@ is for activism: Dissent, resistance and rebellion in a digital culture*. London: Pluto Press.
Harlow, S, Harp, D. (2012) Collective action on the web.*Information, Communication and Society, 15*(2), 196–216.
Harsin, J. (2013). WTF was Kony 2012? Considerations for communication and critical/cultural studies (CCCS). *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies, 10*, 265–272.
Held, D. (2006). *Models of democracy* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Polity.
Hepp, A. (2013). *Cultures of mediatization*. Cambridge: Polity.
Hickerson, A. A. (2013). Media use and transnational political and civic participation: A case study of Mexicans in the USA. *Global Networks, 13*(2), 143–163.
Hooghe, M., & Marien, S. (2013). A comparative analysis of the relation between political trust and forms of political participation in Europe. *European Societies, 15*(1), 131–152.
Howard, P. N., & Hussain, M. M. (2013). *Democracy's fourth wave? Digital media and the Arab spring*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Howard, P. N., & Parks, M. R. (2012). Social media and political change: Capacity, constraint, and consequence. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 359–362.
Hunt, S., Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (1994). Identity fields: Framing processes and the social construction of movement identities. In E. Larana, H. Johnston, & H. Gusfields (Eds.), *New social movements: From ideology to identity* (pp. 185–209). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Inglehart, R. (1997) *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Jordan, T. (2001). *Activism! direct action, hacktivism and the future of society*. London: Reaktion Books.
Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.
Kaun, A. (2015). Regimes of time: Media practices of the dispossessed. *Time & Society*. doi:10.1177/0961463X15577276.
Kavada, A. (2015). Creating the collective: Social media, the Occupy Movement and its constitution as a collective action. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043318.

Keane, J. (2013). *Democracy and media decadence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kelty, C. M. (2013). From participation to power. In A. Delwiche & J. J. Henderson (Eds.), *The participatory cultures handbook* (pp. 22–32). New York, NY: Routledge.

Kinsby, B. (2010). The big society: Power to the people? *The Political Quarterly, 81*(4), 484–491.

Klandermans, B., & Oegema, D. (1987). Potentials, networks, motivations, and barriers: Steps towards participation in social movements. *American Sociological Review, 52*(4), 519–531.

Klein, N. (2002). *Fences and windows: Dispatches from the front lines of the globalization debate*. New York: Picador.

Kohn, M. (2008). *Trust: Self interest and the common good*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kreiss, D., & Tufekci, Z. (2013). Occupying the political: Occupy Wall Street, collective action and the rediscovery of pragmatic politics. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies, 13*(3), 163–167.

Law, J. (2003). *Networks, relations, cyborgs: On the social study of technology*. Centre for Science Studies, Lancaster: Lancaster University, URL (consulted June 2015): http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/sociology/research/publications/papers/law-networks-relations-cyborgs.pdf

Lawy, R., & Biesta, G. (2006). Citizenship-as-practice: The educational implications of an inclusive and relational understanding of citizenship. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 54*(1), 34–50.

Levi, M., & Stoker, L. (2000). Political trust and trustworthiness. *Annual Review of Political Science, 3*, 475–507.

Lievrouw, L. (2010). *Alternative and activist new media*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lievrouw, L. A. (2011). *Alternative and activist new media*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lim, M. (2013). Framing Bouazizi: White lies, hybrid network, and collective/connective action in the 2010–11 Tunisian uprising. *Journalism, 14*(7), 921–941.

Livingstone, D. (1999). Exploring the icebergs of adult learning: Findings of the first Canadian survey of informal learning practices. *Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education, 13*(2), 49–72.

Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking democracy? Social media innovations and participatory politics. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 757–759.

Lovink, G. (2011). *Networks without a cause: A critique of social media*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lyon, D. (2008). *Surveillance studies: An overview*. Cambridge: Polity.

Maltby, S., Thornam, H., & Bennett, D. (2015). Capability in the digital: Institutional media management and its dis/contents. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1046893.

Marshall, T. H. (1950). *Citizenship and social class*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mattoni, A., Treré, E. (2014) Media practices, mediation processes, and mediatization in the study of social movements. *Communication Theory, 24*(3), 252–271.
McAdam, D. (1986). Recruitment to high-risk activism: The case of Freedom Summer. *The American Journal of Sociology, 92*(1), 64–90.
McAdam, D., McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. N. (Eds.). (1996). *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
McCaughey, M., & Ayers, M. D. (Eds.). (2003). *Cyberactivism: Online activism in theory and practice*. New York: Routledge.
McChesney, R. (2013). *Digital disconnect*. New York: The New Press.
Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the present: Social movements and individual needs in contemporary society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Melucci, A. (1996). *Challenging codes: Collective action in the information age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Mercea, D. (2014). Towards a conceptualization of casual protest participation: Parsing a case from the Save Rosia Montana campaign. *East European Politics and Societies, 28*(2), 386–410.
Micheletti, M. (2003). *Political virtue and shopping: Individuals, consumerism, and collective action*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
Milan, S. (2015). From social movements to cloud protesting: The evolution of collective identity. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043135.
Morozov, E. (2011). *The net delusion: How not to liberate the world*. London: Allen Lane.
Mosca, L. (2008). A double-faced medium? The challenges and opportunities of the Internet for social movements. In T. Hayhtio & J. Rinne (Eds.), *Net working/networking: Citizen initiated Internet politics* (pp. 41–73). Tampere: Tampere University Press.
Mosco, V. (2005). *The digital sublime*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Neumayer, C., & Rossi, L. (2015). New platform-time for more protest! A critical analysis of online media and civic engagement scholarship. iCS Symposium *Protest participation in variable communication ecologies*, 24–26 June. Alghero, Italy: University of Sassari.
Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic phoenix: Reinventing political activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Norris, P., & Curtice, J. (2004). *If you build a political website, will they come?* Retrieved March 10, 2005, from http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/APSA2004Communitywebsite.pdf
Occupy Wall Street. (2012) *Statement against the anti-counterfeiting trade agreement*. Retrieved March 4, 2013, from http://www.nycga.net/resources/documents/statement-against-the-anti-counterfeiting-trade-agreement-acta/

Offe, C. (1985). New social movements: Challenging the boundaries of political institutions. *Social Research, 52*(4), 817–868.

Olson, M. (1965). *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Olssen, M. (1996). In defence of the welfare state and publicly provided education: A New Zealand perspective. *Journal of Education Policy, 11*(3), 337–362.

Östman, J. (2012). Information, expression, participation: How involvement in user-generated content relates to democratic engagement among young people. *New Media and Society*, 00:1–18. Accessed February 18, 2012.

Papacharissi, Z. (2010). *A private sphere: Democracy in a digital age.* Cambridge: Polity.

Papacharissi, Z., & Fatima Oliveira, M. (2012). Affective news and networked publics: The rhythms of news storytelling on #Egypt. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 266–282.

Pickerill, J., & Krinsky, J. (2012). Why does occupy matter? *Social Movement Studies, 11*(3–4), 279–287.

Poell, T. (2014). Social media and the transformation of activist communication: Exploring the social media ecology of the 2010 Toronto G20 protests. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(6), 716–731.

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rainie, L., & Wellman, B. (2012). *Networked: The new social operating system.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Rosanvallon, P., & Goldhammer, A. (2008). *Counter-democracy. Politics in an age of distrust.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Russell, A. (2005). Myth and the Zapatista movement: Exploring a network identity. *New Media and Society, 7*(4), 559–577.

Schiller, H. (1996). *Information inequality.* London: Routledge.

Schugurensky, D., & Myers, J. P. (2008). Informal civic learning through engagement in local democracy: The case of the seniors' task force of healthy city Toronto. In K. Church, N. Bascia, & E. Shragge (Eds.), *Learning through community: Exploring participatory practices.* Berlin: Springer.

Serup Christensen, H., & Bengtsson, A. (2011). The political competence of Internet participants. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*, 896–916.

Shah, N. (2012). Resisting revolution: Questioning the radical potential of citizen action. *Development, 55*(2), 173–180.

Skoric, M. M. (2012). What is slack about slacktivism? *Methodological and Conceptual Issues in Cyberactivism Research, 77*, 77–92.

Stolle, D., Hooghe, M., & Micheletti, M. (2005). Politics in the supermarket: Political consumerism as a form of political participation. *International Political Science Review, 26*(3), 245–269.

Sunstein, C. (2007) *Republic.com 2.0,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Tarrow, S. (1998). *Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and politics* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Theocharis, Y. (2015). The conceptualization of digitally networked participation. *Social Media + Society*, July–December 2015, 1–14.

Thorson, K., Driscoll, K., Ekdale, B., Edgerly, S., Gamber Thompson, L., Schrock, A., Swartz, L., Vraga, E. K., & Wells, C. (2013). Youtube, Twitter and the occupy movement: Connecting content and circulation practices. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(3), 421–451.

Tilly, C. (1997). Contentious politics and social change. *African Studies, 56*(1), 51–65.

Tilly, C., & Tarrow, S. (2007). *Contentious politics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H., & Schulz, W. (2001). Executive summary: *Citizenship and education in twenty-eight countries: Civic knowledge and engagement at age fourteen*. Amsterdam: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

Travis, A., Wintour, P., Watt, N., & Mason, R. (2015). Wide-ranging snooper's charter to extend powers of security services. *The Guardian Online*. Retrieved May 28, 2015, from http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/may/27/wide-ranging-snoopers-charter-to-extend-powers-of-security-services

Tufekci, Z., & Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahir Square. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 363–379.

Urry, J. (2000). Mobile sociology. *British Journal of Sociology, 51*(1), 185–203.

Valenzula, S., Arriagada, A., & Scherman, A. (2012). The social media basis of youth protest behavior: The case of Chile. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 299–314.

van Aelst, P., & Walgrave, S. (2002). New media, new movements? The role of the Internet in shaping the 'anti-globalization' movement. *Information, Communication & Society, 5*(4), 465–493.

van de Donk, W., Loader, B. D., Nixon, P. G., & Rucht, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Cyberprotest: New media, citizens and social movements.* London: Routledge.

van Deth, J. (2014). A conceptual map of political participation. *Acta Politica, 49*(3), 349–367.

van Deth, J., & Elff, M. (2000). *Political involvement and apathy in Europe.* Arbeitspapiere-Manheimer Zentrum fuer Europaeische Sozialforschung, 33, ISSN 1437-8574.

van Dijck, J. (2013). *The culture of connectivity: A critical history of social media*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Laer, J. (2010). Activists 'online' and 'offline': The Internet as an information channel for protest demonstrations. *Mobilization, 15*(3), 405–417.

van Laer, J., & van Aelst, P. (2010). Internet and social movement action repertoires. *Information, Communication & Society, 13*(8), 1146–1171.

Verhulst, J., & Walgrave, S. (2009). The first time is the hardest? A cross-national and cross-issue comparison of first-time protest participants. *Political Behavior, 31*(3), 455–484.

Vissers, S., & Stolle, D. (2012). Spill-over effects between Facebook and on/offline political participation. Evidence from a two-wave panel study. Paper presented at the *Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, 15–17 June 2012.

Vromen, A. (2011). Constructing Australian youth online. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(7), 959–980.

Ward, J. (2011). Reaching citizens online: How youth organizations are evolving their web presence. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 917–936.

Ward, J., & de Vreese, C. (2011). Political consumerism, young citizens and the Internet. *Media, Culture and Society, 33*(3), 399–413.

Wessels, B. (2010). *Understanding the Internet: A socio-cultural perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Whitehead, L. (2002). *Democratization: Theory and experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wolfson, T. (2014). Activist laboratories of the 1990s: The roots of technological determinism in contemporary social movements. *Cultural Studies, 28*(4), 657–675.

Xenos, M., & Moy, P. (2007). Direct and differential effects of the Internet on political and civic engagement. *Journal of Communication, 57*(4), 704–718.

Zuckerman, E. (2014). New Media, New Civics? *Policy & Internet*, *6*(2), 151–168.

Zukin, C., Keeter, S., Andolina, M., Jenkins, K., & Delli Carpini, M. X. (2006). *A new engagement? Political participation, civic life, and the changing American citizen*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER 2

The Protest Events

I should start this chapter by reminding the reader that the study of participation in social movements has historically been complicated by the transience, amorphousness and informality that characterises them (McAdam 1986). To overcome this impediment, in his seminal study, McAdam (1986, p. 67) concentrated on moments when social movements materialised in the public arena, thereby proposing to 'shift the focus of analysis [on] specific demonstrations, actions, campaigns or other bounded forms of activism'. Taking guidance from his example, I concentrated my analysis on protest events, cascading it into areas of interest concentrically. I saw in protest events what McAdam succinctly defined as 'instances of activism' (1986, p. 67) where individuals congregate in a physical space to take collective action (Koopmans and Statham 1999, p. 205).

This chapter reviews the circumstances of the groups and organisations that staged the protest events scrutinised in this book. The first was a long-standing informal activist group that since 2004 had been orchestrating FânFest, a headline protest festival mounted by the opposition to the largest proposed gold mine in Europe at Roşia Montană, in Romania. Second, there was the Climate Camp, an itinerant, reiterative and impermanent assembly of action groups variably associated with the UK environmental, labour and anti-capitalist movements. It took place from 2006 to 2010 at different locations throughout the UK symbolic of environmental destruction and its sources, be they industrial or financial. Field studies reported in subsequent chapters were conducted in 2007–08 and 2012. A similar

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_2

concept, namely of temporary gatherings convened in the proximity of seats of financial or political power responsible for global inequalities, underpinned the Occupy Encampments. The third case study dwelled on Occupy the Hague, the protest camp that ran for 4 months at the end of 2011 and early 2012 in the administrative capital of the Netherlands. Fourth, the chapter reports on a loose grouping of purpose-built social media outlets from across Europe that, in 2012, staged a transient cross-national campaign of protest events against the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA).

The purpose of this chapter is to pinpoint the strategic choices that lay behind the action repertoires of the organisations and groups I studied and how the latter, in turn, related to their context. I do this in order to grasp the opportunities and constraints that circumscribed collective action (Tarrow 1998). In taking this approach, I was mindful of the need to gain an understanding of variations in individual conditions and interpretations thereof so as not to map network communication deterministically onto collective action as an independent variable (Castells 1997; Loader and Mercea 2011; Gerbaudo 2012; Zuckerman 2014). Notwithstanding, a common denominator of the action repertoires I examined was the networked communication prefiguring the protest events. In the next section, I provide a definition of action repertoires, tie this into the analysis of social movement organisations (SMOs) in order to describe and classify the groups and organisations I researched before proceeding with expounding the digital foreshadowing of physical protest.

Social Movement Organisations and Action Repertoires

There seems to be widespread agreement in social movement scholarship that protest events are not random acts of discontent with an oppressive reality (Tilly 1986; Jaspers 1997). They are a product of an opportunity calculus undertaken by SMOs—those entities that transpire as orchestrators of collective action—pertaining to external conditions and requisite internal resources (della Porta and Diani 2006). Protest events are one of several means of advancing collective demands, which together constitute the repertoire of action of an SMO.

Repertoires of action are 'the whole set of means [a group] has for making claims of different kinds on different individuals or groups' (1986, p. 4). Repertoires are a product of the history and culture of collective

action in a given society (Tarrow 1998, p. 20), or they may be successful blueprints for contention retrieved from other societies (Tarrow 2005).[1] SMOs take up the task of modulating—creatively adapting—available forms of action to apply them to the particular circumstances of their contention (Tarrow 1998, p. 33). Such efforts may generate innovation in how protest is conducted (della Porta and Diani 2006, p. 183) as well as disseminated (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2002; Bennett 2003). The example of anti-capitalist protests arising out of 'the battle of Seattle' in 1999 represents a relevant turning point for SMOs, which began to make recourse to networked communication technologies systematically in order to coordinate, publicise and extend the outreach of their contention both within and beyond the confines of their societies (della Porta et al. 2006). The ripples of the anti-G8 (Group of 8) demonstrations in Seattle, which for years reverberated through the global Social Justice Movement (Juris 2008), provided some of the early testimonies of the adroitness of SMOs in adapting tried forms of action to the particular circumstances of their contention and by so doing renewing their action repertoires.

The term social movement organisation has been put to various uses, depending on the explanatory work it was intended to do. An illustration can be found in Diani and Donato's (1999) organisational typology. Drawing on a sample of SMOs from amongst environmental movements in Western Europe, those authors distinguished two central dimensions on which SMOs were likely to differ. The first of the two related to the type of actions organisations undertook. In this respect, a distinction was drawn between disruptive and institutionalised actions. The former were protest techniques that scrambled or threatened to thwart the conventional political process, what are here described generically as protest events. Illuminating examples may be demonstrations, protest camps, sit-ins or blockades. The latter type of actions were premised on an ethos of institutional cooperation, embracing sanctioned methods such as advocacy or lobbying. The second dimension pertained to the resources SMOs aimed to mobilise, either people's time or their money (1999, p. 15).

With this model, Diani and Donato (1999) identified four types of organisations. The first, the *participatory protest organisation*, mobilised people into disruptive actions. This variety was qualified as a 'decentralized, grassroots SMO'. Second, the *professional protest organisation*, relied on 'professional activism and the mobilization of financial resources' along with direct action and other public protest techniques. Third, there was the *participatory pressure group,* which employed the financial resources

made available to it by its members and supporters to promote group interests by dint of institutional methods. Finally, *public interest lobbies* were run by paid staff, operated solely in the institutional arena promoting group interests and foregrounding the instrumental use of financial resources towards goal attainment (1999, pp. 16–18).

This taxonomy aided the present analysis in that it highlighted the centrality of action repertoires to the definition of an SMO and its character. The organisations I review in the following pages shared an appetite to confront power and authority from outside the institutional sanctum of democratic politics. In this, they were unlike the interest groups Diani and Donato (1999) depicted with their latter two organisational denominations. Interest groups seek closer contact with and greater influence on powerbrokers (Jordan and Maloney 1997). Moreover, the amorphousness of the collective entities I am about to introduce distances them from any legally registered statutory organisations that thus sustain enduring relationships with institutional counterparts (Doherty et al. 2000).

The other common ground shared by three of the SMOs about to be portrayed, I will suggest, was their organisational form. Succinctly, the organisational form of an SMO represents the structure of relations internal to it (Clemens 1996). In their latest comprehensive treatment of protest camps—the organisational form taken by FânFest, the protest festival in Romania, the Climate Camp in the UK and Occupy the Hague in the Netherlands—Frenzel et al. (2014) delineate the distinctiveness of camps along three analytical dimensions of space, affect and autonomy. Protest camps organise their physical surroundings, often by disrupting them. Within their bounds, relations of 'conflict and collaboration' are formulated, which help emotions towards the target of contention crystallise and bonds among participants sediment. The ensuing communion of place, purpose, affect and opposition contributes to both the physical and mental autonomy of the space occupied by protest camps.

Previously, 'temporary autonomous zones', common during the anti-roads protests of the 1990s, were an example of the reclamation of physical public space. They were characterised as 'a site for a theatre of the possible in which activists can affirm their commitment to other ways of life in which community, public life and pleasure are valued more than paid work in formal employment and consumerism' (Doherty 2002, p. 171). Protest camps have been subsumed to the same logic of creating spaces freed from the authority of the state and the control of the police. Camps are a multifarious micro-climate as a site of sustainable lifestyles and a hotbed for both direct democracy and direct action (Jowers et al. 1999).

At the same time, downplaying a temporal definition of protest camps, Frenzel et al. (2014) instead claim that the individuality of this particular organisational form derives from its existence as a meeting point of people and ideas subsumed to an abstract and elusive social movement. Protest camps are as much physical embodiments of a movement or a sector thereof (della Porta et al. 2006) as they are 'representational spaces' enabling partakers to thrash out and express issues that are often complex and immaterial (e.g. climate change, global finance). This porous definitional process renders protest camps a particularly fertile terrain for mobilisation 'of audiences which are otherwise disconnected from the issue at hand' (Frenzel et al. 2014, p. 460). A sizeable part of this book is dedicated to probing this latter aspect. However, rather than concentrating on the goings-on at camp sites, the focus will be on the networked communication that precedes and the degree to which it primes the physical aggregation of a protest camp. This temporal consideration closely coupled with the participation of unaffiliated individuals in my eyes warranted the incorporation of the fourth case study (the Stop ACTA campaign) into this analysis. In what follows, the historical and socio-cultural coordinates of the four instances of collective action I scrutinised are put forward to illuminate how the protest events reflected their respective inheritance.

The Rise of the 'Save Roşia Montană' Campaign

The first two case studies each represent particular instances of protest events subsumed to the amorphous environmental movement, a kaleidoscope of organisations and groups espousing a commitment to safeguarding life and the natural environment (Castells 1997; Saunders 2008). FânFest, the environmental protest at Roşia Montană, was a central plank of the Save Roşia Montană Campaign (SRM), likely the most conspicuous environmental struggle in Romania (Smith 2007; Thorpe 2007; Parau 2009). The campaign was hailed as 'probably the most enduring, successful and transnationalised environment-centered protest in Southeastern Europe' (Romantan 2006, p. 1). Over the years, it has included more than thirty organisations among the active contributors to its cause (Xenia 2007).[2] Its actions have straddled conventional interest representation, demonstrations, marches and direct action as well as environmental litigation. Lastly, and most importantly, they have championed efforts to lay the groundwork for a new culture of environmental activism in Romania.

Roşia Montană is a village in west-central Romania. It lies at the heart of a region where gold has been mined for centuries (Buza et al. 2001). In the

twentieth century, under the Communist regime, traditional mining was replaced by industrial operations (2001, p. 631). In 1997, Roşia Montană Gold Corporation (RMGC) was founded as a joint venture between a Romanian state-owned company and a Canadian investor, Gabriel Resources Ltd. Its aim was to prospect the area around Roşia Montană for remaining gold and silver deposits. In 1999, RMGC received a license to mine in the area (Gabriel Resources 2006, p. 4). To that end, it had to apply for a variety of other licenses and permits and submit its project to an analysis of its environmental impact by the Romanian authorities. In September 2007, the environmental impact assessment (EIA) procedure the project had to undergo was suspended by the Romanian Ministry for the Environment. The decision by the Ministry came as a result of a court ruling that rescinded one of the licenses required in the EIA procedure. The case had been taken to court by the SRM campaign (Green Report 2009).

The projected open-cast mine would occupy an area of 1258 ha of land that would be taken up by its infrastructure. To make room for it, the company was planning to resettle or relocate 974 households (Gabriel Resources 2006, p. 7) or approximately 2000 people (Alburnus Maior 2006). The first relocations began in the second half of 2002 when RMGC launched its Resettlement and Relocation Action Plan (2006, p. 17). A section from the local community that was living in the impact area of the proposed mine opposed those plans.

The opposition to the gold-mining project formally came into being with the establishment of 'Alburnus Maior', an association of landowners intent on safeguarding their property rights in and around the village of Roşia Montană (Xenia 2007). The organisation became the nerve centre of the local opposition, which attracted members and supporters from across the region. Its leaders gained support from regional and subsequently national environmental NGOs (non-governmental organisations). International supporters likewise lent their weight to its efforts to prevent the mine from opening. They have included NGOs such as Greenpeace CEE (Central and Eastern European), Friends of the Earth International, Bank Watch CEE, Mining Watch Canada and Oxfam America.[3] Gradually, the opposition grew into what became the Save Roşia Montană Campaign. In time, the Save Roşia Montană Campaign managed to create a space that transcended organisational relations with other NGOs and included individuals and informal groups. The campaign actively sought to create a distinctive identity for its protest, which would stretch beyond the immediate concerns of the people directly affected by the proposed gold and silver mine.

Over the course of more than a decade, 40 public actions (demos, marches, flash mobs, direct actions) were either choreographed by the campaign or organised independently in support of it. They were integral to a repertoire of action that had long placed great stress on public participation as both an avenue and an instrument to counter measures to steamroll the Roşia Montană and other controversial mining projects (Keira 2012). The first demonstration took place at Roşia Montană in July 2002. It represented the birth moment of the campaign. On that occasion, 34 NGOs—the majority of which were Romanian—signed a common declaration of endorsement for the local protest. This esprit de corps was described as hitherto unprecedented in the activist arena of the country (Save Roşia Montană 2006).

Between tens of people and several thousand became involved in the campaign's public actions along the years. The continuing dispute escalated in September 2013 with an unprecedented level of mobilisation on the streets of numerous Romanian cities and towns as well as among Romanian diasporic communities around the world. Protestors rallied against proposed legislation designed to streamline licensing procedures and grant the mine operator extensive powers, inter alia, to execute forced purchase orders on the properties in the mining perimeter. Two months of Sunday rallies displayed a vibrant public response to a call by the campaign to compel the Romanian parliament to repeal the proposed reforms to the mining law, which were described as illicitly favouring the mining operator (Wong 2013). FânFest fore-ran and outlasted those demonstrations as an outlet of public solidarity with the local opposition. In 2015 the festival celebrated its tenth anniversary. Yet, the Save Roşia Montană Campaign developed in a general climate that was largely unfavourable to civic participation.

Stunted Civic Participation and Environmentalism in Romania

Romania is a post-Communist democracy with historically low levels of civic engagement (Badescu et al. 2004; Petrova and Tarrow 2007). In the 1980s, the country did not witness the burgeoning of environmental activism seen in the other former Communist countries of the CEE region, which had set out on a path to measured political liberalisation (Pickavance 1999; see Fagan and Jehlicka 2003 for an illustration of the Czech case). Such exceptionalism was attributed to the unparalleled authoritarianism of the Communist regime, which had no tolerance

for political pluralism (Tismaneanu 1989; Deletant 2006) or any groups independent of the Romanian Communist Party (Linz and Stepan 1996, pp. 352–353). Following the collapse of communism, Romania continued to be an outlier among its neighbours, throughout the 1990s. That status was arguably a result of the very limited scope of environmental reforms it implemented during the decade (Andersen 2002) and because it historically had one of the lowest levels of environmental activism in the region (Botcheva 1996).

More than a decade after the 1989 revolution, levels of civic participation in the country continued to be lower than in consolidated liberal democracies (Badescu et al. 2004). The proportion of people who were affiliated to one or more NGOs was the second lowest in east-central Europe (9.6%), just above Russia, which stood at the bottom of that ranking. Those figures were more than four times smaller than in the UK (41.8%). It thus seemed that civic participation was slow to flourish subsequent to the anti-totalitarian insurrection of 1989. Very few Romanians engaged in any civic activities, joined not-for-profit organisations or volunteered their time to public causes (2004, p. 316). Commentators highlighted that scarce material resources, a deep-seated scepticism of collective action prompted by the atomisation of social life during communism, and a feeble activist infrastructure[4] had a concerted negative effect on the overall level of civic engagement (2004, pp. 324–329). More recently, a 2012 survey revealed a modest rise in organisational membership (13.6%, RCPP 2012).[5] By contrast, even fewer Romanians reported having taken part in a protest (what I later refer to as participatory experience) than said they were members in a volunteer organisation that year. Only 1 in every 14 respondents (7%) had previously been to a public demonstration. As a result, the country stands in contrast to the more vibrant civic landscape of Western Europe and North America, which has formed the backdrop of recent studies into the bearing of networked communication on collective action in liberal democracies (Juris 2012; Papacharissi and Fatima Oliveira 2012; Maireder and Schwarzenegger 2012; Theocharis 2012; Thorson et al. 2013).

Despite the low levels of civic participation, a non-governmental sector burgeoned in the 1990s (Porumb et al. 2000; Badescu et al. 2004). After 1989, a flurry of NGO activity was principally pinned on the foreign assistance trickling into the country (Hann and Dunn 1996; Petrova and Tarrow 2007). Upstarting NGOs had to vie for very limited resources,

primarily dispensed by foreign donors. They would come to focus more on their survival than on grassroots outreach (Sloat 2005, p. 440). Thus, in the span of a decade, NGOs became professional organisations. They relied predominately on paid staff and directed most of their capacity to securing project funding and building a positive track-record with their funders (Henderson 2002).

Environmental NGOs (ENGOs) did in no way buck this trend (Botcheva 1996). ENGOs in the CEE region (Pickavance 1999) and Romania (Badescu et al. 2004) were largely unable to raise the organisational infrastructure or the support base on which to nurture social movements. A global assessment of the NGO sector in Romania at the beginning of the 2000s revealed that 'most [NGOs] involved themselves in small-scale projects delivering social services like health care or child protection, or raising public awareness of issues little understood in Romania, e.g. environmentalism' (Parau 2009, p. 121).

The individual circumstances of the Romanian environmental movement were disentangled in research interviews I did between 2007 and 2012 with members of the Save Roşia Montană Campaign. Their comments evinced a deep scepticism about the existence and nature of the environmental movement in Romania. At the same time, some authors have explicitly qualified the campaign itself as a social movement in its own right (Romantan 2006). A more pinpointed description would likely render the campaign as a sector within the indeterminate environmental movement whose size has waxed and waned throughout its existence. Along the years, several Romanian ENGOs renounced their formal partnerships with the campaign while some individuals gave up their membership in them to join the campaign (Rob 2007; Galia 2008). At the same time, the campaign was publicly denounced by other environmental and non-governmental organisations, disavowing its strategy (Galia 2008). Arguably, the SRM campaign's use of multiple forms of action—from lobbying to environmental litigation and public protests—and the steps it took to kindle a new culture of environmental activism in Romania have rendered it one of the enduring proofs of a newfangled activism. The latter, termed *militant activism* by a prominent campaign member was tantamount to a sustained drive to orchestrate public activities that pivoted on broad participation (Galia 2008).[6]

FânFest was the cornerstone of militant activism with its interlinked goals to induct new constituencies into environmental activism, to connect

local environmental concerns with cognate contentions and to broaden the support base of them all. The festival was a space where affiliated activists and unaffiliated participants could convene outside the bounds of formal organisations and in a milieu that recoded the meaning of participation in environmental action. It was a physical manifestation of activism that went against the grain of more than a decade of institutionalised environmentalism in Romania.

The rejuvenation of collective action in Western Europe at the end of the 1970s happened in good part through music concerts (Melucci 1989, pp. 59–60). The amalgamation of a protest agenda with a cultural repertoire proved effective for mobilisation largely because it occasioned the expression of aesthetic values with powerful political resonance (Street et al. 2008, p. 276). In its turn, FânFest was envisioned as a game-changer due to its intended mass appeal amongst the very large body of inexperienced and unaffiliated citizens its organisers aimed to induct into civic participation and environmental activism.[7] The very early sketches for a protest festival at Roşia Montană were made together with overseas volunteers who initially proposed the idea to the local activists (Caden 2007). Such cooperation may be an example of the transfer of forms of action by transnational activists referenced by Tarrow (2005, pp. 43–47). Ultimately, appealing to the younger generation was an aim shared in both contexts.[8]

Similarities with the new movements of the West may have fallen short of establishing a fresh, however loose, organisational infrastructure for the movement (like youth centres in Italy, Melucci 1989, p. 59; or social centres in the UK, Lacey 2005). A full account of the social networks and spin-off activism nurtured by festival is yet to be produced. Nonetheless, a core argument made in this book is that the networked communication that flourished around the festival—and which was actively stoked by its organisers—was propitious to the escalation of public participation culminating in the tens-of-thousand strong autumn rallies of 2013. In a vivid account of the chain reaction to the call to participation in the 2013 rallies launched on Facebook, a chronicler of the campaign recollected the rapid accumulation of pledges to participate that ultimately translated into a ‘permanent demonstration’ (Goţiu 2013, p. 470) extending over more than two months. In Chap. 4, I advance a number of hypotheses to test the notion of casual protest participation that I propose as a theoretical instrument whereby to interpret this development.

The Camp for Climate Action: Building Autonomy on the Shoulders of a Broad Movement

In the UK, the Camp for Climate Action[9] was initiated by a spin-off group of environmental activists who had been involved in the demonstrations against the G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, in 2005. The camp, an itinerant protest, continued in the footsteps of a radical activist tradition of direct action that peaked in the 1990s with the UK anti-roads protests. Environmental direct action (EDA) represents an activist ethos 'designed not only or necessarily to change government policy or to shift the climate of public opinion through the media, but to change environmental conditions around them directly' (Doherty et al. 2000, p. 1). Its aim was to shake up the established practices of environmental activism and rebalance conservationist or reformist approaches to environmental issues (Doherty et al. 2007, p. 822).

The Climate Camp's targets for direct action were chosen from among the biggest carbon dioxide polluters or their known sponsors. In 2006, the camp was at Drax, the largest coal-fuelled power station in Europe (Wainwright 2009). The Climate Camp was at Heathrow in 2007, protesting against plans to build a third runway at that airport (Connor 2008). In 2008, the camp arrived at Kingsnorth, a coal-fuelled power station in Kent. There, climate campers were called to protest against plans by the energy operator E-ON to build a new generation of coal power stations (Camp for Climate Action 2008). There were two camps in 2009 (in April and August respectively) which took aim at the London G20 Summit and global financial institutions headquartered in the City of London. Finally, the 2010 camp turned up on the doorstep of the Royal Bank of Scotland in Edinburgh, to stage a protest against the role of the bank in the meltdown of the global financial system, which presaged the Occupy Movement of the following year.

A part of the activists who in 2005 convened at the G8 counter-summit in Sterling, Scotland, set up the so-called Convergence Camp. The Convergence Camp was an eco-village intended as a practical demonstration of sustainable living coordinated through a horizontal decision-making process (Convergence 2005). The Convergence Camp was attended by some of the core activists who then went on to put together the first Camp for Climate Action in 2006. Those activists had become disenchanted with the counter-summits shadowing the G8 meetings. Since the demonstrations in Seattle, in 1999, G8 summits had become the flashpoint for pro-

tests by a wide spectrum of organisations and groups against a pervasive capitalist world order. As a Climate Camp activist explained

> '…the one time that we actually do anything, er, or the one time that… particular social movements were doing anything was a time that was kind of dictated to them by the people they were trying to claim should stop dictating' (Connor 2008).

Acting outside the context of counter-summits was seen as a departure from what splintering activists regarded as established and increasingly ineffectual attempts to tackle rising concerns about climate change (Connor 2008). Through its protests, the ensuing camp articulated a long-standing tension between economic development and environmental protection that may be traced back to the economic boom of the industrial revolution.

The birth of the UK environmental movement has been inextricably linked to the industrial revolution (Rawcliffe 1998, p. 15). In the late nineteenth century, conservationist organisations were established to safeguard the natural environment against an encroaching demand for natural resources and new land for industrial development (Rawcliffe 1998, p. 15). The number of groups and organisations embracing environmental ideas grew in the interwar period. Nevertheless, the modern mass environmental movement did not come into its own until the 1960s. That movement was led by new activist organisations committed to collective action that commanded broad public support and sought to make both governmental policies and industrial practices environmentally sustainable (Rawcliffe 1998, p. 16; Rootes 2003, p. 21). Exemplars of such activist organisations were Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth (FoE).

The two big environmental organisations rose to prominence in the late 1970s and the 1980s, their membership continuing to swell throughout those decades. Other large environmental organisations, among which were conservationists such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the National Trust, similarly benefited from that trend. Greenpeace and FoE, however, gave voice to a more radical agenda than that of the conservationists. Greenpeace has further stood out because it has systematically employed direct action to raise the profile of its campaigns (Rootes 2003, p. 21).

These two organisations became the central pillars of the environmental movement in the UK and the archetypal environmental movement organisations (EMOs). They have been described as vast entities advancing a reformist agenda directed at changing environmental policy. Their

objectives have by-and-large confined their repertoire to moderate forms of action (Doherty et al. 2000, p. 16; Doherty 2002, Chapter 5). Their preoccupation with policy outcomes and a readiness to engage in both lobbying and advocacy antagonised constituencies from within its membership who shifted towards more radical forms of action (Rootes 2003, p. 24). The latter flourished on the bedrock of a militant protest culture and the social networks that had formed during the anti-nuclear protests of the 1980s (Doherty 2002). Concomitantly, the radicalisation of environmental activism was attributed to an increase in social awareness about environmental risks, in the face of extensive economic development plans with an expected enduring impact on the environment (Doherty et al. 2000, p. 17).

In contrast to the big EMOs, the aim of EDA groups has not been to influence policy-making (Doherty et al. 2007). Their action repertoires (lock-ons and occupations, protest camps, blockades, damage to material property) have been confrontational, engaging powerful economic and political actors such as transnational corporations or the UK government, directly. EDA groups have been defined by the principles of radical ecology they espoused[10] and transposed in everyday life (Doherty 2002, p. 156), and by the forms of non-hierarchical organisation they adopted, which put them in contrast with the comparatively large and bureaucratic environmental organisations to which they were a response. Third, it has been argued that EDA groups have been able to produce an alternative to environmental action that was not reliant on big, well-funded and professionalised organisations (Doherty et al. 2000, p. 13).

Earth First! (EF) UK has been described as the ideal-typical EDA group because of the two principal characteristics that have defined it as an organisation. The group has no recognised membership. It has run annual national gatherings, coordinated in a non-hierarchical manner and attended by individuals pooling together skills, ideas and resources (Earth First UK 2009). However, a key weakness of its organisational model has lain in the noted difficulties of local EF groups to renew their support base (Doherty et al. 2007). This may have been due to the cultivation of close personal relationships among activists intent on taking direct action. As an approach to mobilisation, this may have precluded the development of a mobilisation potential beyond personal networks (2007, p. 814).

The Climate Camp borrowed much of the ideology and organisational logic of EF. However, in contrast to EF, it actively sought to attract a large swathe of the public to its protest, comprehending unaffiliates, too

(Connor 2008). Whilst perpetuating the ethos of EDA groups, the camp aimed to extend its mobilisation beyond the direct action networks from which it emerged. Networked communication, it will be shown later in the book, was instrumental for the purpose. Concomitantly, the camp inspired a surge in radical environmental protest within the UK environmental movement, reactivating ties between direct action groups nationally (Doherty et al. 2007, p. 822).

The Climate Camp's organisational form comprised a loose and informal network of variably sized activist groups as well as unaffiliated individuals collectively relying extensively on ICTs for coordination (Larry 2008; Rachel 2008). Together, they formed the organisational backbone of the Climate Camp, which materialised at the national gatherings, weekend-long strategy meetings. In 2008, national gatherings were convened. The meetings commenced on Saturday mornings and ended on Sunday afternoons. Most were held in social centres. Groups native to the location convened the gatherings.

Much like in the case of Earth First, local groups and the personal networks organised around them were a primary vehicle for mobilising participants at the Climate Camp (Larry 2008). However, the camp sought the broad participation of people concerned about climate change pledging to inform and educate them about the issue and the direct ways to tackle it (Ivy 2008). Thus, although local groups were involved in mobilisation drives, their intended scope entrained a wider effort. Most of the local groups counted no more than several dozens of activists. The finer detail of the Climate Camp's mobilisation strategy is scrutinised in Chaps. 3 and 5 with an emphasis on unpicking its networked communication. I note here that the camp styled its public discourse so as to fire up both the EDA community and other sensitive publics—people concerned about climate change or intent on learning about sustainable living and existing or emerging local opposition to carbon polluters (Camp for Climate Action 2008, p. 3; Larry 2008). Broad-based participation in the camp was viewed as a stepping stone on the way to forming a radical social movement on climate change (Larry 2008). In this respect, the Climate Camp continued the vision of Earth First! to construct a self-standing movement rather than to link its protest into similar campaigns ran by EMOs such as Greenpeace (See and Plows 2000, p. 118). Nevertheless, the Climate Camp liaised with environmental NGOs, to raise the level of sympathy for its protest and also in order to gain access to their more substantial resources (Tom 2008).[11]

In sum, in contrast to the environmental protest festival at Roşia Montană, the Camp for Climate Action had a lineage of environmental activism that extended over several decades. The Climate Camp was moulded on the example of earlier forms of environmental direct action whose effectiveness had been tried and tested. It had a mobilisation potential on which to draw, whereas the activists at FânFest had to invent theirs. For that reason, the latter adopted a form of protest they envisioned would hold a wide appeal among unaffiliates in Romania. The goal to bring new recruits into the activist fold was common to both these and the other two SMOs introduced in the following lines.

The Occupy Movement

Occupy Den Haag (henceforth Occupy DH) was the encampment that sprung up in October 2011 in The Hague, the seat of the Dutch government. It was one of the myriad camp sites to be erected in the backwash of Occupy Wall Street (OWS), the US protest camp that sought with great urgency to assert afresh democratic control over global finances in the interest of the swelling number of people left destitute by the austerity that followed the 2008 financial meltdown. Occupy DH was part of an ample transnational movement that, according to its own estimates, at its peak counted above 500 city sites (Occupy Together n.a.). The camp took roots in a country that has witnessed historically high levels of protest participation (Norris 2002), comparable to those in the UK and far outstripping those in Eastern Europe and Romania in particular. This contrast in participation levels was a primary source of reflection for the analysis on the priming of engagement through networked communication reported in Chap. 4.

The Occupy Movement epitomized a protest wave—a sequence of protest events that transpire in rapid succession, scaling up to span a growing area beyond an original site of contention (Tilly 1978; Gerbaudo 2013). The origins of the movement may be traced back to the 1999 Seattle protests against the World Trade Organisation and the Global Justice Movement that formed in their wake (della Porta et al. 2006). Thereafter, a cycle of transnational protests shadowed political and economic summits of the heads of leading economies and business executives (Juris 2005). Occupy completed the tapestry of mutually reinforcing border-defying collective action, which that same year traversed the Middle East (the Arab Spring) and the south of Europe (the Indignant Movement, Gerbaudo 2013; Mico and Casero-Ripolles 2014). As the Global Justice Movement previously,

Occupy was a mirror image of the global financial system, exposing anew its opaqueness and its structural inequalities. The rife experience of hardship in the wake of the fiscal austerity instituted to prop up that system helped render concrete the concept of a democratic space existing to express, learn and act out (Gleason 2013) a collective will to place global finances under deep scrutiny and thereby to make it subject to democratic reform. As with other examples in recent history, this common consciousness was coterminous with the global communication infrastructures that have evolved in tandem with the financial system (Castells 1997).

The maiden Occupy demonstration on 17 September 2011 drew its symbolic and partly also its organisational roots from that activist lineage, being instigated by the 'Adbusters' Foundation, a long-standing satirical publication chastising consumerism and its underpinning neoliberal ethos. 'Adbusters' put out the original call to action against the financial institutions on Wall Street that had thrown the global economy into crisis (Tharoor 2011). The protest was the clarion call for the Occupy Movement and the rekindling of the premise that democratic counter-politics are rightly effected at the very site of hegemonic power (Graeber 2014).

Similar to previous camps (Saunders and Price 2009), OWS became a loose, informal and horizontal network of working groups charged with running the daily affairs of the activist collectivity, e.g. participant recruitment, media outreach, police liaison, logistics. Working groups reported to the general assembly, the principal consensus-seeking decisional body. Yet, in contrast to its global precursors, rather than being predicated upon existing organisational infrastructures (Tharoor 2011). Occupy developed as a movement of individuals, first and foremost. Whilst its apparent individualism raised questions about its political coherence (Bennett et al. 2014), the outlines of the OWS organisational model were adopted by the camps it inspired across the world (Pickerill and Krinsky 2012).

Crucial to the exponential cross-border diffusion the Occupy movement will have likely been its capacity for coordination (Tarrow 2005, pp. 118–119). In their minute inspection of the microblogging practices of the Occupy movement, Bennett et al. (2014) shed light on precisely how the large tapestry of encampments it encompassed attained a 'coherent organisation' through a set of conducive media practices. An important array of informational resources it generated were a strategic output of '*production*, *curation* and *dynamic integration*' (original emphasis 2014, p. 234) differentially taking place across the geographical span

of the movement. These practices were part of the socio-technological fabric an exponential *crowd* of activists weaved with Twitter. The micro-blogging service was depicted as a 'stitching mechanism', whereby peer-orchestrated networked communication substituted coordination by any single organisation or coalition thereof (2014, p. 254). I explore this topic at greater length in Chap. 6.

Nonetheless, a geo-locational analysis of Twitter data attested to the concentration of activist communication in urban centres with vibrant Occupy protests (Conover et al. 2013), lending credence to a notion that the encampments became SMOs in their own right. One might portray the camps as *participatory protest organisations* (Diani and Donato 1999), actively encouraging wider participation in their proceedings and the deliberative direct democracy counterposed to traditional representative politics (Conover et al. 2013, p. 7). To that extent, Occupy encampments acted as an organisational backbone for an otherwise amorphous movement of individual participants transitorily orbiting the protests, chiefly by recourse to social media (Juris 2012, p. 269). Indeed, early assessments of the movement (Gandel 2011, p. 463) noted that 'the Occupiers, mostly in their 20s, have been heavy users of social media [in the attempt to] to get their message to friends and the rest of the world'. Following the dismantlement of the physical camps that infrastructure remains in place online, as a persistent resource on which other collective action projects (e.g. Occupy Sandy in 2012; Occupy Gezi in 2013) may draw.

Occupy Den Haag

The disquietude that first engulfed Wall Street was soon propagated across the globe, making landfall in the Netherlands within the month. No less than 13 Occupy camps were erected in the country. The encampments were put up following demonstrations 15 October 2011 in support of the Occupy movement. In the image of OWS, the Dutch camps were hubs for deliberation, political socialisation as well as for the orchestration of concerted collective action. They voiced a broad message of structural reform to address the root causes of interlocking inequalities, highlighting the nefarious impact on political jurisdictions of interconnected, democratically unaccountable global financial flows (Castells 1997, p. 446). Of the 13 camps, 4 were surveyed in an exploratory field study carried out from late October to December 2011. These were Occupy Amsterdam, Occupy DH, Occupy Haarlem and Occupy Utrecht. Occupy Amsterdam, Occupy

DH and Occupy Utrecht attracted close to 2000 participants between them in the initial demonstrations on 15 October (El Pais 2011).

Occupy DH rose on the edifice of an activist effervescence that a generation earlier had climaxed in the largest peace demonstration the Netherlands had ever seen. On 29 October 1983, one in four Dutch citizens partook in the protest (Klandermans and Oegema 1987, p. 521), which happened in Malieveld, a common ground neighbouring the Central Railway Station in The Hague. At the same location and almost 28 years to the day, Occupy DH would set camp for the next almost 10 months, following the original demonstration in the city that brought together a reported 700 participants (DutchNews.nl 2011). I make the reference to the historical example only to illustrate a very specific point. Namely, whilst the peace demonstration was the tip of a fastidiously choreographed organisational mobilisation that reached into the farthest corners of the country (Klandermans and Oegema 1987, p. 521), Occupy in the Netherlands had no activist organisational core. Instead, the movement grew out of the discrete demonstrations on 15 October that were called in support of OWS.

Closely following the example of OWS and resembling the Climate Camp, the Dutch Occupy camps, comprehending Occupy DH, resisted any imposition of agendas and organisational procedures emanating from established activist organisations (Tharoor 2011). Its general assembly together with its consensual decision-making mirrored the aforementioned principles of protest encampments. A mushrooming population of social media outlets (e.g. Facebook groups and pages, Twitter, Youtube and Livestream accounts) together with the website www.occupythenetherlands.nl formed the exoskeleton of the movement. The latter website acted as a gateway to local sites and social media outlets that together aided in displaying a practice rather than rule-based order in what on the face of it would have readily been interpreted as a cacophony of activist clamouring (DeLuca et al. 2012). The same Internet outlets further revealed the interpersonal connections that in time bonded occupiers around the country. In the course of the field study presented later in this book, the importance of embodied interaction for those relationships became apparent. It was nurtured with reciprocal visits at general assemblies and other happenings arranged by local camps (Agarwal et al. 2014, p. 333).

When, over the course of more than a month at the end of 2011, my colleagues and I began to make regular visits to Occupy DH and the other three encampments, participant numbers had dropped to a few tens of people. All of those camps had a significant web footprint encompassing

dedicated websites (Occupy DH and Occupy Amsterdam) together with Facebook and Twitter outlets and doubled by Youtube footage. Activists described the resultant interconnected and visible networked communication ecology as the most important recruitment ground for the camps. There was a sharp awareness, expressed by one core activist (Daphne 2012) that the absence of an organisational lattice of participant mobilisation networks meant that recruitment in the embodied protests had to be achieved interpersonally and through social media. These findings have already been reported (Mercea et al. 2013). However, they are recounted here to underscore the appreciation held by activists interviewed from 2007 to 2012 that the networked communication they had instigated or otherwise observed being undertaken by their peers would help enlarge their mobilisation potential. This topic is given full consideration in the next chapters.

In sum, Occupy DH was a protest camp imbued with the ideals and values of the global Occupy Movement, whose organisational procedures it had also embraced. Not unlike the Climate Camp, Occupy DH had an ostensible mobilisation potential stemming from historical support for broad-based new social movements whose contentions bridged over wide socioeconomic strata (Kriesi 1989). The slogan 'We are the 99%' is an apposite rendition of this outlook echoed globally in the movement's discourse. Yet, by contrast with its precursors, indications from the Occupy encampments were of a movement that had formed principally on the backbone of interpersonal rather than organisational relationships. The Stop ACTA case study, I indicate below, was very similar to the Dutch encampments in this respect. It was individual contributors rather than any dominant activist organisations that formed the chorus of voices backing these protests on social media (see also Theocharis et al. 2015 for an account of comparable findings about the Indignados in Spain and Greece and OWS).

Stop ACTA

The fourth case study centred on an instance of collective action arising in response to the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (henceforth ACTA). The Stop-ACTA protest unfolded throughout the first half of 2012, hot on the heels of the Occupy Movement. ACTA was the embodiment of a transnational drive to institute a binding international copyright regime, which first brought to the same table vested interests from the

media and creative industries and government experts in 2007, five years prior to its signature (European Commission 2012). The protests which erupted in early 2012 provided an opportunity not only to verify propositions coming out of the research I had carried out to that point—particularly in relation to questions of organisation and coordination—but also to consider cultural implications to accrue from the networked communication of the discontented (Dahlgren 2006).

Formal negotiations on the copyright agreement were launched in June 2008 by the governments of Australia, Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the United Mexican States, the Kingdom of Morocco, New Zealand, the Republic of Singapore, the Swiss Confederation, the USA as well as the European Union and its member states. This was a slow-burning negotiation process concluded more than two years later in November 2010. In the eyes of its proponents, the treaty would 'help countries work together to tackle more effectively Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) infringements' (European Commission 2012). Despite such promises, the agreement was swiftly rebuked for its apparent encroachment on fundamental rights and freedoms and data protection norms (Metzger and Matulionyte 2011) as well as for its systematic failure to make the proceedings transparent even to enquiries by representative bodies such as the European Parliament (Losey 2014, p. 209). Regardless, on 26 January the EU signed the treaty in Tokyo anticipating that 'once the European Parliament has given its consent and the national ratification process in the Member States has completed, the Council of Ministers then has to adopt a final decision to conclude the agreement' (European Commission 2012).

Mirroring the transnational scope of the agreement, the resistance that it encountered spawned soon after its signature, the EU being the main hotspot of contention. Demonstrations were also recorded in the USA and Japan, which had earned the dubious reputation of being the birthplace of the treaty. The first instances of collective action in the EU were documented as early as the beginning of February 2012. A wave of discontent rose and was manned by 'internet users who have protested for days both virtually and physically' (Arthur 2012) whose main aim was to discourage both national legislatures and the European Parliament from ratifying ACTA. A succession of weekend rallies that commenced on 4 February 2012 continued throughout an effervescent month with demonstrations ebbing and flowing thereafter before hitting a second highpoint in early June 2012 ahead of a scheduled vote in the European Parliament in early July. Ironically, the labyrinthine workings of the European construction—

persistently denounced for its *democratic deficit* (Dinan 2004)—placed the EU at the heart of efforts to kill off the treaty.

Opposition to the agreement is best described as a front spanning established civil society organisations, informal groups and individuals who articulated their disquiet following distinct action repertoires ranging from advocacy networks built over time to lobby and pressure relevant institutions to short-notice street demonstrations (Losey 2014, p. 213). There was a noticeable split in the opposition along an outsider/insider strategy fault line (Maloney et al. 1994). On the one side, there were advocacy campaigns directed at corporate and government policy networks sponsoring ACTA. They were spearheaded by civil society organisations (Losey 2014). Organisations such as Consumers International and the Electronic Frontier Foundation petitioned the European Parliament (Liscka 2010) and met with EU officials (European Commission 2011).

On the other side, there were recurrent street protests orchestrated by ad hoc loose grassroots groupings from across the EU and beyond. This latter set of actors appeared to dominate the communication on social media ahead of the last pan-European demonstration against the agreement that took place in June 2014 (Chap. 6). The hacktivist group 'Anonymous' and national 'Pirate Parties' backed the Stop-ACTA protests. They issued statements to that effect on their websites playing an active and visible part in street demonstrations throughout 2012. A collection of other online platforms championing the cause of the movement also flourished online acting as caches of resources for the protests. A noticeable example was the website www.stopacta.info, which was run by the advocacy group La Quadrature du Net. Despite organisational links that formed between the inside/outside oppositional groups, street demonstrations were remarkable for the apparent absence of any organisation at their helm (Losey 2014, p. 217). In this, the protests resembled the Occupy as well as the Indignados movements whilst networked communication became what Bennett et al. termed a *stitching mechanism* (2014), namely a multifarious vehicle for mobilisation, organisation and collective action that I unpick in Chap. 6.

To further sketch out the socio-technological fabric of the Stop ACTA protest I would emphasise two interlinked aspects of the street demonstrations. The contentious ferment spilling over onto the streets in early 2012 harked back to the spirit of the Occupy Movement. This assessment, I propose, holds true equally for its broad-based call to interrogate hegemonic politics and for its organisational architecture of dispersed units—from

registered non-governmental organisations to informal action groups or individuals—disposed horizontally (Losey 2014). Encompassing the geometry of the street protests in the EU and beyond, tweets, Twitter hashtags, Youtube videos, Facebook groups and pages became a discernible underpinning of the scalable network that repeatedly came out on the streets from February to June 2012. This argument is developed later in the book and stems from the fieldwork conducted for the project from March to June 2012.

Following a period of close observation of the networked communication on Facebook and Twitter, data was gathered during a two-week period (26 May to 9 June) ahead of the pan-European demonstration called for 9 June 2012. Rallies summoned for that date were envisaged as a decisive show of grassroots opposition to the treaty that the European Parliament was called upon to heed during a vote the following month. The vote had the outcome protestors clamoured but its significance became largely symbolic as the Dutch Parliament rejected the agreement in late May 2012. These final and decisive moments in the brief existence of the treaty were captured in the dataset alongside other strands of communication pertaining to the orchestration of the 9 June protest. In Chap. 6, I discuss what together with my colleague Andreas Funk I termed participatory coordination whilst Chap. 7 is where I contemplate the scope for user-generated informal civic learning occasioned by networked communication preceding collective action.

Conclusion

At this juncture, it is important to reiterate that the four cases are not building blocks to a comparative empirical study. The connecting line between the cases will not become an object of empirical verification further down the line. Instead, the cases are intended to add discrete aspects into a maturing notion of participation that foreruns and primes co-locational action at the physical site of a protest. Consequently, each case is best viewed as a departure point for querying seminal arguments about the networked communication of political contention. This admission, however, does not foreclose comparison. In an initial comparative study (Mercea 2012), FånFest and the Climate Camp were contrasted in along the distinction between high and low risk/cost protest events (McAdam 1986). In order to assay the degree to which ICT usage among protest goers would prove instrumental to their participation. That analysis is unpacked in the next chapter.

A short chronological note should illustrate how the empirical research following in the wake of the initial two case studies occasioned a re-examination of the main arguments to emerge from them. In late 2011 ethnographic research I conducted at the Occupy encampments in the Netherlands alluded to a movement of individuals that, for better or worse, had fomented on social media. Subsequently, my return visit to FânFest, reported in Chap. 4, was prompted by the notion that the embracement of social media would be paying dividends to collective actors seeking an exponential aggregation of individual supporters (Juris 2012).

At the same time, the proposition that myriad organisational operations would be devolved to variably sized, loosely connected and 'self-programmable' (Castells 1997) units, was the spark for a comparative treatment first of FânFest and the Climate Camp and subsequently of the latter and Occupy DH. The latter study, reported in Chap. 5, considered the place that the communication occurring on the Facebook outlets of the two protests took in the organisational processes they had in place. This query was carried through into the research on the mobilisation against ACTA, this time with an emphasis on coordination dynamics among contingents on Facebook and Twitter that materialised as opposition to the agreement became manifest and spilled over onto the streets.

The thread that ties together all the following chapters is the aim to provide an evidenced and discriminating account of the place that networked communication takes in the mobilisation and organisational pathways taken by protest participants. This preoccupation has been amplified by efforts to assay the scope and single out reasons for an interplay between networked communication and onsite collective action (Bastos et al. 2015). The latter research is not given a full treatment in the book but it is a reference to which I return when reflecting on networked communication on a longer temporal continuum.

Notes

1. In the latter case, one key agent that may facilitate that transfer are *transnational activists*. They have been described as individuals or groups who act in support of 'goals they hold in common with transnational allies' (2005, p. 43) both within their own societies and internationally.
2. Pseudonyms are used throughout this thesis to reference the interviews conducted by this author.

3. 'Cooperating Partners of Alburnus Maior' available on http://www.rosiamontana.org/ [01 March 2008].
4. Badescu and his colleagues examined both the density of NGOs and the nature of their activities as well as the friendship networks stemming from them. They described activist infrastructures as a structural factor fundamental to the development of civil society as well as for mobilisation into collective action (2004, pp. 327–329).
5. The Resource Center for Public Participation together with the Babeş-Bolyai University conducted a survey in August–September 2012 on a representative, multistage, stratified sample of 1100 individuals aged over 18 at the 95 % confidence level, with an error margin of ±3%. Respondents were asked if they were members of sports, religious, environmental, animal rights, pensioners', charity, cultural and professional organisations or any other volunteer organisations apart from political parties and trade unions.
6. 'Maybe FânFest could have been a sort of…forum for all sort of organisations, or people or any sort of groups that want to do something for Rosia in the future, for the area or something like that…or a meeting forum for the broader social movement in Romania. But people have said, well, 'but do we have an environmental movement in Romania? And haven't we tried, in previous years, to bring environmental NGOs that could run exhibitions and have stalls and to'… And no, they didn't come and they didn't do it and (because there are very few militant NGOs, environmental ones, in Romania.. that would want to present their message and do, erm, mobilise people and collect signatures and, you know. I mean, people who would be interested in coming along to such an event because that's why you come, in the first place, right?! Because the NGOs that get money from Coca-Cola to collect PET containers from the banks of the Dambovita don't need to come because they don't see any practical benefit in coming to FânFest' (Galia 2008).
7. The only prerequisite to participation in the protest festival at Roşia Montană was an interest to discover the village of Roşia Montană and a readiness to explore the festival's rich programme (Keira 2012) comprising music concerts, theatre plays and activist workshops and culminating with a final demonstration against the mining project.
8. Melucci described how music was instrumental to the spawning of activist groups that convened around the new cultural symbols of social movements. Such symbols would replace the purportedly jaded 'political forms of collective action' of the New Left. The latter had been drawing on the established tenets of socialist revolutionary politics. Melucci described the flagging support for the New Left as 'the *crisis of militantism* which in turn reflected the steady withdrawal of individuals from Leninist-style politics in the name of self-realization, expressiveness, and affective communication' (emphasis added, 1989, p. 58).

9. Vernacularly also referred to as the Climate Camp.
10. Radical ecology predicates the fundamental transformation of society that would not only stop but would also reverse those processes that threaten life on the planet (Earth First Journal 2009).
11. The Climate Camp had an NGO policy designed as a consistent response to questions about the stake of large environmental NGOs in its protest. The policy reflected the already recognised scepticism of EDA groups towards such organisations (Larry 2008). The large EMOs, Greenpeace or FoE were not officially involved in the running of the actual camp. Objections to their involvement touched on the long-standing differences between EDA groups and EMOs: the former were organised as heterarchies, the latter as hierarchies. EMOs worked within the polity and sanctioned the conventional mechanisms of political decision-making while EDA groups resorted to using only public demonstrations and disruption in their actions. However, particularly Greenpeace assisted the camp by making available material resources. In part, this 'background support' (Larry 2008) may have been offered by Greenpeace as a result of a pragmatic calculation about the benefits of opening a larger protest front against plans to build a new power station at Kingsnorth (Tom 2008). Greenpeace had been running its own campaign against it and had first taken direct action at the power station two months prior to the start of the camp (Benjamin 2007). The Climate Camp was ready to welcome individual members from any environmental NGO, the Green Party, other parties and NGOs as long as they did not canvass the participants for their own benefit. Ultimately, the Camp for Climate Action seemed to be socially integrated into the 'activist'—as opposed to the conservationist—environmental movement to which Doherty (2002) and Saunders (2007) alluded. Nevertheless, the camp chose to distance itself from that purported movement's forms of action and organisation and embarked on developing a radical social movement on climate change.

References

Agarwal, S., Barthel, M. L., Rost, C., Borning, A., Bennett, W. L., & Johnson, C. N. (2014). Grassroots organizing in the digital age: Considering values and technology in Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(3), 326–341.

Alburnus Maior (2006) "Letter of Contestation against the report of the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the Roşia Montană project" [online] available from <http://www.rosiamontana.ro/doc/contestatie_EIM.doc> [10 Dec. 2008].

Andersen, M. S. (2002). Ecological modernization or subversion? The effect of Europeanization on Eastern Europe. *American Behavioral Scientist, 45*(9), 1394–1416.

Arthur, C. (2012). ACTA protests break out as EU states sign up treaty. *The Guardian*. Retrieved February 29, 2012, from http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/jan/27/acta-protests-eu-states-sign-treaty.

Badescu, G., Sum, P., & Uslaner, E. M. (2004). Civil society development and democratic values in Romania and Moldova. *East European Politics and Societies, 18*(2), 316–341.

Bastos, M. T., Mercea, D., & Charpentier, A. (2015). Tweets, tents, and events: The interplay between street protests and social media. *Journal of Communication*. doi:10.1111/jcom.12145.

Benjamin, A. (2007) "Greenpeace protesters take over plant". In *The Guardian*, 8 October 2007 [online] available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2007/oct/08/climatechange.energy> [3 July 2009].

Bennett, W. L. (2003). Communicating global activism. *Information, Communication & Society, 6*(2), 143–168.

Bennett, W. L., Segerberg, A., & Walker, S. (2014). Organization in the crowd: Peer production in large-scale networked protests. *Information, Communication & Society, 17*(2), 232–260.

Botcheva, L. (1996). Focus and effectiveness of environmental activism in Eastern Europe: A comparative study of environmental movements in Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. *The Journal of Environmental Development, 5*(3), 292–308.

Buza, M., Dimen, L., Pop, G., Turnock, D. (2001) "Environmental protection in the Apuseni Mountains: the role of environmental NGOs (ENGOs)". *GeoJournal*, 54 (2-4), 631-53.

Camp for Climate Action. (2008). *Decision making*. Retrieved July 29, 2008, from http://climatecamp.org.uk/node/15

Caden (2007) *Member of the FânFest Coordination Team* [interview by author] Cluj, Romania, 05 September 2007.

Castells, M. (1997). *The power of identity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Clemens, E. S. (1996). Organizational form as frame: Collective identity and political strategy in the American Labor Movement, 1880–1920. In D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy, & M. N. Zald (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings, Cambridge [England]* (pp. 205–226). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Connor. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. London, U.K., 07 June 2008.

Conover, M., Davis, C., Ferrara, E., McKelvey, K., Menczer, F., & Fammini, A. (2013). The geospatial characteristics of a social movement communication network. *PloS One, 8*(3), 1–8.

Convergence (2005) "Activists to set up eco-village in Stirling". In *Indymedia Scotland* [online] available from <http://scotland.indymedia.org/node/1006>, [05 Sept. 2008].

Dahlgren, P. (2006). Doing citizenship: The cultural origins of civic agency in the public sphere. *European Journal of Cultural Studies, 9*(3), 267–286.

Daphne. (2012). *Participant at occupy Amsterdam* [interview by author]. Amsterdam: 21 November 2012.

Deletant, D. (2006). *Ceausescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965–89*. London: Hurst & Company.

della Porta, D., Andretta, M., Mosca, L., & Reiter, H. (2006). *Globalization from below: Transnational activists and protest networks*. Mineapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

DeLuca, K. M., Lawson, S., & Sun, Y. (2012). Occupy wall street on the public screens of social media: The many framings of the birth of a protest movement. *Communication, Culture and Critique, 5*(4), 483–509.

Dinan, D. (2004). *Europe recast: A history of the European Union*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Diani, M., Donato, P. (1999) "Organizational change in Western European environmental groups: a framework for analysis". In C. Rootes, *Environmental Movements: Local, National and Global*. London, Portland OR: Frank Cass, 13-3.

Doherty, B. (2002). *Ideas and actions in the green movement*. London: Routledge.

Doherty, B., Paterson, M., & Seel, B. (2000). Direct action in British environmentalism. In B. Seel, M. Paterson, & B. Doherty (Eds.), *Direct action in British environmentalism* (pp. 1–24). London: Routledge.

Doherty, B., Plows, A., & Wall, D. (2007). Environmental direct action in Manchester, Oxford and North Wales: A protest event analysis. *Environmental Politics, 16*(5), 805–825.

DutchNews.nl. (2011). *Occupy movement spreads to The Netherlands*. Retrieved February 21, 2015, from http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2011/10/occupy_movement_spreads_to_the/

Earth First! U.K. (2009) "Summer Gathering 2009". In *Earth First Journal* [online] available from <http://earthfirstgathering.org.uk/2009/front.html> [27 June 2009].

El Pais. (2011). *America toma el relevo de les protestas*. Retrieved November 20, 2011, from http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2011/10/15/actualidad/1318670174_243153.html.

European Commission. (2011). *Civil society meeting*. Retrieved February 29, from http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2011/february/tradoc_147497.pdf

European Commission. (2012). *What ACTA is about*, Fact sheet. Retrieved February 30, 2012, from http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/cfm/doclib_section.cfm?sec=663&langId=en.

Fagan, A., Jehlicka, P. (2003) Contours of the Czech environmental movement: a comparative analysis of Hnuti Duha (Rainbow Movement) and Jinoceske matky (South Bohemian Mothers). *Environmental Politics*, 12(2), 49-70.

Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). *Protest camps*. London: Zed Books.

Frenzel, F., Feigenbaum, A., & McCurdy, P. (2014). Protest camps: An emerging field of social movement research. *The Sociological Review, 62*(3), 457–474.

Gabriel Resources (2006) "Non-technical summary". In *EIA Study Report*, ch. 9 [online] available from <http://www.rmgc.ro/en/raport/files/RMP_EIA_MAY_06/1%20-%20EIA%20Chapters/9%20Non-Technical%20Summary%20-%20Chapter%209/RMP_EIAch9_NonTechSummary_May06.pdf> [20 Aug. 2007].

Galia (2008) *Member of the FânFest Coordination Team* [interview by author] Cluj, Romania, 21 August 2008.

Gandel, S. (2011) The leaders of a leaderless movement in Time Editors *What is Occupy? Inside the Global Movement* (Kindle Edition), New York: Time Books.

Gerbaudo, P. (2012). *Tweets and the streets: Social media and contemporary activism*. London: Pluto Press.

Gerbaudo, P. (2013). Protest diffusion and cultural resonance in the 2011 protest wave. *The International Spectator, 48*(4), 86–101.

Gleason, B. (2013). #Occupy Wall Street: Exploring informal learning about a social movement on Twitter. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 966–982.

Goţiu, M. (2013). *Afacerea Roşia Montană [The Roşia Montană Affair]*. Cluj-Napoca: Tact.

Graeber, D. (2014). *The democracy project*. London: Penguin.

Hann, C. M., Dunn, E. (eds.) (1996) *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*, London, New York: Routledge.

Henderson, S.L. (2002) "Selling Civil Society: Western Aid and the Nongovernmental Organization Sector in Russia". *Comparative Political Studies*, 35 (2), 139-167.

In Green Report, 19 March 2009 [online] available from http://www.green-report.ro/stiri/certificatul-de-urbanism-la-proiectul-rosia-montana-fost-suspendat [05 May 2009].

Ivy. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. London, UK, 13 July 2008.

Jasper, J. M. (1997). *The art of moral protest: Culture, biography and creativity in social movements*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Jordan, G., & Maloney, W. A. (1997). *The protest business? Mobilizing campaign groups*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Jowers, P., Dürrschmidt, J., O'Docherty, R., & Purdue, D. (1999). Affective and aesthetic dimensions of contemporary social movements in South West England. *Innovation, 12*(1), 99–118.

Juris, J. (2005). The new digital media and activist networking within anti-corporate globalization movements. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 597*, 189–208.

Juris, J. (2008). *Networking futures: The movements against corporate globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.
Keira. (2012). *Member of the FånFest coordination team* [interview by author]. Cluj, Romania, 10 August 2012.
Klandermans, B., & Oegema, D. (1987). Potentials, networks, motivations, and barriers: Steps towards participation in social movements. *American Sociological Review, 52*(4), 519–531.
Koopmans, R., & Statham, P. (1999). Political claims analysis: integrating protest event and political discourse approaches. *Mobilization, 4*(1), 203–221.
Kriesi, H. (1989). New social movements and the new class in the Netherlands. *American Journal of Sociology, 94*(5), 1078–1116.
Larry. (2008). Climate camp activist [interview by author]. London, UK, 08 June 2008.
Linz, J.J., Stepan, A. (1996) *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
Liscka, K. (2010). *Die wichtigsten Fragen zum Copyright-Pakt.* Der Spiegel. Retrieved February 29, 2012, from http://www.spiegel.de/netzwelt/netzpolitik/0,1518,674802,00.html
Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking democracy? Social media innovations and participatory politics. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 757–759.
Losey, J. (2014). The anti-counterfeiting trade agreement and European civil society: A case study on networked advocacy. *Journal of Information Policy, 4*, 205–227.
Maireder, A., & Schwarzenegger, C. (2012). A movement of connected individuals. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(2), 171–195.
Maloney, W. A., Jordan, G., & McLaughlin, A. M. (1994). Interest groups and public policy: The insider/outsider model revisited. *Journal of Public Policy, 14*, 17–38.
McAdam, D. (1986). Recruitment to high-risk activism: The case of Freedom Summer. *The American Journal of Sociology, 92*(1), 64–90.
Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the present: Social movements and individual needs in contemporary society.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Mercea, D. (2012). Digital prefigurative participation: The entwinement of online communication and offline participation in protest events. *New Media and Society, 14*(1), 153–169.
Mercea, D., Nixon, P., & Funk, A. (2013). Unaffiliated socialization and social media recruitment: Reflections from occupy the Netherlands. In P. Nixon, R. Rawal, & D. Mercea (Eds.), *Politics and the Internet in comparative context: Views from the cloud.* London: Routledge.
Metzger, A., & Matulionyte, R. (2011). (coord.) *Opinion of European Academics on the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement.* Retrieved March 1, 2012, from http://www.iri.uni-hannover.de/tl_files/pdf/ACTA_opinion_110211_DH2.pdf

Micó, J. L. & Casero-Ripollés, A. (2014). Political activism online: organization and media relations in the case of 15M in Spain. *Information, Communication & Society*, 17, 858-871.

Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic phoenix: Reinventing political activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Occupy Wall Street. (2012) *Statement against the anti-counterfeiting trade agreement*. Retrieved March 4, 2013, from http://www.nycga.net/resources/documents/statement-against-the-anti-counterfeiting-trade-agreement-acta/

Papacharissi, Z., & Fatima Oliveira, M. (2012). Affective news and networked publics: The rhythms of news storytelling on #Egypt. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 266–282.

Parau, C. E. (2009). Impaling dracula: How E.U. accession empowered civil society in Romania. *West European Politics, 32*(1), 119–141.

Petrova, T., & Tarrow, S. (2007). Transactional and participatory activism in the emerging European polity: The puzzle of East-Central Europe. *Comparative Political Studies, 40*(1), 74–94.

Pickavance, C. G. (1999). Democratization and the decline of social movements: The effects of regime change on collective action in Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and Latin America. *Sociology, 33*(2), 353–372.

Pickerill, J., & Krinsky, J. (2012). Why does occupy matter? *Social Movement Studies, 11*(3–4), 279–287.

Porumb, A., Gheorghe, C., Lazar, C., Pirtoc, D. (2000) "Review of Donor Support for the NGO Sector in Romania". In *Romanian Donors' Forum* [online] available from "http://www.allavida.org/downloads/donorreview.pdf", [15 Jan. 2006].

Rachel. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. Kingsnorth, UK, 5 August 2008.

Rawcliffe, P. (1998) *Environmental Pressure Groups in Transition*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

Resource Center for Public Participation (RCPP). (2012). Sondaj de opinie la nivel naţional, August–September 2012, Bucharest: unpublished.

Romantan, A. (2006) "The role of the E.U. in civic opposition to gold mining in Romania". Unpublished. *Paper presented at the ECPR General Conference*, Budapest, 2005.

Rob (2007) *Member of the FânFest Coordination Team* [interview by author] Cluj, Romania, 03 September 2007.

Rootes, C. (Ed.). (2003). *Environmental protest in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Saunders, C. (2008). Double-edged swords? Collective identity and solidarity in the environmental movement. *The British Journal of Sociology, 59*(2), 227–253.

Saunders, C., & Price, S. (2009). One person's eu-topia, another's hell: Climate camp as a heterotopia. *Environmental Politics, 18*(1), 117–122.

See, B., & Plows, A. (2000). Coming live and direct: Strategies of Earth First! In B. Seel, M. Paterson, & B. Doherty (Eds.), *Direct action in British environmentalism* (pp. 112–133). London: Routledge.

Sloat, A. (2005). The rebirth of civil society: The growth of women's NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe. *European Journal of Women's Studies, 12*(4), 437–452.

Smith, C.S. (2007) "Fighting over gold in the land of Dracula". *In The New York Times* [online] available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/03/business/worldbusiness/03gold.html> [30 March 2008]

Street, J., Hague, S., & Savigny, H. (2008). Playing to the crowd: The role of music and musicians in political participation. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations, 10*(2), 269–285.

Tarrow, S. (1998). *Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and politics* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Tarrow, S. (2005). *The new transnational activism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tharoor, I. (2011). Hands across the world. In Time (Ed.), *What is occupy? Inside the global movement* (Kindle Edition). New York: Time Books.

Theocharis, Y. (2012). The wealth of occupation networks? Communication patterns and information distribution in a Twitter protest network. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 10*(1), 35–56.

Theocharis, Y., Lowe, W., van Deth, J. W., & Garcia-Albacete, G. (2015). Using Twitter to mobilize protest action: online mobilization patterns and action repertoires in the Occupy Wall Street, Indignados and Aganaktismenoi movements. *Information, Communication and Society, 18*(2), 202–220.

Thorpe, N. (2007) "Romania's gold stays in the hills". *From Our Own Correspondent, BBC News* [online] available from <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from_our_own _correspondent/7087194.stm>> [11 Nov 2007]

Thorson K, Driscoll K, Ekdale B, Edgerly S, Gamber Thompson L, Schrock A, Swartz L, Vraga EK and Wells C (2013) 'Youtube, Twitter and the Occupy movement: connecting content and circulation practices'. *Information, Communication and Society* 16 (3):421-451.

Tilly, C. (1986). *The contentious French.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Tismaneanu, V. (1989) "The tragicomedy of Romanian communism". In *East European Politics and Societies*, 3 (2), 329-76.

Tom. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. London, UK, 13 July 2008.

van Aelst, P., & Walgrave, S. (2002). New media, new movements? The role of the Internet in shaping the 'anti-globalization' movement. *Information, Communication & Society, 5*(4), 465–493.

Wainwright, M. (2009) "Drax protest trial judge relaxes warning on talk of climate change". In *The Guardian*, [online] available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jul/01/drax-climate-change-protest-court> [4 July 2009].

Wong, G. (2013). Protests continue in Bucharest against gold mine plan in Rosia Montana. *The Guardian*. Retrieved December 01, 2013, from http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/sep/04/protest-rosia-montana-gold-mine-protest

Xenia (2007) *Member of the FânFest Coordination Team* [interview by author] Cluj, Romania, 29 July 2007.

Zuckerman E. (2014) New Media, New Civics? *Policy & Internet* 6(2), 151-168.

CHAPTER 3

Digital Prefigurative Participation

It would be no understatement to say that a political imagination of renewed participation has been pinned onto the diffusion of information and communication technologies and attendant networked communication (Chadwick and Howard 2008; Loader and Mercea 2011). Relatively marginal actors—individuals disenchanted with conventional politics, civic groups, organisations and movements—seized on the opportunity to harness alternative forms and avenues of political engagement (Bimber 2003; Rodgers 2003; Russell 2005; Mosca 2008). This and the consequent chapters examine it within the framework of a wider debate on the reassertion of democratic sovereignty (Castells 2007, 2009).

To start, I dwell on the question of the current state of collective action orchestrated by social movement organisations (SMOs). This departure point was chosen in light of reports of much feverish activity by social movements to claw back control over their public communication from the mass-media (Castells 1997, 2007; Gitlin 2003), conspicuously by way of alternative self-publication (Atton 2004; Russell 2005). Largely, this renewed capacity has been put down to the widening scope for inexpensive mass communication with the standard paraphernalia of personal computing (Postmes and Brunsting 2002, p. 294). Within the same digital domain, a growing latitude was recognised for the enactment of collective action (Ayres 1999; van Aelst and Walgrave 2002), chiefly by way of diversifying the spectrum of activist practices to include digital ways and means (van de Donk et al. 2004) thereby opening up the definition of

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_3

political activism to further revisions (McCaughey and Ayers 2003, p. 5; Theocharis 2015). An array of actions native to the digital domain was probed with trepidation at the turn of the millennium—from boycotts to hacktivism, e-petitions, sit-ins and strikes (Postmes and Brunsting 2002; Micheletti 2003; Vegh 2003; della Porta et al. 2006; Jordan 2008; Mosca 2008).

Equally, there was spirited deliberation of the net contribution of networked communication to mobilisation in collective action (Valenzula et al. 2012; Tufekci and Wilson 2012; Enjolras et al. 2012; Anduiza et al. 2014; Theocharis et al. 2015). This and the following chapters interrogate modalities of individual participation in collective action that may take shape through networked communication but which ultimately feed through into emplaced and embodied protest. The several modalities I introduce are united under the term *digital prefigurative participation*. The theory of prefigurative politics helps to root the notion. The theory maintains that 'the actualisation of a future ideal in the here and now' (original emphasis, Sande 2013, p. 230) is a fundamental task to which social movements (and, for that matter, participants in their actions, be they demonstrations or drives to propagate messages on social networking sites) will apply themselves. This prefigurative effort, I will propose, is also taking shape online. The original empirical data brought to bear on this tentative term dates back to 2007 and may therefore be subject to an unforgiving indictment of obsolescence due to the continuous transformation of networking communication (Keane 2013). For that reason, I return to it with a critical eye throughout the book and in light of more recent evidence.

Retracing a Concept

When the article where I first floated the term digital prefigurative participation came out in 2012, it was hot on the heels of the Arab Spring, and the explosion of interest in the collective action of dissenting groups in authoritarian regimes for whom social media appeared as a much needed political breathing space (Zhuo et al. 2011; Howard and Hussain 2013). That analytical flurry was preceded by two decades of investigations into the implications of networked communication for social movements and their entrenched and emerging media and communication practices (among others, see Myers 1994; Castells 1997; Diani 2000; Pickerill 2003; van de Donk et al. 2004; Kavada 2009; della Porta 2011). Digital prefigurative participation was intended as a heuristic referencing a digitally enabled involvement in activism predicated on computer-mediated interaction with

content or individuals preceding engagement in physically enacted protest. The three-year study leading to its formulation was prompted by a desire to sidestep the dominant interest at the time in the implication for democratic politics of the self-contained forms of online activism I listed above.

In the interim, the question of the impact of social media usage on participation in both contentious[1] and electoral politics[2] has grown exponentially, with macro-analyses casting a critical gaze over the rising body of literature (see Gayo-Avello 2012; Boulianne 2015). Yet, as I will make the case in this and later chapters, digital prefigurative participation remains a useful theoretical yardstick for explicating the scope, intensity and the inflections of communicative acts that become fully enacted when instantiated beyond the symbolic arena of networked communication.

Grappling with the theoretical backcloth to the original empirical study, I would flag up the noticeable lack of engagement with a previously salient distinction that had marked social movement scholarship *ante* networked communication, namely that between high- and low-risk participation (McAdam 1986; Klandermans and Oegema 1987). The high/low-risk differential was designated as a decisive dimension of variance in mobilisation into collective action. Who is mobilised and how, it has been proposed, varies chiefly with the degree of risk but also the anticipated cost of participation. Risk was defined as a collection of 'anticipated dangers…of engaging in an activity' (McAdam 1986, p. 67) with high risk protests being likely to attract participants who would be both socially and ideologically integrated into activist networks (Klandermans and Oegema 1987).

Early indications were that close socialisation within activist networks nurtured ideological affinities and interpersonal commitments conducive to mobilisation. Sustained socialisation had the potential to ultimately lead to the mobilisation of individuals originally not affiliated with activist networks (McAdam 1986, p. 68). Tentatively, I termed such neophytes *unaffiliates* (Mercea 2012) or individuals conspicuous among other activists due to their lack of membership in an activist organisation. An unaffiliate's pathway into collective action would commence with participation in instances of low-risk activism followed by a potential development of the action-oriented mindset and the social links required for high-risk participation (McAdam 1986). Despite the strong evolutionary premise of this statement, the key claim that a process of social induction would foster a readiness by unaffiliates to partake in collective action was the starting point for the enquiry into the priming role of networked communication that would, figuratively, enable unaffiliates to hit the ground running once they had made their way to a protest.

The Three Dimensions of Digital Prefigurative Participation

The first level of digital prefigurative participation was that of mobilisation. Historically, there has been outright scepticism (Diani 2000) or critical reservation (Della Porta et al. 2006; Mosca 2008; Pickerill 2003) about the contribution of networked communication to mobilisation into protest events. Following systematic consideration, a net 'mobilisation effect' of networked communication was by and large ruled out (van Laer 2007) as it was evinced that outreach by activist organisations would likely not radiate beyond extant activist networks (Diani 2000; Lusoli and Ward 2003; van Laer 2010). Instead, a reinforcement effect of extant movement networks was viewed as more likely by Mario Diani (2000, p. 394–95). He posited that networked communication could not amount to a substitute for the social bonds formed through face-to-face interaction that nurtured collective action. In Diani's account, face-to-face interaction was germane to high levels of trust. By contrast, networked communication was not expected to generate the same levels of trust entirely apart from face-to-face interaction (2000, p. 391). Others such as van Laer (2010, p. 405) pointed out that networked communication is largely conducive to the mobilisation of 'organizationally embedded activists'; its more likely potential to extend mobilisation may be witnessed in the scope it affords 'super-activists' with multiple cross-movement ties to sustain their manifold activist engagements (2010, p. 412).

Other observers would rush to highlight that networking technologies are in perpetual transformation (Lovink 2011; Rheingold 2012) and have become increasingly embedded in our social experience (Baron 2010). In addition, scholars have contended that ranking them as secondary to membership in civic or community associations as a medium for political socialisation conducive to participation (Putnam 2000) may be unhelpfully debasing networked communication. This perspective reduces networked communication to a socialisation tool per se devoid of civic utility (Mihailidis 2014, p. 1067). Conversely and timidly, competing research has alluded to a new body of participants registering their appearance at protest events (Fisher and Boekkooi 2010). Pre-dating the Arab Spring, this study referenced a constituency of isolated individuals with no personal links to protest participants who were able to inform themselves about and make their way to a demonstration solely by recourse to information available online (Fisher and Boekkooi 2010, p. 204). Van Laer (2010) and

other scholars (Lomicky and Hogg 2010) also conceded that the Internet opened the door to widespread information dissemination that can purportedly cascade beyond activist milieus (Postmes and Brunsting 2002).

To return to the terminology deployed in this chapter, such unaffiliated individuals seemed to have found in networked communication a new structural opportunity for mobilisation which would bridge the noted social gap making them less likely to become recruited into collective action than individuals closely affiliated to an activist organisation (McAdam 1986, p. 79). The substantiation of this postulate is far from conclusive (Fernandez-Planells et al. 2014), whilst the potential for mobilisation is likely dependent on the wider sociopolitical context and the character of the protests themselves (see Chap. 4; Anduiza et al. 2014).

Taking all the above into account, the first question I contemplated was whether networked communication may contribute to the decision by unaffiliates to partake in protest events, concurrently aiding them to form a sense of trust in event organisers. Trust may be described as the confidence that one invests in a trustee (Giddens 1991; McKnight and Chervany 1996). It is a social outcome, a product of social interaction which is elemental to mobilisation (Diani 2000; Pickerill 2003), especially in high-risk protest (see also della Porta 1988). As I have indicated, networked communication was not expected to generate, entirely apart from face-to-face interaction, the high levels of trust that underpin protest participation (Diani 2000, p. 391). Indeed, again and again, the potential for mobilisation through networked communication has been seen as highest for the constituency of individuals whose affiliation to activist networks would be reinforced through this type of communication (Gibson and McAllister 2013).

However, if affiliation would be decisive to mobilisation in high-risk events (see also McAdam and Paulsen 1993), an indirect link with an organisation through a third party such as an affiliated personal contact was seminal to mobilisation in low-risk events (Gerlach and Hine 1970; Snow et al. 1980). McAdam's two studies (1986; McAdam and Paulsen 1993) illuminated the presence of unaffiliated participants at both high- and low-risk protest events. In both cases, unaffiliates were mobilised by trustworthy 'recruitment agents' of which the primary ones were affiliated friends (1986, p. 87). Friendships may thereby be viewed as organisational proxies with organisations remaining the principal structural contributor to mobilisation. As evidence is mounting that particularly social media usage is instrumental to retrieving information pertinent to protest mobilisation

(Valenzula 2013, p. 935 but see also the concurring account by Postmes and Brunsting 2002, which highlights the presence of the same relationship in the pre-social media age), I further asked whether for protest participants (i.e. people that made it all the way to a protest event) networked communication registered as a key means of priming their impending attendance.

Admitedly, Valenzula's (2013) research was one of the latest to echo the salience of affiliation to protest mobilisation. Nonetheless, the question remains whether through their networked communication (both by retrieving and exchanging priming information) unaffiliated friends could self-organise their participation in protest events, in the absence of both direct and indirect links with activist organisations; and whether this would hold true for both high- and low-risk protests. The question is justified particularly when set against indications that established social movement organisations (having 'brick-and-mortar' offices, a postal address and an identifiable membership) have not been driving the spate of protests (Indignados, Occupy, to name only the most widely cited) where collective action transpired largely through the networked (and personalised) communication of variegated groups and individuals (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 742). As Bennett and Segerberg caution, such *connective action* is not a substitute to entrenched modes of recruitment, organisation or the physical enactment of contention. Indeed, as this book and other studies propose (Gerbaudo 2012), it may add to the diversity of participants and organisational practices that make protest happen.

Identity-Building

The second level on which digital prefigurative participation was considered is that of identity-building, a process of social interaction whose complexity has historically seemed to be irreducible, especially to the constrictions of asymmetric networked communication (Diani 2000), which had a modest imprint on the espousal of a shared identity (van Laer 2010, p. 410). It may not be entirely wise to say that with the social turn in networked communication (Beer and Burrows 2007, 2013), assertions such as the above have lost all validity. Instead, a more nuanced question premised on the same marked distinction between affiliates and unaffiliates may reveal whether networked communication is an access route into movement processes, namely identity-building, which has long unfolded firmly within the confines of affiliative social movement networks (Jasper 1997 p. 89–90; Diani 2000; della Porta and Diani 2006).

Identities are multiple, interacting and dynamic (Castells 1997, p. 6). They are not assigned but constructed: individuals or groups interpret who they are and how they want to be represented in interaction with each other. To that extent, and most importantly for this analysis, identities can be conceived as 'strategic constructions created through interactions' (Howard 2000, p. 371). By contrast, in American social movement scholarship, collective identity was a reductive category which pinned group membership onto dominant material interests or physical characteristics (Jasper 1997, p. 86–87). From a European perspective, the term collective identity has referenced an indeterminate social process of negotiation that is conducive to identity-building (Melucci 1996). In this light, collective identities form as groups and individuals develop a unifying appreciation of the social change they seek to effect, despite variations in their ascribed characteristics (e.g. of class, gender, race; Jasper 1997, p. 86). Those identities are a historical by-product of universalist (also known as *new*) social movements that straddle many divisions in the pursuit of cross-cutting agendas such as global peace, social justice or environmental protection.

Communication has been depicted as a fundamental form of social action whereby a collective identity may be constructed (Klandermans 1997). In questioning the potential for a collective identity to emerge through networked communication one is reminded that an earlier consensus indicating identification with a movement to be a prerequisite for participation in collective action (Kelly and Breinlinger 1995; for an overview see Klandermans 2004, p. 364) has been challenged. Indeed, identification with a movement may occur in the absence of face-to-face communication in movement networks when aided by 'media labels and portrayals' (Jasper 1997, p. 90). Identity-building may have therefore been in flux lately not least because with minimal resources, social movement organisations can acquire the capacity to independently broadcast their own messages (Atton 2004).

According to another distinct account, people may be converge in collective action who 'do activism without self-identifying as activists' (Bobel 2007, p. 157). The point is significant if one aims to examine the collective identity that unaffiliates may develop should they take to the Internet to prime their participation in a protest. Further, testimonies from protests against global capitalism testified to the salience of the common experience of participation as a fundamental building-block of collective identities (McDonald 2002). Participation in those events was not underpinned by

the familiarity of prior socialisation or the guiding presence of movement organisations (2002, p. 118–121). Instead, collective identity was defined by 'a shared struggle for personal experience', opened to everyone (2002, p. 125).

As mentioned, early indications were that there may only be limited scope for identity-building online (Diani 2000; Pickerill 2003, p. 82). Trailblazing accounts suggested that networked communication would likely be shunned even by activists seeking to assemble a collective identity within movement networks (Ayers 2003, p. 160), let alone by individuals with no activist affiliations. More positive assessments pointed to a potential for it to reinforce germane communication strictly within movement networks as these became replicated online (Diani 2000). The high stakes of high-risk protests, however, made that prospect particularly unappealing to activists due to a 'lack of commitment [which] reflects not only a lack of investment in on-line relationships, but also a lack of trust, of reciprocality' (Pickerill 2003, p. 82).

Other authors have argued that SMOs engage in multiple interactions which are reflected in their identity, ultimately 'altering and redirecting the [wider] movement as it expands' (Russell 2005, p. 562). In one illustrative study, della Porta et al. (2006, p. 110) noted that affiliated participants at the Genoa Social Forum and Florence European Social Forums were more likely than others to believe their networked communication contributed to a sense of trust and identification with a sector (e.g. the environmental activists) rather than the whole Global Justice Movement. The authors expected that the networked modality of identity-building they captured was likely to be confined to such movement sectors. However, they also contended that 'the internet facilitates the construction of new, flexible identities; it operates as an intervening variable extending individual social relationships by demolishing space-time barriers' (2006, p. 116).

In a more granular treatment of networked communication by social movement organisations, Bennett and Toft (2008) held up distributed narratives as being a vehicle for the construction and circulation of collective identities. The two authors pondered the renewed possibilities for individuals to actively contribute to the articulation of collective identities, which were at once pieced together and personalised in stories syndicated on social networking sites or, prior to that, via e-mail listservs (see also Kavada 2009). The distribution of stories and the degree to which the process is managed by a central or a dispersed and decentralised organisation will influence the structure and the spread of activist networks (Bennett and Toft 2008,

p. 251). Bennett and Toft further cautioned that there may be an important additional number of variables which influence the circulation of stories—organisational, individual as well as broader cultural and social determinants. Indeed, stories themselves may characteristically not only extend or consolidate but also reduce the span of the social networks that constitute a movement (2008, p. 258).

One important corollary of the appraisal above, though, is that the individual takes centre-stage as both the locus of identity processes and as the primary link in the communication which instigates collective action (Bennett and Toft 2008; see also Bennett and Segerberg 2013). Following this line of argumentation, it may be that an opportunity can arise for the unaffiliated to assume and perhaps also rearticulate a collective identity through networked communication so long as the narratives which carry it are circulated outside movement networks (Bennett and Toft 2008, p. 258). Nonetheless, there is a palpable threat that, as a result, collective action becomes completely individualised and merely an aggregate of individual grievances (Fenton and Barassi 2011). The one notable saving grace may be that this newly found balance between affinity and autonomy in the relationship of the individual with the group sediments into a participatory experience (McDonald 2002, p. 123–125) that nurtures a long-term commitment to collective action (see Saunders et al. 2012).

Organisation

Third, ownership of a collective identity along the lines previously outlined is a facet of a participatory process that, I have suggested (Mercea 2012), touches on decision-making. Stated bluntly, I have contended that digital prefigurative participation potentially democratises SMOs, as these take steps to accommodate their online support base. In the strictest sense, democratisation pertains to the institutionalisation of electoral politics in countries formerly under authoritarian political regimes. Applied more widely, across a range of political organisations and processes, democratisation is a heuristic for steps taken towards 'a more rule-based, more consensual and more participatory type of politics' (Whitehead 2002, p. 27).

To elaborate, many SMOs have been faced with the dilemma of having to reconcile leadership requirements with a moral imperative to make their decision-making democratic (Klandermans 1997, p. 134). At the same time, SMOs have been portrayed as harbingers of organisational

innovations as early adopters of ICTs (Chadwick 2007). The purported democratic and collaborative values characteristic of the Web 2.0 generation of social media websites (Chadwick 2008, p. 14) would afford SMOs the possibility to collaborate with their audiences, be that on blogs (Pomerantz and Stutzman 2006) or social networking sites (SNSs, Bruns 2008; Jameson 2009). Further, there have been indications that in as far as participants engage in some form of collaboration on those platforms (such as by reacting to blog posts in a concerted way, Boyd 2005; discussing issues pertaining to the running of an organisation, on a blog, Pomerantz and Stutzman 2006; or by sharing in the coordination of a collective project through an SNS, Jameson 2009) they may collectively generate horizontal and inclusive decision-making procedures (Jameson 2009).

Moreover, if SMOs reflexively adapt to the new opportunities for collective action largely pinned on networked communication (Flanagin et al. 2006), it may be because they are facing up to gradually more transient involvement in their actions. As a result, organisational boundaries may become increasingly blurred as SMOs adapt to a multiplication and diversification of their support base (Flanagin et al. 2006; Bennett and Segerberg 2011). On this theoretical basis, I discuss here and in Chap. 5 whether democratic decision-making may be a concomitant to the interaction of SMOs with their constituency on social media.[3] This upshot sits within the realm of possibility so long as both SMOs and their support base actively engage in some form of collaboration whilst SMOs are reflexive about their organisational boundaries.

The Empirical Treatment of Digital Prefigurative Participation

The low/high-risk differential guided case selection. Embracing it, I hoped to discern whether participant mobilisation happens through networked communication ahead of contrasting protest events and if unaffiliates are more likely to be engaged in the process in either low- or high-risk protests. As argued in Chap. 2, FånFest was a protest festival where low-risk activism and recreation were blended together. At the other end of the continuum, Climate Camp summoned participants to undertake high-risk direct action. Both protests sought a radical departure from the prevalent

forms of environmental activism in their own societies. Of central concern to the empirical investigation were the social dynamics that McAdam (1986) showed to be fundamentally underlying participation and not the broader context in which socialisation takes place.

An inspection of the wider social coordinates of the protests was provided in Chap. 2. As I have already proposed, each event was marked by individual societal conditions. In the UK, a tradition of environmental direct action (Doherty et al. 2000) was in stark contrast with the timidly budding and largely institutionalised environmental movement that had sprung up in Romania after 1989 (Jancar-Webster 1998; Parau 2009). Each protest was designed to respond to its circumstances, chief among which were the low levels of civic engagement in Romania (Odette 2007) or an apparent necessity to form a radical activist front advancing direct action on climate change in the UK (Larry 2008). Following a brief overview of the methodological apparatus constructed for the purpose of the study, I highlight the main research findings, relate them back to the central concept of digital prefigurative participation and illuminate how this analysis feeds into the subsequent chapters.

To tackle the research aims, it was necessary to survey the networked communication of both protest organisers and participants. A mixed-methods design resulted in the collection over two years (2007–2008) of participant observation, semi-structured interview and survey data and a corpus of digital data retrieved from the Internet outlets maintained by the SMOs, i.e. their websites, newsletters and emailing lists the FânFest blog and the Facebook outlets of the Climate Camp. A total of 40 semi-structured in-depth interviews and two self-administered surveys on purposive samples (Neuman 2003, p. 213) of participants were completed at FânFest in 2007 and the Climate Camp in the summer of 2008.[4] At FânFest,[5] the survey response rate was 84% ($n = 252$) whilst at the Climate Camp the rate was 57% ($n = 105$). Recurrent face-offs between campers and law enforcement (George 2008) attested to the high-risk character of the Climate Camp while at the same time making data collection particularly treacherous.[6] By means of binary logistic regression, I first sought to verify the chief characteristics that singled out participants whose networked communication would have been instrumental to their mobilisation into either of the protests. The reported interview data provided a fuller account further illustrating the survey results.

Mobilisation

At a time when there were few examples of research situating the use of the Internet in the lived experience of protest participants, I unpacked mobilisation into three constitutive elements. Reflecting on the foregoing theory, my interest was to see whether the use of the Internet featured in the process of retrieving protest-related information; if it helped determine one's decision to attend a protest and whether it fed into a sense of trust in the event organisers. My approach was two-pronged: first, I hoped to see if these processes were taking root online and relatedly, whether or not they continued to be confined exclusively to socialisation in enclosed (physically, symbolically through membership or both) movement spaces (Erickson Nepstad and Smith 1999). In the last instance, I hoped to make out the principal participation pathways for the unaffiliated, drawing on the in-depth interviews to explore their networked communication.

The question was particularly topical at a time when the Internet was still predominately regarded as a medium for information retrieval and limited interaction with content (Stein 2009) rather than social organisation (Bennett et al. 2014). The enduring relevance of the question is the reason why I return to it in the next chapter to review a follow-up study I did five years later at FânFest. Second to it was the contingency that a planned repeat of the pilot carried out in 2007 could not take place the following year as the festival was temporarily discontinued. The main consequence was that a more complete questionnaire developed ahead of the 2008 Climate Camp could not be applied the same year at the Romanian protest festival. Accordingly, the initial research highlights from FânFest were primarily derived from the in-depth interviews.

By no accident, online resources were part and parcel of the mobilisation strategies of the two SMOs. Their visions in this respect were contrasting to the extent that for FânFest, the online outlets were the primary interface the festival coordinators relied upon to link to potential participants. These were both inexpensive and theoretically the most effective recruitment tool whereby to tap a pool of young people new to activism (Odette 2007). Keira (2007), an activist who helped design the website of the festival, remarked, 'We don't have the money to run media campaigns of whatever sort besides the poster campaigns and some flyers that we handed out I don't know where. I see that the Internet has, I think, the most important role in this campaign [to popularise the festival]'.

However, it was not until 2009 that the festival would also take to social media in the attempt to attain its recruitment goal.

Conversely, at the Climate Camp, an otherwise wider spectrum of online resources comprising the then newfangled Twitter (Larry 2008) was envisaged as primarily a supplement to face-to-face activist communication. An express advantage of networked communication (particularly through listservs which at the time Camp activists believed had a wider dissemination potential than social media, Larry 2008), resided in its latitude for network bridging (Ellison et al. 2007). Bridging or the ability to form fresh connections was an anticipated upshot of an overflow of information beyond the confines of activist circles and into the terrain of the wider public the camp sought to sensitise to the necessity of collective action on climate change. Facebook was increasingly at the heart of such appraisals. In the words of one of the administrators of the camp's Facebook outlets, '[Facebook is]… a good way of reaching out to non-activist types because you can easily contact all of your friends regardless of whether or not they're in activist circles' (Rachel 2008).

Turning to the participants, the first benchmark finding was the very significant number of Internet users at both protest events—96 percent of respondents at both the Climate Camp (of which slightly more than two-thirds were heavy users spending between 21 and 30 days online a month) and FânFest (three-quarters of which were heavy users). In marked contrast, levels of affiliation at FânFest were low with slightly over 10 percent of respondents being affiliated to activist organisations or groups, 8 percent being involved in an environmental organisation or group. At the Climate Camp, 87 percent were affiliated to one or more activist organisations, be it an environmental (two-thirds of respondents), human rights, anti-capitalist or a religious one. Accordingly, at first glance, the survey verified the contention that affiliation would be prevalent among participants in high-risk protest (McAdam 1986).

As indicated, my attention centred on the mobilisation of unaffiliated individuals, as I proposed that their Internet use would be instrumental to their participation in low-risk protests. The most popular means to source information about the festival was the Internet (for approximately 90 percent of the FânFest respondents). However, no variables in the logistic regression I ran—comprehending affiliation—could predict the use of the Internet to retrieve information about the festival, at a statistically significant level. In-depth interviews, nonetheless, revealed that unaffiliates had taken to the Internet to prime and organise their prospective participation.

Unaffiliates sourced requisite information first and foremost online,[7] principally from the festival's website (Lydia 2007). Crucially, several recounted deciding to invite other unaffiliated friends to accompany them to the protest via different online services that were a mainstay of their peer communication apparatus (e.g. instant messenger, Lydia 2007). Alex and Georgia (2008) were an example of how exclusive reliance on networked communication enabled participants to become familiar with the protest, to develop an interest in attending it and to accrue the requisite knowledge to that end. The couple were two unaffiliated participants who for three years went to the festival on their own despite discouragements from their close friends. From the festival's website, they sourced practical information and retrieved the activist narrative of the event, which reinforced their views and determination. On other online news outlets they were able to gain broader insights into the protest. Ahead of the 2007 event, they went on the festival's discussion forum to trade tips and opinions with other prospective participants. They stayed up to date with the yearly preparations for the festival through their subscription to the festival's emailing list.

Trust did not seem to be a key factor in the mobilisation of the interviewees I met at FånFest in 2008 as they returned to the festival site to reminisce on their experience from previous years. I asked all ten interviewees if they had interacted with the event organisers online, prompting them to reflect on the question of whether their networked communication had helped them build a trustful relationship with the organisers. Alex and Georgia had never been in contact with the organisers online and first talked to them at the festival in All other interviewees told the story of their decision to attend the protest festival in 2008 or before as having hinged on accounts from various friends about their positive experience of participation at the event.

The unaffiliated at the Climate Camp were more likely to have used the Internet to garner information about the protest camp than the affiliated. They, nonetheless, did not embrace it to prime their participation, that is systematically communicate with friends or activist organisations about their prospective participation. It was the affiliated rather than the unaffiliated participants who saw their networked communication with friends as having contributed to their mobilisation (see Table 3.1). First, the result supported earlier claims that the Internet would reinforce mobilisation through interpersonal ties within extant activist networks (Diani 2000; Lusoli and Ward 2003; van Laer 2007). Second, the relatively low number of unaffiliates at the camp foreclosed a more robust analysis. Yet,

Table 3.1 Significant predictors of Internet use at the Climate Camp

Significant predictors of Internet use to source of information about the Climate Camp

Variable	Logistic regression coefficient (b)	Adjusted Odds Ratio [Exp(B)]
Non-affiliation to environmental organisation/group	−1.548*	.213*
Non-affiliation to activist organisation/ group	1.936*	6.928*

R^2 = .288 (Nagelkerke) and the model chi square was 19.87 significant at $p < .05$; *$p < .05$. Sig: *.05, **.01, ***.001

Significant predictors of the influence participant Internet use had on the decision to attend the Climate Camp

Variable	Logistic regression coefficient (b)	Adjusted Odds Ratio [Exp(B)]
Non-affiliation to activist organisation/ group	3.273**	.039**
Non-participation at previous Climate Camp	7.147**	9.49**

R^2 = .402 (Nagelkerke) and the model chi square was 27.426 significant at $p < .01$; *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$. Sig: *.05, **.01, ***.001

Significant predictors of networked communication with friends about attendance at the Climate Camp

Variable	Logistic regression coefficient (b)	Adjusted Odds Ratio [Exp(B)]
Non-affiliation to activist organisation/ group	−2.098*	.123*

R^2 = .281 (Nagelkerke) and the model chi square was 20.14 significant at $p < .05$; *$p < .05$. Sig: *.05, **.01, ***.001

Significant predictors for the influence of networked communication on identification with movement against climate change

Variable	Logistic regression coefficient (b)	Adjusted Odds Ratio [Exp(B)]
Non-affiliation to an environmental organisation/group	−1.746*	.175*

The overall model was not statistically significant; *$p < .05$. Sig: *.05, **.01, ***.001

with the exception of participants affiliated to environmental organisations or groups, unaffiliated participants were more likely than the affiliated to regard their Internet use as having had a bearing on their decision to attend the event. Put differently, unaffiliates held the perception that their Internet use helped seal their choice to attend the protest. That

contribution seemed to be in the form of pertinent information about the event that they were able to retrieve online. Indirectly, then, it appeared that participant use of the Internet aided the mobilisation of unaffiliates at both protest events. Unaffiliated participants were most likely to go on the Internet for information about the events with the Internet playing a key part in the circulation of protest-related information beyond movement networks.

Affiliated participants were more ready to communicate online with friends about their prospective participation. The finding was remarkable because it disavowed claims that risks integral to networked communication such as the ease with which it lent itself to surveillance by government monitors (Lyon 2008), inhibited its use in activist circles, and in particular among the radical flank (Diani 2000). On closer inspection, it became apparent that activists knew very well to stay off the Internet whenever an exchange of sensitive information on collective action had to take place (Larry 2008). Indeed, at monthly gatherings, the point would be reiterated that the most secure way to plan particularly direct action was in small groups whose membership was vetted through personal recommendation. Notwithstanding, affiliated participants were likely to embrace the Internet as a supplement to their face-to-face communication within the bounds of friendship networks, conceivably for other purposes than to plan direct action. Illustratively, Ed, who was an affiliated participant at the Climate Camp, described his Internet use ahead of the event as a complement to face-to-face communication he relied upon principally for practical information:

> 'I used the Internet to communicate with [the] organizers…I used it to communicate with people in Leeds about coming to the Camp. I used it to find neighbourhood meetings in Leeds… to help prepare to run the neighbourhood in the Camp. And I attended those meetings as well. Erm, but I knew about them through emails and the Internet. Erm, I used, I used the Internet to find out information from the Camp website both about what, what this particular camp was about…and also … about how the setting up was going' (Ed 2008).

In the end, participants and organisers were most likely to intersect online as the former were overwhelmingly not involved in any activist organisations, campaigns or activities, whilst the latter had scant resources to reach them otherwise. Yet, at both FânFest and the Climate Camp, the notion that unaffiliates were net beneficiaries of the information circulated online by the SMOs did not seem to be substantiated

by the statistical analysis. Indeed, at the Climate Camp, networked communication likely helped consolidate movement infrastructures as affiliated friends systematically relying on it were most likely already connected amongst themselves and to activist organisations and groups. Lastly, networked communication did not appear to engender trust in the event organisers by for either the affiliated or the unaffiliated. Yet, participants at Climate Camp who lacked the experience of having previously attended the protest believed their Internet use had influenced their trust in the organisers. The finding invited more scrutiny into the formation of a sense of trust among inexperienced participants, regardless of their affiliation status.

Identity-Building

The formation of a collective identity and its distribution through networked communication was the second empirical dimension of digital prefigurative participation. On this plane, the starting point was the proposition that networked communication is a possible entryway for unaffiliates into a process that has historically been the province of movement organisations and their social infrastructures (Fireman and Gamson 1979; Melucci 1989; Diani 2000). To begin with, I wanted to see whether protest participants developed a collective identity through their networked communication in the run-up to the events. Equally, as identities are dynamic, I hoped to learn whether unaffiliates played an active part in the articulation of collective identities as they encountered these online and contemplated the ways in which to interpret their participation.

In the initial 2007 pilot survey I did not incorporate a dedicated item on collective identity. With the resulting survey data from FânFest, I could thus only consider whether the participants at the festival believed their Internet use had any bearing on their wider engagement in activist campaigns and events. Nevertheless, in light of the noted disconnect between being an activist and doing activism (Bobel 2007), it seemed opportune to query whether a broad sense of engagement in activism developed as activist content seeped into respondents' networked communication (at least as they were scooping up information about the upcoming protest). The follow-up study in 2012 did feature a battery of items on collective identity, which are presented in the following chapter. By contrast, participants at the Climate Camp were asked if their Internet use, specifically to

prepare for participation in the protest event, contributed to their sense of involvement in a movement against climate change. Variation among the questionnaire items in the two surveys precludes a comparison between the two events. Interview and observational data were therefore the main vehicle where by to ponder the high/low-risk distinction separating out the two events.

Networked communication was hardly a lynchpin in the crystallisation of a collective identity among the participants at either FânFest in 2007 or the Camp for Climate Action. At the camp, only about one in three respondents thought that broadly their Internet use had allowed them to become 'part of a social movement against climate change'. The remainder were either not persuaded of the idea or rejected it altogether. At the protest festival, on the other hand, the proportion of respondents minded to say their Internet use had enabled them to become involved in activist campaigns and events was slightly larger (see Table 3.2). It seemed reasonable to thereby conclude that a sense of being a movement member (Climate Camp), or an activist (FânFest) had hardly been nurtured by the respondents' networked communication. These initial results seemed to support claims querying the latitude for identity-building online (Diani 2000).

The FânFest coordination team carefully constructed and painstakingly disseminated (through electronic newsletters and listservs, press releases and its website) an identity frame that hinged on an understanding that everyone in attendance would support the Save Roşia Montană campaign while embracing the festival as a unique opportunity to deepen one's involvement in environmental activism. A textual example of its identity frame was available on the landing page of the festival website:

> '…designed as a meeting for environmental activists from all around the country, FânFest 2007 calls on you to become active—an activist—and begin to create and act to protect nature. Be a free spirit, communicate, inform and share ideas with young people your age. The protection of the blue planet starts with you. Now!' (FânFest 2007).

Prior to the festival, future attendees turned to the FânFest website primarily to gather practical information on it, for instance about the musical acts on offer, the location and state of camping facilities. Online and ahead of the protest, unaffiliated participants recognised and felt ready

Table 3.2 The contribution of participant's Internet use to a sense of involvement in the social movement against climate change (Climate Camp); Internet use and involvement in activism (FânFest)

Climate Camp: Internet use contributed to sense of involvement in social movement against climate change						*FânFest: Internet use contributed to involvement in activist campaigns and events*					
Very large/large extent		Some extent		Small extent/ not at all		Very large/ large extent		Some extent		Small extent/ not at all	
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
31	31	41	41	27	27	62	26	70	30	96	41

Note: Some of the results could not be rounded up to 100% either because the question included an additional category for undetermined responses or because the variable had missing cases

to embrace elements of the collective identity devised by the organisers. Unaffiliates recalled that on the website of the festival they had come across the notion that their participation would signify a readiness to bear witness to the public support for the SRM campaign (Antonia, John and Lydia et al. 2007). They found it more difficult, however, to sign up to the idea that by the same stroke they would take up the mantle of environmental activism. That status was reserved to the protest coordinators who sat at the top of an imagined participant hierarchy predicated on the scope of one's investment—of time and/or effort—in the campaign (Lydia 2007). Ultimately, interviewed unaffiliates spoke of how they had honed their own interpretation of their prospective participation in face-to-face conversations with friends and family (Antonia et al. 2007). Indeed, they all shared a similar account of being first persuaded by their friends to attend the protest festival. One participant told me: '…I'm not very knowledgeable about these things. I didn't have the time to (last year I came here for the first time and… [it was] fun but still, I believe it's for a good cause' (Antonia 2007).

At the Climate Camp, event organisers foregrounded a commitment to direct action on climate change. The camp's call for participation carried this appeal, publicised on its website and distributed online through its announcement list and on Facebook. The call was designed to attract a variety of groups to the event while lending them the latitude to build their own specific identity around it. The resultant identity-building project attracted particularly environmental activists eager to throw their weight behind immediate action to tackle climate change. Priming one's

participation with information sourced online appeared to instill in the environmentally affiliated a sense of belonging to a movement against climate change (see Table 3.1). For the less numerous unaffiliates among Climate Campers, networked communication shored up a commitment to tackling climate change head on. Identifying and embracing a shared purpose was key to unafilliates' resorting to networked communication when contemplating a possible participation in the protest. This point was illustrated by Fred's account of the place his Internet use took prior to his arrival at the camp site as he began to weigh his potential participation. In his words:

> '…[the Internet] is for me, coming essentially from the outside, [I] didn't know anybody else who's at it before, this was my primary source of information… on which I based my decision to come or not and what I would be experiencing' (Fred 2008).

Particularly in the case of the high-risk protest, the analysis validated the contention by Pickerill (2003) that a collective identity would be shored up through networked communication by activists who already had some attachment to it. Nonetheless, Lydia (2007), one of the unaffiliated interviewees at FânFest, talked about being infused with a perception of gaining an activist persona while searching for festival news or trawling online for activist content. In her view, the festival could help consolidate that mindset. In both instances of collective action and regardless of the distinctions between them, a collective identity seemed unlikely to be fashioned solely through networked communication. On the evidence at hand, for unaffiliates, sourcing activist content online may have been an expedient to involvement and to developing an appreciation of the causes advanced by the protests. At the end of the day, even a loose activist collective identity did not appear to be absolutely central to participation in the low-risk event.

Organisation

The protest organisers each set up social media outlets ahead of the 2008 events—the FânFest blog, the Climate Camp Facebook group and page—with the intent to woo new recruits into collective action. The move took place only some months before the events were scheduled to get underway. Having witnessed both the deliberations internal to the organisations centred on a cost-benefit analysis of this step balanced against the

anticipated communication with the social media following, I was able to reflect on ramifications for the SMOs.

The FânFest coordination team launched its blog in the wake of the 2007 festival to maintain a steady stream of communication with its support base. Starting from a working definition of a blog as a personal diary, members of the coordination team asserted it would constitute a means for the team to reveal their emotions and views on running the festival and doing grassroots activism. Second, the blog was intended as an open space for deliberation, in response to the posts added by the coordinators. Third, it was imagined as a tool for imparting the team's accumulated knowledge on how to organise and diffuse grassroots resistance among the readers (Warren 2008).

Together, the team and prospective participants at the festival appeared to set in motion what would amount to a new organisational dynamic. Several calls made on the blog by followers for involvement in decision-making on the future of the event suggested the platform had become a portal for marginal actors external to the Save Roşia Montană campaign to publically register their desire to have a say in the running of the event. An illustrative articulation of the wish to be heard came from one blog reader who took the organisers to task for having changed the format of the protest event from a festival to an activist reunion in 2008: 'as a participant [at FânFest] and supporter of the Save Roşia Montană campaign, I believe I am owed an explanation' (Ivan 2008). Such demands highlighted how festival public base had hitherto silently played its part in the campaign by attending the festival.

The camp's Facebook group was created a little before the 2007 Climate Camp. In August 2008, there were 1500 registered group members. The fan page was set up when group membership could no longer be expanded because of regulations on Facebook that put a cap on the maximum number of members (Connor 2008). Members of the group were subsequently invited to sign up to the Facebook page of the camp. Before the commencement of the camp in 2008, there were 2000 registered fans on the page. Climate Camp activists saw in Facebook an opportunity to tap into a mobilisation potential reaching beyond the activist networks previously approached via e-mail and by means of public meetings. New connections to the camp would help draw new recruits into the fold as information circulated beyond activist circles through trustworthy affinity links native to the platform. The chief merit of the Facebook outlets, it was perceived, resided in the potential for decentralised and networked

mobilisation of unaffiliated individuals through proxies, i.e. their Facebook friends (Rachel 2008). That promise seemed to supersede evaluations pertaining to the risks associated with having a presence on that platform, chief among which was seen to be that of surveillance.

Survey data revealed that one in six respondents had used Facebook to prime their participation in the protest event. From among them, the largest number was affiliated to an activist organisation. In other words, Facebook was one setting where the reinforcement effect noted in relation to mobilisation and identity-building was seen to be in play. The proportion of survey respondents using Facebook, however, accounted for less than 1 percent of the Climate Camp's constituency on that platform. The finding painted an already familiar picture of mobilisation into high-risk activism, suggesting the use of Facebook made little difference to it. Facebook may have helped amplify the camp's communications. But of the people endorsing the protest on Facebook, it was those followers with activist credentials who also turned up to it.

The camp's Facebook public—expected to comprise a good number of unaffiliated prospective participants—was furnished with information and advice on how to self-organise one's participation (Rachel 2008). The posited readiness to collaborate with the camp's Facebook constituency, co-opting them in the organisation of the event was extraneous to this reasoning. Thus, several obstacles were in place precluding the Facebook interface from being any kind of gateway into SMO decision-making for prospective participants. These aspects are reviewed systematically in Chap. 5. Here I would highlight that a top-down democratisation of decision-making was foreclosed by an absence of trust by activists in their social media following. Activists regarded the platform as inappropriate for hashing out organisational matters for fear this would jeopardise direct action (Rachel 2008). A democratic forum was already in place at the camp in the form of the monthly national gatherings, which were open to all and sundry. In turn, scepticism was rife among the FânFest organisers about the commitment of the blog audience to the goals of the festival. The former doubted particularly the motivation of participants to become actively involved in the planning and running of the event (Keira 2008). In turn, no bottom-up appeals were made by prospective participants for the communication on social media to feed more directly into decision-making.

In sum, despite the scope for communication conducive to collaboration integral to both platforms (Bruns 2008), their utilisation was predominantly for top-down content dissemination. This was not dissimilar

to the utility of websites run by environmental organisations previously studied in the USA (Stein 2009). The Facebook administrators of the Climate Camp held out their self-organisation ethos as a model the Facebook constituency could adopt when envisioning an involvement in the camp (Rachel 2008). The argument that networked communication would have little to add to the communication between prospective participants and organisers of high-risk protest events (Pickerill 2003) thus seemed to be due a review. I take up the task in Chap. 5.

Conclusion

The driving rationale for the two SMOs going online was for them to meet their mobilisation potential. In both cases, networked communication appeared to benefit mobilisation but not entirely in line with the theoretical assertions I introduced in the opening lines of this chapter. Especially the suggestion that networked communication would galvanise the mobilisation of unaffiliated participants in a low-risk protest event was only partly verified. The analysis partially confirmed the contention that the use of the Internet would reinforce mobilisation through activist networks in the case of high-risk protests (Diani 2000; Lusoli and Ward 2003; van Laer 2007, 2010). Upsetting that earlier assertion, however, was the finding that affiliated participants had parlayed with friends online about their prospective participation in the protest event. This was despite risks integral to networked communication.

The mobilisation of the unaffiliated was partly helped by their networked communication. It fed into a sense that the decision to attend was cemented through the online priming of participation, among the unaffiliates at the high-risk event. Unaffiliates could only turn to the Internet to glean information about the low-risk protest. To them, networked communication was the principal access point to event organisers, to practical information about the event and to other prospective participants similarly engaged in one or more aspects of digital prefigurative participation. Unaffiliates, I would argue, would have the opportunity to draw on networked communication for their induction into activism, to independently prime and organise their participation with friends and other relevant social contacts. Thereby, they would nurture their own motivation to partake in protests, a task that had rested firmly with movement organisations. I return and expand on this topic in Chap. 6.

It may have been that in the end digital prefigurative participation was primarily the prerogative of the environmentally affiliated at the high-risk Climate Camp. Networked communication had made a difference to the mobilisation of affiliated participants whilst also likely bolstering a collective identity among the environmentalists from them. Conversely, it looked as though unaffiliates had not been closer to embracing a collective identity as they primed their participation by means of but not exclusively through networked communication. An interrogation of the degree to which a collective identity underpins involvement in activism (Bobel 2007), especially of the unaffiliated, was encouraged by that initial analysis and is undertaken in the next chapter.

The cardinal idea that began to emerge out of the two case studies and which I continue to dissect in the following chapters was that embodied protest was increasingly enmeshed with and bolstered by digital prefigurative participation in mobilisation, identity building and even organisational interplay. Mobilisation into activism and the formation of a collective identity, it would seem, have stubbornly remained the province of unmediated socialisation. Whilst there was some variance between the cases, it appeared that both affiliated and unaffiliated participants alternated between networked and face-to-face communication when priming their participation. Rather than taking complete precedence over networked communication, socialisation was aided by it as unaffiliates strengthened their resolve to partake in collective action together with close social contacts outside movement infrastructures. This outlook stemmed from the analysis of low-risk activism and is further unpicked in Chap. 4 against data from the follow-up study conducted at FânFest in 2012. One outstanding question was how activist sociality may be maintained or expanded through digital prefigurative participation, and in particular in light of the ever-deeply engrained dominance of networked communication by social media. Specifically, that question may unseat the notion of insular activist communities that are somehow reluctant to spread beyond face-to-face networks. Studies of the global Occupy Movement that touched on this question (Juris 2012; Mercea et al. 2013) highlighted the marginality of movement organisations coupled with a discursive emphasis on the possibility to move into collective action through other routes than via movement infrastructures.

More systematic attention to the relationship between risk and digital prefigurative participation seemed warranted by the empirical analysis. SMOs embraced digital platforms, experimenting with them chiefly

in order to maximise their mobilisation potential as well as to find new ways to activate unaffiliated people previously beyond their reach. The unaffiliates I interviewed were young, technologically savvy and able to independently plan their participation. For them, digital prefigurative participation was a primary avenue into on-site protest. Finally, it was beyond the scope of this investigation to determine the possible consequences of digital prefigurative participation for the longer-term commitment of the unaffiliated to activism. In more recent studies, however, we have illustrated how prolific Twitter communicators have been able to become remotely involved in protests happening across the world, for extensive periods of time (Bastos and Mercea 2015). Many of them had no links to any activist organisations.

Notes

1. See the special issues of the *Journal of Communication*, vol. 62, issue 2; *The American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 57, issue 7; *Information, Communication and Society*, vol. 18, issue 8; and the tens of articles written on the topic in high-impact journals.
2. Illustratively, case studies in one leading communications journal, *New Media and Society*, explore the minutia of European (Larson and Hallavard 2011; Strandberg 2013; Vaccari and Valeriani 2013) and North American elections (Williams and Gulati 2012; Kreiss 2014).
3. For an elaborate definition of the concept, see Hinton and Hjorth (2013) and in particular Chap. 2.
4. That sampling strategy was chosen because no sampling frame (de Vauss 2002) was available for drawing a probabilistic sample. In line with Goss (2004), a sampling strategy accounting for the socio-spatial distribution of the participants at different times of the day was devised to attain randomness and representativity at both events.
5. The media reported the figure of 6000 participants at FånFest for the three days of the festival, in 2007 (Biro 2007).
6. The total number of participants for the entire week of the event was reported to have reached around 1500 participants (George 2008).
7. A lower response rate than at FånFest reflected this state of affairs. The comparison drawing on the survey data appeared nevertheless practicable as the samples represented roughly the same proportion of participants at the two events.
8. The logistic regression model was a composite of predictors shown to have a bearing on participation in offline protest, i.e. organisational affiliation (McAdam 1986), participatory experience (Mosca 2008), perceptions of

the necessity and effectiveness of participation, movement identification (Postmes and Brunsting 2002) and finally, the ability and experience with using the Internet (Krueger 2002). The regression was run using the block entry method.

9. For 90 percent of the respondents, the most popular source of information about the event was the Internet.

References

Alex and Georgia. (2008). *FânFest participants* [interview by author]. Rosia Montana, Romania, 31 August 2008.

Anduiza, E., Cristancho, C., & Sabucedo, J. M. (2014). Mobilization through online social networks: The political protest of the *indignados* in Spain. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(6), 750–764.

Antonia, John and Lydia (2007) *FânFest participants* [interview by author] Rosia Montana, 24 August 2007.

Atton, C. (2004). *An alternative Internet*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Ayers, M. D. (2003). Comparing collective identity in online and offline feminist activists. In M. McCaughey & M. D. Ayers (Eds.), *Cyberactivism: Online activism in theory and practice* (pp. 145–165). New York: Routledge.

Ayres, J. M. (1999). From the streets to the Internet: The cyber-diffusion of contention. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 566*(1), 132–143.

Baron, N. (2010). *Always on: Language in an online and mobile world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bastos, M. T., & Mercea, D. (2015). Serial activists: Political Twitter beyond influentials and the Twittertariat. *New Media and Society*. doi:10.1177/1461444815584764.

Beer, D., & Burrows, R. (2007). Sociology and, of and in Web 2.0: Some initial considerations. *Sociological Research Online, 12*(5). http://www.socresonline.org.uk/12/5/17.html.

Beer, D., & Burrows, R. (2013). Popular culture, digital archives and the new social life of data. *Theory, Culture and Society, 30*(4), 47–71.

Bennett, L., & Segerberg, A. (2011). Collective action dilemmas with individual mobilisation through digital networks. *Information, Communication & Society, 14*(6), 770–799.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(5), 739–768.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2013). *The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bennett, W. L., Segerberg, A., & Walker, S. (2014). Organization in the crowd: Peer production in large-scale networked protests. *Information, Communication & Society, 17*(2), 232–260.

Bennett, W. L., & Toft, A. (2008). Identity, technology and narratives: Transnational activism and social movements. In A. Chadwick & P. N. Howard (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of Internet politics* (pp. 246–260). London: Routledge.

Bimber, B. (2003). *Information and American democracy: Technology in the evolution of political power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Biro, A. (2007). Drama Aurului. Ziua de Cluj, 27 August, URL (consulted August 2007): http://www.ziuadecj.ro/action/article?ID=2431.

Bobel, C. (2007). 'I'm not an activist, though I've done a lot of it': Doing activism, being activist and the 'perfect standard' in a contemporary movement. *Social Movement Studies, 6*(2), 147–159.

Boulianne, S. (2015). Social media use and participation: A meta-analysis of current research. *Information, Communication and Society, 18*(5), 524–538.

Boyd, D. (2005). *Blogging out loud: Shifts in public voice*. LITA Conference Paper, URL (consulted December 2009): http://www.danah.org/papers/LITA.html

Bruns, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, second life, and beyond: From production to produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.

Castells, M. (1997). *The power of identity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Castells, M. (2007). Communication, power and counter-power in the network society. *International Journal of Communication, 1*, 238–266.

Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chadwick, A. (2007). Digital network repertoires and organizational hybridity. *Political Communication, 24*(3), 283–301.

Chadwick, A. (2008). Web 2.0.: New challenges for the study of e-democracy in an era of information exuberance. *I/S A Journal of Law and Policy for the Information Society, 5*(1), 9–42.

Connor. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. London, U.K., 07 June 2008.

de Vauss, D. (2002). *Analyzing social science data*. London: Sage.

della Porta, D. (2011). Communication in movement. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 800–819.

della Porta, D., Andretta, M., Mosca, L., & Reiter, H. (2006). *Globalization from below: Transnational activists and protest networks*. Mineapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

della Porta, D. (1988) Recruitment processes in clandestine political organizations: Italian left-wing terrorism. In B. Klandermans, K Kriesi and S. Tarrow (eds.) *From Structure to Action* Greenwich: JAI Press, 155-69.

Diani, M. (2000). Social movement networks virtual and real. *Information, Communication and Society, 3*(3), 386–401.

Doherty, B., Paterson, M., & Seel, B. (2000). Direct action in British environmentalism. In B. Seel, M. Paterson, & B. Doherty (Eds.), *Direct action in British environmentalism* (pp. 1–24). London: Routledge.

Ed. (2008). *Participant at the climate camp* [interview by author]. Kingsnorth, UK, 04 August 2008.

Ellison, N., Steinfeld, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook 'friends': Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 12*(4), 1143–1168.

Enjolras, B., Steen-Johnsen, K., & Wollebaek, D. (2012). Social media and mobilization to offline demonstrations: Transcending participatory divides? *New Media and Society, 15*(6), 890–908.

Erickson Nepstad, S., & Smith, C. (1999). Rethinking recruitment to high-risk/cost activism: The case of Nicaragua Exchange. *Mobilization, 4*(1), 25–40.

Fenton, N., & Barassi, V. (2011). Alternative media and social network sites: The politics of individuation and political participation. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 179–196.

Fernandez-Planells, A., Figueras-Maz, M., & Pàmpols, C. F. (2014). Communication among young people in the #spanishrevolution: Uses of online–offline tools to obtain information about the #acampadabcn. *New Media & Society, 16*(8), 1287–1308.

Fireman, B., & Gamson, W. A. (1979). Utilitarian logic in the resource mobilization perspective. In M. N. Zald & J. D. McCarthy (Eds.), *The dynamics of social movements* (pp. 156–173). Cambridge, MA: Winthrop.

Fisher, D. R., & Boekkooi, M. (2010). Mobilizing friends and strangers. *Information, Communication and Society, 13*(2), 193–208.

Flanagin, A. J., Stohl, C., & Bimber, B. (2006). Modeling the structure of collective action. *Communication Monographs, 73*(1), 29–54.

Fred. (2008). *Participant at the climate camp* [interview by author]. Kingsnorth, UK, 06 August 2008.

Gayo-Avello, D. (2012). I wanted to predict elections with Twitter and all I got was this lousy paper. A balanced survey on election prediction using Twitter data. Retrieved December 18, 2013, from http://arxiv.org/abs/1204.6441v1

George, R. (2008). An environment of repression. *The Guardian*. URL (consulted August 2008). http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/aug/12/climatechange.police

Gerbaudo, P. (2012). *Tweets and the streets: Social media and contemporary activism*. London: Pluto Press.

Gerlach, L.P., Hine, V.H. (1970) *People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation, Indianapolis*, New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

Gibson, R., & McAllister, I. (2013). Online social ties and political engagement. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 10*(1), 21–34.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity.
Gitlin, T. (2003). *The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making and unmaking of the new left*. Berkley: University of California Press.
Goss, K. A. (2004). Rethinking the political participation paradigm. *Women and Politics, 25*(4), 83–118.
Hinton, S., & Hjorth, L. (2013). *Understanding social media*. London: Sage.
Howard, P. N., & Hussain, M. M. (2013). *Democracy's fourth wave? Digital media and the Arab spring*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Howard, J.A. (2000) Social psychology of identities. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 267-93.
Ivan. (2008). *Blog reader*, *FânFest blog*. URL (consulted August 2008): http://www.fanfest.ro/
Jameson, J. (2009). Distributed leadership, trust and online communities. In A. A. Ozok & P. Zaphiris (Eds.), *Online communities* (LNCS, Vol. 5621, pp. 226–235). Berlin: Springer.
Jancar-Webster, B. (1998). Environmental movement and social change in the transition countries. *Environmental Politics, 7*(1), 69–90.
Jasper, J. M. (1997). *The art of moral protest: Culture, biography and creativity in social movements*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Jordan, T. (2008). The politics of technology: Three types of hacktivism. In T. Hayhtio & J. Rinne (Eds.), *Net working/networking: Citizen initiated Internet politics* (pp. 254–280). Tampere: Tampere University Press.
Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.
Kavada, A. (2009). Email lists and the construction of an open and multifaceted identity. *Information, Communication and Society, 12*(6), 817–839.
Keane, J. (2013) *Democracy and Media Decadence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Keira (2007) *Member of the FânFest Coordination Team*, [interview by author] Cluj, Romania, 02 September 2007.
Keira. (2008). *Member of the FânFest coordination team* [unstructured interview by author] Rosia Montana, Romania, 30 August 2008.
Kelly, C., Breinlinger, S. (1995) Identity and injustice: exploring women's participation in collective action. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 5 (1), 41-57.
Klandermans, B. (1997). *The social psychology of protest*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
Klandermans, B. (2004). The demand and supply of participation: Social-psychological correlates of participation in social movements. In D. A. Snow, S. A. Soule, & H. Kriesi (Eds.), *The Blackwell companion to social movements* (pp. 360–379). Oxford: Blackwell.
Klandermans, B., & Oegema, D. (1987). Potentials, networks, motivations, and barriers: Steps towards participation in social movements. *American Sociological Review, 52*(4), 519–531.

Kreiss, D. (2014). Seizing the moment: The presidential campaigns' use of Twitter during the 2012 electoral cycle. *New Media and Society*, 1–18. doi: 10.1177/1461444814562445.

Krueger, B. S. (2002). Assessing the potential of Internet political participation in the United States: A resource approach. *American Political Research, 30*(5), 476–498.

Larry. (2008). Climate camp activist [interview by author]. London, UK, 08 June 2008.

Larson, A.O., Hallvard, M. (2011) Studying political microblogging: Twitter users in the 2010 Swedish electoral campaign. *New Media and Society*, 14(5): 729–747.

Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking democracy? Social media innovations and participatory politics. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 757–759.

Lomicky, C. S., & Hogg, N. M. (2010). Computer-mediated communication and protest: An examination of social movement activities at Gallaudet, a university for the deaf. *Information, Communication and Society, 13*(5), 674–695.

Lovink, G. (2011). *Networks without a cause: A critique of social media*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lusoli, W., & Ward, S. (2003). *Hunting protestors: Mobilisation, participation and protest online in the Countryside Alliance*. Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops. Edinburgh, 28 March to 2 April 2003.

Lydia. (2007). *FânFest participant* [interview by author]. Rosia Montana, Romania, 24 August 2007.

Lyon, D. (2008). *Surveillance studies: An overview*. Cambridge: Polity.

McAdam, D. (1986). Recruitment to high-risk activism: The case of Freedom Summer. *The American Journal of Sociology, 92*(1), 64–90.

McAdam, D., & Paulsen, R. (1993). Specifying the relationship between social ties and activism. *The American Journal of Sociology, 99*(3), 640–667.

McCaughey, M., & Ayers, M. D. (Eds.). (2003). *Cyberactivism: Online activism in theory and practice*. New York: Routledge.

McDonald, K. (2002). From solidarity to fluidarity: Social movements beyond "collective identity" – the case of globalization conflicts. *Social Movement Studies, 1*(2), 109–128.

McKnight, H.D., Chervany, N.L. (1996) "The meanings of trust". *Techreport MISRC* http://misrc.umn.edu/wpaper/WorkingPapers/9604.pdf.

Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the present: Social movements and individual needs in contemporary society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Melucci, A. (1996). *Challenging codes: Collective action in the information age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mercea, D. (2012). Digital prefigurative participation: The entwinement of online communication and offline participation in protest events. *New Media and Society, 14*(1), 153–169.

Mercea, D., Nixon, P., & Funk, A. (2013). Unaffiliated socialization and social media recruitment: Reflections from occupy the Netherlands. In P. Nixon, R. Rawal, & D. Mercea (Eds.), *Politics and the Internet in comparative context: Views from the cloud*. London: Routledge.

Micheletti, M. (2003). *Political virtue and shopping: Individuals, consumerism, and collective action*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Mihailidis, P. (2014). The civic-social media disconnect: Exploring perceptions of social media for engagement in the daily life of college students. *Information, Communication & Society, 17*(9), 1059–1071.

Mosca, L. (2008). A double-faced medium? The challenges and opportunities of the Internet for social movements. In T. Hayhtio & J. Rinne (Eds.), *Net working/networking: Citizen initiated Internet politics* (pp. 41–73). Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Myers, D. (1994). Communication technology and social movements: Contributions of computer networks to activism. *Social Science Computer Review, 12*(2), 250–260.

Neuman, W. L. (2003). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Odette. (2007). *Member of the FânFest coordination team* [interview by author]. Cluj, Romania, 03 August 2007.

Parau, C. E. (2009). Impaling dracula: How E.U. accession empowered civil society in Romania. *West European Politics, 32*(1), 119–141.

Pickerill, J. (2003). *Cyberprotest: Environmental activism online*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Pomerantz, J., & Stutzman, F. (2006). Collaborative reference work in the blogosphere. *Reference Services Review, 34*(2), 200–212.

Postmes, T., & Brunsting, S. (2002). Collective action in the age of the Internet: Mass communication and online mobilization. *Social Science Computer Review, 20*(3), 290–301.

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rachel. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. Kingsnorth, UK, 5 August 2008.

Rheingold, H. (2012). *Net smart: How to thrive in an online world*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Rodgers, J. (2003). *Spatializing international politics: Analyzing activism on the Internet*. London: Routledge.

Russell, A. (2005). Myth and the Zapatista movement: Exploring a network identity. *New Media and Society, 7*(4), 559–577.

Saunders, C., Grasso, M., Olcese, C., Rainsford, E. E., & Rootes, C. (2012). Explaining differential protest participation: Novices, returners, repeaters and stalwarts. *Mobilization, 17*(3), 263–280.

Snow, D. A., Zurcher, L. A., & Ekland-Olson, S. (1980). Social networks and social movements: A microstructural approach to differential recruitment. *American Sociological Review, 45*(5), 787–801.

Stein, L. (2009). Social movement web use in theory and practice: A content analysis of US movement websites. *New Media and Society, 11*(5), 749–771.

Strandberg, K. (2013). A social media revolution or just a case of history repeating itself? The use of social media in the 2011 Finnish parliamentary elections. *New Media and Society, 15*(8), 1329–1347.

Theocharis, Y. (2015). The conceptualization of digitally networked participation. *Social Media + Society*, July–December 2015, 1–14.

Theocharis, Y., Lowe, W., van Deth, J. W., & Garcia-Albacete, G. (2015). Using Twitter to mobilize protest action: online mobilization patterns and action repertoires in the Occupy Wall Street, Indignados and Aganaktismenoi movements. *Information, Communication and Society, 18*(2), 202–220.

Tufekci, Z., & Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahir Square. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 363–379.

Vaccari, C., & Valeriani, A. (2013). Follow the leader! Direct and indirect flows of political communication during the 2013 Italian general election campaign. *New Media and Society*. doi:10.1177/1461444813511038.

Valenzula, S. (2013). Unpacking the use of social media for protest behavior. The roles of information, opinion expression, and activism. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 920–942.

Valenzula, S., Arriagada, A., & Scherman, A. (2012). The social media basis of youth protest behavior: The case of Chile. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 299–314.

van Aelst, P., & Walgrave, S. (2002). New media, new movements? The role of the Internet in shaping the 'anti-globalization' movement. *Information, Communication & Society, 5*(4), 465–493.

van de Donk, W., Loader, B. D., Nixon, P. G., & Rucht, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Cyberprotest: New media, citizens and social movements*. London: Routledge.

van de Sande, M. (2013). The prefigurative politics of Tahrir Square – an alternative perspective on the 2011 revolutions. *Res Publica, 19*(3), 223–239.

van Laer, J. (2007). *Internet use and protest participation: How do ICTs affect mobilisation?* PSW-Paper, 2007/1, URL (consulted January 2010): http://webhost.ua.ac.be/psw/pswpapers/PSWpaper%202007-01%20jeroen%20van%20laer.pdf

van Laer, J. (2010). Activists 'online' and 'offline': The Internet as an information channel for protest demonstrations. *Mobilization, 15*(3), 405–417.

Vegh, S. (2003). Classifying forms of online activism. In M. McCaughey & M. D. Ayers (Eds.), *Cyberactivism: Online activism in theory and practice* (pp. 71–95). New York: Routledge.

Whitehead, L. (2002). *Democratization: Theory and experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williams, C. B., & Gulati, G. J. (2012). Social networks in political campaigns: Facebook and the congressional elections of 2006 and 2008. *New Media and Society, 15*(1), 52–71.

Warren (2008) *Member of the FânFest Coordination Team* [interview by author] Rosia Montana, Romania, 31 August 2008

Zhuo, X., Wellman, B., & Yu, J. (2011). Egypt: The first Internet revolt? *Peace Magazine, 27*(3), 6. Retrieved July 15, 2011, from http://peacemagazine.org/archive/v27n3p06.htm.

CHAPTER 4

Casual Protesters

In this chapter I begin to dwell on the *connective action logic* (Bennett and Segerberg) that is seeping into contentious politics. *Connective action* (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 752) has been described as a reinscription of collective action predicated on personal expression and trusted social relationships of which many are sustained on social media rather than exclusively through social movement organisational infrastructures. The resulting layered social organisation is crystallised by virtue of the public visibility augmented by social media (Margetts et al. 2012), thereby adding another dimension to mobilisation and identity-building (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 753). In many instances, however, collective action remains contingent on the resource mobilisation capacity of social movement organisations (McCarthy and Zald 1977). The Labour movement in the UK is a lasting case in point (Fenton and Barassi 2011).

The intellectual and tactical appeal of connective action networking (or CAN), however, resides in its latitude for becoming a pathway into collective action that seizes on the multiplication of and shift in participation from conventional to contentious politics in advanced liberal-democracies (Dalton 2006, 2008, p. 94). In what follows, I visit research that I carried out to put this idea to an empirical test. To that end, I review findings from the follow-up field study I did at FânFest in 2012. As I indicated in Chap. 2, the modest levels of civic participation in Romania put the wider context of the festival in contrast with the more vibrant landscape of Western Europe and North America where the implications of social network sites

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_4

(SNS) usage for collective action have come under closer examination (Gonzalez-Bailon et al. 2013; Juris 2012; Maireder and Schwarzenegger 2012; Theocharis 2012a, b; Thorson et al. 2013).[1]

As My interest in pathways into collective action developed, I faced a significant stumbling block when I realised that in social movement scholarship, mobilisation has turned into somewhat of a protean concept. In resource mobilisation theory, the term encapsulates the rational pursuit of a collective actor—the social movement organisation—to secure an optimum of material (funds, manpower, communication infrastructure) and immaterial (shared beliefs and values) resources necessary for collective action (della Porta and Diani 2006; Klandermans 2004). In its turn, resource mobilisation has been reproved for sidelining social interaction, which is arguably the crucible where those very collective action resources are assembled (Melucci 1996; Jasper 1997). My fundamental concern was with the latter or what Snow et al. (1986, p. 464) have termed 'micromobilisation…various interactive and communicative processes' that catalyse participation in protest events.

My overarching aim was to tease out what may be embryonic modes of participation. I therefore departed from the assessment of general levels of political activism among users of one specific social networking service (Harlow 2012; Valenzula et al. 2012; Vissers and Stolle 2012; Gonzalez-Bailon et al. 2013). Instead, I undertook a cross-platform, comparative treatment of SNS usage for the priming of protest participation. By means of a mixed-methods design and pooling original survey and interview data,[2] I ended up looking at three social networking services—Facebook, Twitter and The platforms is called Google+ (Google Plus) and unpicked user practices galvanising protest participation.

Social Network Site Usage and Mobilisation

Querying the purchase of SNS usage on mobilisation could only take place on an already rich canvas of research findings that have accumulated over more than a decade (see Myers 1994; Castells 1997; Boulianne 2009 and the earlier overview of the field in Chap. 3). As I have already pointed out, the prevailing view has been that the use of new media applications such as e-mail and websites by prospective participants contributes to mobilisation principally within established social movement networks, thus reinforcing them (Diani 2000; Pickerill 2003; Verhulst and Walgrave 2009; van Laer 2010).

This argument was verified competently by Verhulst and Walgrave (2009) who produced a rank-scaling of mobilisation channels. According to those authors, mass-media sources sat at the open end of a channel continuum that featured friends and family in the median position and organisational meetings, organisational websites and e-mails at the closed end of it (2009, p. 483). The two scholars submitted that closed channels were effective in membership mobilisation (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009) whilst open channels would facilitate the mobilisation of protest newcomers who were unaffiliated to an activist organisation and had no prior participation experience. While SNS were not on that spectrum for historical reasons, I imagined the services would occupy a median position as a hybrid of closed and open channels. SNS are an embodiment of hybridity being at once amenable to both broadcasting and interpersonal communication (Chadwick 2008; Tufekci and Wilson 2012). Such concomitant broadcasting and interpersonal communication, I envisaged, would render networked communication a more decisive avenue for the mobilisation of people outside movement infrastructures.

My supposition stemmed from evidence of the more remote possibility that the use of new media prompted an 'influx of…traditional non-activists' into social movement actions (Postmes and Brunsting 2002, p. 294; Harlow and Harp 2012). Cohorts beyond movement networks have been found to rely principally on Internet sources for information germane to their protest participation (Fisher and Boekkooi 2010). According to this account, despite the pre-eminence of social embeddedness in movement infrastructures for mobilisation, learning about protests from Internet sources (websites, e-mail/mailing lists) was correlative with attending a protest on one's own (2010, p. 204). The participant type matching this trajectory was labelled the 'stranger': an individual with no pre-existing social connections to other protest participants.

As already noted in the previous chapter, the canonical understanding has been that newcomers face barriers to protest participation pertaining to limited motivation and unfavourable risk/cost assessments of a potential involvement (McAdam 1986; Verhulst and Walgrave 2009). These obstacles are circumvented through interrelations with activist organisations and/or activist social contacts (McAdam 1986; McAdam and Paulsen 1993), or if one has a personal cache of participatory experience on which to draw (Mosca 2008; Saunders et al. 2012). Newcomers to protest, however, are significantly less likely to be the target of recruitment drives than their experienced counterparts (McAdam and Paulsen 1993).

As a result, it has been principally mass media that have acted as recruitment agents of newcomers whenever they evoked a moral imperative of solidarity with a protest (Jasper and Poulsen 1995).

In a more recent article, Jeffrey Juris (2012, p. 272) contended that SNS usage at the Occupy encampment in Boston translated into the mobilisation of a 'crowd of individuals' with varying degrees of experience of protest participation. The proposition herein is that on the way to settling the question of a devolutionary trend in mobilisation from organisations to individuals, one can proceed with further enquiries revisiting the protest mobilisation of individuals with no experience of protest participation who are not members of activist organisations. The latter form a participant category was referred to as collective action 'first-timers' (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009). The research that I present in this chapter was designed to ascertain the degree to which the use of social networking sites would be conducive to mobilisation—especially of such disadvantaged protest participants to the extent that they can benefit from neither network embeddedness nor a cache of participatory experience. My hypothesis, therefore, was that the broadcasting and interpersonal communication capacities of SNS (Tufekci and Wilson 2012) make them an additional open mobilisation channel for these newcomers to a protest event. Supporting this idea was the finding that first-time Egyptian protesters who filled up Tahrir Square in 2011 exhibited complex media diets (Tufekci and Wilson 2012). Their participation could be predicted from their usage of blogs and Twitter for general information and of the telephone, e-mail and Facebook to converse about the first protests in Tahrir Square (2012:375).

To delve further into germinal practices for mobilisation, I embraced the classification of SNS usage modalities along a push-pull communication scale as previously outlined in marketing studies (Kaplan and Haenlein 2011). *Push* communication designates the act of directing messages at contact networks, an active effort at content dissemination that may result in a message being 'cascaded down' through user networks (Kaplan and Haenlein 2011, p. 107). *Pull* communication represents the act of receiving such messages and their subsequent exploration through information searches (2011, p. 107). My expectation has been that applied to protest mobilisation, the distinction would reveal possible patterns of mobilisation that pivot on the combination of active information dissemination and/or reception; and whether any such patterns can be differentially attributed to specific types of participants, e.g. the unaffiliates. Exploratory research

that colleagues and I conducted among Occupy the Netherlands activists pointed to a predominant usage of SNS for information sharing—*push* communication—rather than to encourage distributed participant recruitment—or *pull* communication (Mercea et al. 2013).

The important though generic claim has been that communication on social networking services aids socialised individuals into a readiness for collective action (see Valenzula et al. 2012, p. 307). In the birthplace of the Arab Spring, Tunisia, social networking sites were central to efforts to diffuse the popular unrest beyond its original hotspot. They were a key but not the only element of a grassroots communication ecology wherein mobile phones also figured prominently in the activist strategy to link up to foreign broadcasting media and thereby overcome state censorship. Equally, those interconnections established between communication technologies helped overcome geographical, age and class boundaries (Lim 2013). Aside from the above sources, scholarship remained wanting of a systematic decantation of the practices favoured by individuals with various degrees of affinity and activist experience embracing networked communication. Drawing on the theory of push-pull communication, I posited that push communication would be prevalent among experienced activists using SNS to actively encourage others to participate in collective action. By contrast, for newcomers, SNS would be chiefly a vehicle for pull communication as they were principally targets of appeals to sign up to collective action.

Lastly, I pored over the theory of connective action one more time to illuminate some of the intricacies of collective identification on social networking services. My main aim was to quiz the premise that identity is an outcome of personal expression reflective of mutual experience rather than group membership (Bennett and Segerberg 2012). The theory was one of the latest attempts at grappling with the question of collective identity formation in the intricate contemporary communication environment.[3] The attention paid to collective identity has largely been due to its evidenced purchase on protest participation, particularly within the social psychology of movement studies (see van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010 for a review). Again, there have been two major conflicting accounts on the scope for identity-building through networked communication. Sceptics have pointed to collective identity as being inextricably bound to socialisation effected in organisational settings to which the networked communication of websites, e-mails and chat fora was an addition not an alternative (Diani 2000). Conversely, identity-building was in train within

the confines of activist e-mail lists in the European Social Forum (Kavada 2009), a periodic conference of the Global Justice Movement held on the European continent. The two perspectives converge on one aspect, their assessment of the limited latitude for the cultivation of trust in networked communication. Trust has been a lubricant to identity-building aligning cognitive frameworks and emotions associated with group membership. In networked communication, trust has appeared to be inversely related to the openness of a communication channel. In her examination of activist e-mail lists, Kavada (2009. p. 834) noted that 'open email lists, where anyone can subscribe and where no one has complete knowledge of the list's membership, can be a hostile habitat for fostering relationships of trust'.

A first principle of social networking services, however, has been the idea that users have a definitive say on the social fabric of their communication experience. The social architecture of SNS has been erected on the selective association of individuals with preferred social contacts (Boyd 2006),[4] a feature that sits at the heart of computer algorithms devised to maximise the commercial potential of human interaction patterns (van Dijck 2013). More widely, there has been a reflexive personalisation of participation in collective action that has been attributed to the rise of self-actualising *life politics* (Giddens 1991; Bennett 2003; Bennett and Segerberg 2012). If the former development references a technological affordance whereby users have the capacity to closely manage their digital networks, the latter represents yet another thesis that calls attention to an ongoing decoupling of participation from social movement organisations (SMOs), organisational structures that have hitherto been deemed as instrumental to resource mobilisation and identity-building (McCarthy and Zald 1977; McDonald 2002; Flanagin et al. 2006).

In organisationally orchestrated collective action, individual mobilisation is the fruit of network ties that unfailingly flowed out of key organisational nodes (Diani 2000; Bennett and Segerberg 2012). Movement networks have been the principal stage where the articulation, distribution and adoption of collective identities came to pass. Conversely, mobilisation in CAN arises out of one's immersion into the emergent culture of collaboration, sharing and personal expression characteristic of social media, including SNS (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 753). The latter mobilisation pathway designates a process of pooling 'already internalized or personalized ideas, plans, images, and resources with networks of others' (2012, p. 753). CAN is thus an expressive mode of individual engagement in the co-creation, interpretation and distribution of collec-

tive identities absent the stewardship of SMOs. An illustrative example of this development has been the Occupy Movement, which was characterised by a conspicuous lack of SMOs in its midst (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Juris 2012; Mercea et al. 2013).

Tying together the foregoing insights with the focus on newcomers, a notable finding has been that these stood in contrast to experienced participants in the significant level of identification with co-attending demonstrators they exhibited (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009, p. 475). Such identification was described as being a consequence of unfamiliarity with organisations involved in the protests and an absence of connections with their members (2009:462). Taking into account the cited indications that SNS usage plays a part in the protest mobilisation of newcomers (Juris 2012), the supposition that I set out to test was that the SNS usage of newcomers fed into a collective identity hinging on one's identification with fellow participants in a protest event. Put differently, SNS usage would be associated with a fellowship rather than membership-based identity, a variation that may signal a widening of mobilisation potentials beyond networks of SMO members and seasoned protest participants. The significant involvement of newcomers in the Egyptian insurgency, which unfolded in a political context where civic participation was actively supressed (Tufekci and Wilson 2012) lent support to the investigation into protest participation in a democratic country such as Romania, which, for more than two decades, had seen historically low levels of civic engagement. The report of my research findings opens with aggregate figures for levels of participatory experience and organisational membership among FânFest participants and for the prevalence of social networking site usage. Again, the hypothesis-testing was done with three separate binary logistic regression models.[5]

Protest Participation Against the Odds?

Participants at FânFest 2012 were young, well-educated, the majority being students who were overwhelmingly online (see Table 4.3). Membership in volunteer organisations among them was twice as high as the national level that same year. Participatory experience—prior involvement in a public protest—was at a level nearly ten times higher than among the general population (see Chap. 2). This initial assessment revealed first that the festival demographic had likely changed from 2007 as newcomers represented a clear minority ($\chi^2 = 5.286$, df = 1, $p < .05$). The long-standing

aim of the festival to attract protest first-timers (Keira 2012), one could surmise, had either been attained or had gone seriously unfulfilled. The question was settled by the additional finding that more than two-thirds of the participants were newcomers of the festival. Put differently, while the festival appeared successful in appealing to new cohorts, these were likely drawn from a small section of individuals with some participatory experience which had not accrued from attendance at the festival in a previous year (Table 4.1).[6]

Participants were asked how they had learned of the festival, particularly whether they had relied on any specific means of communication for the purpose. The survey item was modelled after the example of Verhulst and Walgrave (2009), following the aforementioned distinction between open and closed channels of communication.[7] As a general avenue for information retrieval, the Internet was preferred above all other channels. Family and friends were second to it as a source of information.[8] Open mobilisation channels—mass media such as newspapers, radio and television—were far less popular, as shown in Table 4.2. Online, the largest number of participants sourced their information about FånFest from Facebook and to a lesser extent via closed channels, to wit NGO websites. Far fewer respondents quoted Twitter or Google+ as a point of call for festival-related information.

In the following step, the first test I ran was to determine whether SNS had been an open or closed channel for the mobilisation of newcomers. For the purpose, I generated two dummy variables for mass media and social networking sites, respectively. The SNS scale did not prove reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .35$), due to wide variance in the usage of the three indexed applications (Facebook, Google+ and Twitter). I therefore set up dummy variables for each individual application. The results of the logistic regression[9] are presented in Table **4.6**. The listed coefficients in tables 4.4–4.6 are odds ratios. A coefficient value of 1.0 or more represents a positive relationship whilst values below 1.0 connote a negative relationship.

By contrast with Verhulst and Walgrave (2009), there was a less clear-cut relationship between open mobilisation channels and participatory inexperience (Table 4.4).[10] In particular, Facebook stood out as its usage was predicted by participatory experience but the relationship was more complicated than it had been depicted in foregoing scholarship. It was indeed experienced participants that had very determinedly taken to Facebook for information about the festival. However, pursuing a dis-

Table 4.1 FânFest participant demographics and general SNS usage levels (%)

Organisational membership[a]	*Participatory experience*[b]	*Participation at previous FânFest*[c]	*Age*			*Gender*		*Education*			*Social network site usage*		
			16–24	*25–34*	*≥35*	*F*	*M*	*Secondary*	*High-school/ vocational education*	*Baccalaureate and higher*	*Facebook*	*Google+*	*Twitter*
34	77	29	36	55	9	45	55	1	13	86	88	36	19

[a]The survey questions for membership were: 'Are you a member of a non-governmental organisation?' 'Tick the box next to any of the organisations listed below if you are involved in any one of them (more than one answer is possible)'. The final answer option for this question was 'any other type of organisation. Please describe it here'

[b]The survey question reported here was: 'Have you ever participated in a public protest (strike, demonstration, flashmob, march)?'

[c]The survey question was: 'Is this the first time you are attending FânFest?'

Table 4.2 Sources of information about FânFest[a] (%)

Mass media	*Friends and family*	*Internet*	*Social networking sites*			*NGO websites*
			76			
			Facebook	*Twitter*	*Google+*	
12	57	91	71	3	13	44.5

[a]Participants were asked the following questions: 'In the last year where did you get information about FânFest?' and 'If you used the Internet to get such information, where specifically did you find it?' On a nominal scale, answer options ranged from open mass-media channels such as radio, television, newspapers to family and friends, SNS and closed channels such as NGO websites. Results are reported as dummy variables with percentages for users

Table 4.3 Push and pull communication on SNSs directed at the encouragement of participation at FânFest (%)

SNS push	*Facebook push*	*Twitter push*	*Google+ push*	*SNS pull*	*Facebook pull*	*Twitter pull*	*Google+ pull*
79	79	10	14	75	76	6	11

tinction between general experience and previous participation at FânFest unveiled the negative effect the latter had on the use of Facebook, Twitter and NGO websites. Accordingly, my first conclusion was that experienced participants who were at FânFest for the first time were more likely than respondents with a general lack of participatory experience to use an SNS or closed channels as were NGO websites and e-mail to garner information about the festival. In turn, that led me to conclude that, SNS were not an open channel and the primary conduit for the mobilisation of newcomers. Conversely, they more closely approximated closed mobilisation channels. My first hypothesis was thereby rejected, albeit only in part. It turned out that SNS were best portrayed as a hybrid channel enabling principally seasoned though unaffiliated participants to tap into information pertinent to their prospective participation in a protest they were going to attend for the first time.

The interview data enabled me to situate the statistics in participants' lived experience and their communication practices. None of the interviewees had previously been in a public protest other than FânFest and all but one were not activists in a non-governmental volunteer organisa-

tion. A research student, Jane (2012), embodied the newcomer participant type. She knew the festival had been taking place for a number of years but personally she had first learned of the 2012 event when she saw it publicised by contacts on her Facebook news feed. Among her contacts were prominent members of the Save Roşia Montană Campaign whom she had befriended when researching for a graduate project. In her words, 'Facebook was the one place where I learnt about FânFest even though I normally stay abreast with the Save Rosia Montana [campaign]'.

Peter, a musician, and his girlfriend Carly, a medical student, cautioned against taking affiliation as a proxy for participation. That inference would have been blindsiding of possible extra-organisational activism as was, in their eyes, their festival attendance. Their recurrent participation at FânFest was sparked by chance exposure to germane information that fuelled a deepening submergence into what they independently identified as the convergent media ecology of the protest. Coming out emphatically against that conflation, they likewise echoed Jane's assertion that Facebook had been the predominant information access point among all sections of the body of participants. They asserted:

> "We're not involved in non-governmental organizations but that doesn't mean that we are not involved as such. We're simply not affiliated to any one organization… the first time we learnt about it [FânFest, in 2006] I think it was from a poster 'cause there wasn't much else. I mean there was the Internet then, but…but I mean these days the best way to promote an event is through Facebook. People are on Facebook a lot".

Experience, Mobilisation and Collective Identity

Resting with the same classification of participant types, I turned my attention to the question of whether experienced activists were more likely than newcomers to act as recruitment agents. If so, they would have actively encouraged their contacts on social networking sites to take part in the festival. On the other hand, newcomers, I had hypothesised, would find in SNS a vehicle for *pull* communication as targets of appeals to participate in the protest event (Table 4.3).[11] SNS scales for *push* and *pull* communication were again not reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .35$), so I placed each individual service in a separate logistic regression model (Table 4.4).

Participatory experience was the strongest predictor of both *push* and *pull* communication on SNS and particularly on Facebook. Experienced

Table 4.4 Logistic regression models predicting use of open or closed mobilisation channels (block entry method, Exp (B))

	Mass-media	*Family and friends*	*Facebook*	*Twitter*	*Google+*	*NGO websites*	*E-mail*
Organisational membership	1.382	1.435	1.071	1.256	.837	1.393	1.031
Participatory experience	.467	1.264	3.207***	–	.646	1.031	2.540*
Previous FânFest participation	1.138	1.170	.360**	.171*	2.306	.445*	.641
Age	1.131	.675	.932	.859	1.531	.974	.814
Gender (ref. male)	.979	.542*	.729	1.003	1.055	.768	.453*
Education	.946	.818	1.170	.822	1.040	1.396	.942
Model	$R^2 = .028$	$R^2 = .087$	$R^2 = .148$	$R^2 = .154$	$R^2 = .076$	$R^2 = .090$	$R^2 = .096$
Sig: *.05, **.01, ***.001	(Nagelkerke) $\chi^2 = 3.774$, df = 6, n.s.	(Nagelkerke) $\chi^2 = 16.679$, df = 6, $p < .05$	(Nagelkerke) $\chi^2 = 26.399$, df = 6, $p < .001$	(Nagelkerke) $\chi^2 = 8.776$, df = 6 n.s.	(Nagelkerke) $\chi^2 = 10.200$, df = 6, n.s.	(Nagelkerke) $\chi^2 = 17.191$, df = 6, $p < .01$	(Nagelkerke) $\chi^2 = 17.257$, df = 6, $p < .01$

participants seemed to be part of a communication environment where participation was a topic to which they both contributed and were exposed. At the same time, not having previously been at the protest predicted push communication. Therefore, as anticipated, most likely to engage in push communication were the experienced participants, albeit those among them who had not previously attended the festival. This snapshot of push-pull communication echoed earlier accounts of mobilisation in activist networks to the extent that it conjured up an environment that one enters with a degree of familiarity with collective action and social contacts that are capable of nurturing that experience. Neither of the two modalities of networked mobilisation, however, bore any relationship to organisational membership. The corollary to this finding seemed to be that unaffiliates with a cache of participatory experience would be best placed to see their activism flourish through SNS communication.

Turning again to the interviews, Jane (2012) spoke of how she had conveyed information about the festival among her Facebook friends all the while urging them to make the trip to Roşia Montană with her. As a newcomer with a standing interest in the campaign, her testimony verified the notion that push and pull communication are two sides to the same coin. Similar to experienced participants, newcomers may engage in push communication if their interest in collective action is stimulated by the pull communication of contacts in their SNS networks. As Jane put it,

> "…we 'liked' and 'shared' it [news about FânFest] on Facebook… that basically means that we distributed, somehow disseminated the information in cyberspace… As a result of publicising it 7 of us are now here. It's as simple as that".

In the end, however, experienced participants remained more likely to act as active recruiters engaging in push communication at FânFest. Their push communication unfolded chiefly on Facebook (Cramer's $V = .192$, $p < .01$). Together, these findings upheld the first part of my second hypothesis. Push communication was the preserve of experienced participants who were, however, more prone than newcomers to be likewise involved in pull communication.

In the final test, I juxtaposed two disparate conceptions of collective identity—a membership-based and, conversely, an identity of fellowship with participant peers.[12] In the run up to the protest, I posited, newcomers would be sensitised to the latter type of identity as they became engulfed in the communication surrounding the event on social network-

Table 4.5 Logistic regression models predicting collective identity (block entry method, Exp (B))

	Membership-based identity	*Participant fellowship identity*
Membership	2.044*	1.217
Participatory experience	.911	2.626*
Previous FânFest participation	1.138	.704
SNS usage	1.388	1.545**
Mass-media	1.890	2.459
Friends and family	.869	.993
E-mail	1.575	.870
NGO websites	1.606	1.448
Gender	1.327	1.407
Age	.714	1.049
Education	.820	.900
Model	$R^2 = .126$ (Nagelkerke)	$R^2 = .158$ (Nagelkerke)
Sig:*.05, **.01, ***.001	$\chi^2 = 19.141$, df = 11, n.s	$\chi^2 = 24.028$, df = 11, $p < .05$

ing sites. Running the statistical test, I found a statistically significant positive relationship between fellowship identity, participatory experience and SNS usage[13] (see Table 4.5). On the other hand, I detected no significant relationship between SNS usage, participatory experience and membership-based identity.

At first blush, it looked as though SNS usage reinforced a fellowship identity among experienced though unaffiliated protest participants. Experienced participants who had primed their participation on social networking services were more ready than all other participants to admit to a feeling of companionship with co-participants. More bivariate tests revealed that fellowship identity only correlated with participatory experience (Cramer's $V = .190$, $p < .01$) and not with organisational membership. This evidence went against the grain of the earlier contention that participatory experience was coterminous with membership identity (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009). The only contingent among the participants espousing a membership-based identity were the experienced members of activist organisations (Cramer's $V = .141$, $p < .01$). Again, the final and most important finding related to protest newcomers. They did not seem to have embraced a fellowship identity. The evidence thus appeared to pile on in favour of the conclusion that SNS communication was unlikely to systematically imprint on the participation of newcomers to protest (Table **4.6**).

Table 4.6 Logistic regression models predicting SNS push and pull communication (block entry method, Exp (B))

	Facebook push	*Twitter push*	*Google+ push*	*Facebook pull*	*Twitter pull*	*Google+ pull*
Organisational membership	.844	2.745	.406	.987	1.954	.560
Participatory experience	2.815**	1.058	1.366	2.597*	1.164	1.072
Previous FånFest participation	.420*	1.523	1.600	.662	1.248	.905
Age	985	1.886	1.805	.994	1.159	3.041*
Gender	992	2.332	1.056	.840	2.157	.424
Education	701	.623	1.178	.887	.868	.994
Model	$R^2 = .104$	$R^2 = .099$	$R^2 = .113$	$R^2 = .063$	$R^2 = .038$	$R^2 = .115$
Sig: *.05,	(Nagelkerke)	(Nagelkerke)	(Nagelkerke)	(Nagelkerke)	(Nagelkerke)	(Nagelkerke)
**.01,	$\chi^2 = 15.233$,	$\chi^2 = 7.223$,	$\chi^2 = 10.845$,	$\chi^2 = 9.628$,	$\chi^2 = 2.182$,	$\chi^2 = 9.596$,
***.001	df = 6, p < .05	df = 6, n.s	df = 6, n.s	df = 6, n.s	df = 6, n.s	df = 6, n.s

I reverted to the interviews one final time with the same aim, namely to situate the statistics in participant practice. Most notably, none of the interviewees regarded her/himself to be an activist in the Save Roşia Montană Campaign. This was despite the fact that they all proclaimed their active support for the primary goal of the campaign to forestall the development of the proposed open-cast gold mine. Interviewees spoke of their engagement both in the campaign and in civic actions more widely as being confined to communication on Facebook and the odd, often tokenistic, signing of an online petition. They had little time to invest in activism and believed that others such as the festival organisers could do it more effectively. Their decision to go to the festival stemmed from a desire to learn more about the campaign and to understand how other people like them could help give a boost to the struggle without becoming full-blown activists themselves. Tellingly, one of the interviewees said:

> "We clearly support the campaign but none of us have actually done anything to show our support for it…Okay, we would like to do something but in the end it's not only up to us. I mean if you do something, collect signatures, how many should you aim to get? … the only way to stop this mine will be through protest and that's what it's gonna come down to… If that happens I'm certainly going to be there even though up to now I haven't been actively engaged in it" (Jeff 2012).

Conclusion

I started this chapter in the mind that the mobilisation of newcomers into a protest might be boosted by their networked communication. As contacts in their personal networks would push content germane to an eventual participation, newcomers would have the opportunity to surpass entrenched obstacles to engagement in collective action, developing a sense of fellowship with other participants. The prospect would have been particularly momentous in a democratic country experiencing chronically low levels of civic participation such as Romania.

In 2012, FânFest attracted more participants with a cache of protest experience and membership credentials than previously recorded. The primary beneficiaries of networked communication on social networking sites were the experienced participants rather than the newcomers. However, the former were not members of activist organisations. Rather,

they showed a commitment to collective action, which they seemed to be able to sustain outside an organisational setting. In particular, Facebook appeared to be pivotal to the circulation of information beyond movement networks. In this respect, it proved to be more effective than either mass-media and friends or family as a mobilisation channel. Indeed, nearly all survey respondents said they had sourced the information they had about the protest on Facebook. The result corroborates claims that Facebook usage may contribute to protest participation (Valenzula et al. 2012) with two qualifications.

First, such usage does not have to be linked to organisational membership (see Valenzula et al. 2012). The use of Facebook as a mobilisation channel by prospective participants may seal the decoupling of participatory experience and organisational membership (see Verhulst and Walgrave 2009). As illustrated, mobilisation may at least in part be aided by the circulation of pertinent information by key figures in a collective action. Experienced participants may come to establish contacts with activists on social media, thereby becoming able to activate themselves ahead of a protest. This may equally be applicable to newcomers if, as exemplified, they come to follow leading activists. This dynamic, however, does not render the platform an entirely open channel, according to the definition by Verhulst and Walgrave (2009) but rather a hybrid one.

Second, in light of the research findings, seeing Twitter as a means for prospective protest participants to retrieve information, and Facebook as a platform for them to trade opinions (Tufekci and Wilson 2012) was a counterfactual distinction. Confoundingly, Facebook turned out to be the primary avenue for sourcing information about the protest event. The result called for context-sensitive research accounting for platform diffusion rates. The approach would be better equipped to reveal possible interchangeable utilities of Facebook and Twitter or any other social media dominant in a certain country or region (e.g. the Chinese Sina-Weibo or the Russian VKontakte).

The use of Facebook as a channel for push communication by experienced participants seeking to encourage contacts in their Facebook network to attend the protest festival further calls into question the functional distinction between social media platforms. Notably, however, newcomers did not encounter protest-related content on Facebook to the degree that experienced participants had. Twitter, on the other hand, has been used effectively to mobilise weak ties—connections limited in their intensity, intimacy and reciprocity (Granovetter 1973, p. 1361)—at international environmen-

tal demonstrations (Segerberg and Bennett 2011). Ultimately, Facebook seemed to provide experienced participants with ample support for partaking in collective action, possibly placing them in a mobilisation loop where they were likely both targets and initiators of mobilisation drives.

Common, again, among experienced participants was a collective identity grounded in a sense of fellowship with co-participants. The conclusion confounds the claim previously made that participatory experience is tied to a membership-based identity. Individual participation may no longer be inextricably wedded to a sense of belonging to an organisationally regimented social group. To that extent, a logic of connective action may have been at work at FânFest, providing an impetus to participate to individuals who had not previously attended the festival and who equally were neither activists nor complete newcomers to protest. This most sizeable contingent at the festival may represent a cohort of what I tentatively termed *casual participants* relying on social networking sites to organise and interpret their participation. This proposition is intended as an incentive for rather than a definitive conclusion to this line of enquiry. If for no other reason, this is because underpinning this analysis was a single case design. Both comparative surveys and ethnographic research may provide more depth and a wider verification of these findings.

In the last instance, records of casual participation at protests in established democracies are beginning to emerge. Such participation seems to be a practice common among an important contingent of largely self-activating returnees that will attend protests on their own. They have limited linkages with SMOs but can count activists amongst their friends (Saunders et al. 2012, p. 275). On the basis of the research reported in this chapter, three elements can be added to that insight, which also speak to the potential for a rejuvenation of civic participation in the individualised civic climate berated by many observers. First, the casual participation of self-activating returnees (or what I have called experienced participants) might be an important characteristic of an increasing variety of protests (see also Anduiza et al. 2014). Second, casual participation was elicited through a multifarious event combining activism, education and entertainment. Third, I would emphasise the instrumentality of SNS usage to the enablement of casual protest participation. Finally, I would welcome surveys of a wider array of protest events that continue to focus on newcomers. Despite the lack of statistically significant results pertaining to their mobilisation, newcomer interviewees shared a similar pathway into collective action with experienced participants.

I would further stress that I ascribe the epithet *casual* strictly to the description of the mobilisation process of prospective protest participants. The term is not intended as a portrayal of any actions undertaken in the course of a protest. The reliance on networked communication during an instance of collective action has been the subject of separate research that I recently completed with colleagues (Bastos et al. 2015). One of the main claims we have advanced is that the use of both Twitter and Facebook is associated with specific types of action onsite such as the onset of an urban occupation (in the case of the Indignados and the Occupy Movement) or the chronicling of police violence (see also Earl et al. 2013).

To conclude, casual protestors are an ideal type standing out for the primacy of networked communication in their mobilisation. Other aspects to do with the motivation that prospective participants require so as to be able to convert a sympathy for an activist cause into embodied participation and how it may be fostered through networked communication are discussed in Chap. 6. In the next chapter, I delve into the organisational ramifications of networked communication for SMOs seizing on it for strategic reasons such as to boost mobilisation in the collective action they orchestrate.

Notes

1. For an early and rare overview of the topic centred on eastern and central Europe, see the special issue of *Convergence* (1998, vol. 4, no. 2) dedicated to the area. For instance, in their study Verhulst and Walgrave (2009) reported a study conducted in Belgium and other western European democracies such as Britain, Germany and Spain (see also Saunders et al. 2012), countries with significantly higher levels and a longer history of civic participation (Norris 2002; Badescu et al. 2004) and environmental protest (Rootes 2003) than Romania. To reiterate, the Romanian environmental movement did not gain a momentum parallel to other movements in the East-Central Europe (Pickavance 1999) due to the authoritarianism of the Communist regime, which had no tolerance for political pluralism (Deletant 2006) and following its demise, because of the comparatively slow pace of environmental reform (Andersen 2002).
2. As in 2007, I ran a survey on a purposive sample from what I understood to be the 'specialized population' of protest participants (Neuman 2003, p. 213). By means of a self-administered paperback questionnaire respondents were queried about their membership in non-governmental organisations other than parties or trade unions; their previous experience with participation in a

public protest be it a demonstration, strike, march or flashmob (Mosca 2008); whether they had previously attended FânFest and finally on their collective identity.

3. The survey respondents were invited to either complete the questionnaire on the spot or to return it to the survey team at a later time before their departure from Roşia Montană. In line with Goss (2004) and Walgrave and Verhulst (2009), several heuristic procedures were employed to attain randomness and representativity. They included distributing questionnaires at different locations within the field sites at different times of the day and on each day of the five-day event. Consequently, in the course of the festival, every other participant in the activist workshops and the evening concerts was surveyed adding up to a total of 340 participants and a high response rate—(81%, $n=276$)—for the chosen survey administration strategy (Weisberg et al. 1996, p. 121). The final sample size was comparable to the samples in Verhulst and Walgrave's (2009) and Saunders et al.'s (2012) studies.
4. The qualitative component of the design comprised semi-structured interviews with protest newcomers. In the course of three group interviews, I talked to 14 newcomers. All were recruited from amongst survey participants. The interview protocol invited interviewees to reflect on their pathway to participation in the protest festival, whether and how they had used social networking services at any point in that process.
5. For a timely collection of articles on the topic, see the special issue of *Information, Communication and Society,* vol. 18, issue 8.
6. Needless to say this principle is not foolproof. The literature on cyber-bullying bears witness to this fact. See for example M.A.Campbell (2005), 'Cyber bullying: An old problem in a new guise?', *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling* 15(1): 68–76, and C.S. Bhat (2008), 'Cyber bullying: Overview and strategies for school counsellors, guidance officers, and all school personnel,' *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling* 18(1): 53–66.
7. The socio-demographic variables of age, gender and education acted as controls in the logit models (Mosca 2008; Tufekci and Wilson 2012).
8. No relationship was found between general participatory experience and previous participation at the protest festival.
9. Participants were asked the following questions: 'In the last year where did you get information about FânFest?' and 'If you used the internet to get such information, where specifically did you find it?' On a nominal scale, answer options ranged from open mass-media channels such as radio, television, newspapers to family and friends, SNSs and closed channels such as NGO websites.

10. In their consideration of mobilisation channels Verhulst and Walgrave (2009) relied on a survey item which queried respondents on the means of communication they used to learn about the protest they attended. Similarly, FânFest participants were asked the following questions: 'In the last year where did you get information about FânFest?' and 'If you used the Internet to get such information, where specifically did you find it?' Answer options ranged from open mass-media channels to family and friends to closed channels such as NGO websites, email and finally, SNSs.
11. The most powerful of the logit models was that for Facebook usage. That model's explained variance was nevertheless small. This as well as all the other regression models in this study held limited explanatory power. They therefore should be viewed as exploratory models allowing for predictions on membership in the categories of the dependent variables (Menard 2002; Field 2005).
12. The general level of affiliation was measured with the question, 'Are you a member of a non-governmental organisation?'
13. Respondents were asked if they used Facebook, Google+ or Twitter to encourage their friends to go to FânFest, or alternatively, if they had been encouraged by their friends on Facebook, Google+ or Twitter to attend the festival.
14. Drawing on Brunsting and Postmes (2002) and Verhulst and Walgrave (2009), respondents were queried about the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements, 'I identify with the other people present here' and 'I am a member of the Save Roşia Montană campaign'.
15. I designed a single scale for SNS usage comprising information retrieval and push and pull communication (Cronbach's $\alpha = .70$).

References

Andersen, M. S. (2002). Ecological modernization or subversion? The effect of Europeanization on Eastern Europe. *American Behavioral Scientist, 45*(9), 1394–1416.

Anduiza, E., Cristancho, C., & Sabucedo, J. M. (2014). Mobilization through online social networks: The political protest of the *indignados* in Spain. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(6), 750–764.

Badescu, G., Sum, P., & Uslaner, E. M. (2004). Civil society development and democratic values in Romania and Moldova. *East European Politics and Societies, 18*(2), 316–341.

Bastos, M. T., Mercea, D., & Charpentier, A. (2015). Tweets, tents, and events: The interplay between street protests and social media. *Journal of Communication*. doi:10.1111/jcom.12145.

Bennett, W. L. (2003). Communicating global activism. *Information, Communication & Society, 6*(2), 143–168.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(5), 739–768.

Boulianne, S. (2009). Does Internet use affect engagement? A meta-analysis of research. *Political Communication, 26*(2), 193–211.

Boyd, D. (2006). Social network sites: My definition. *Apophenia: Making connections where none previously existed*. Retrieved December 10, 2009, from http://www.zephoria.org/thoughts/archives/2006/11/10/social_network_1.html

Brunsting, S., & Postmes, T. (2002). Social movement participation in the digital age: Predicting offline and online collective action. *Small Group Research, 33*(5), 525–554.

Castells, M. (1997). *The power of identity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Chadwick, A. (2008). Web 2.0.: New challenges for the study of e-democracy in an era of information exuberance. *I/S A Journal of Law and Policy for the Information Society, 5*(1), 9–42.

Dalton, R. J. (2006). *Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced industrial democracies*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Dalton, R. J. (2008). Citizenship norms and the expansion of political participation. *Political Studies, 56*(1), 76–98.

Deletant, D. (2006). *Ceausescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965–89*. London: Hurst & Company.

della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Diani, M. (2000). Social movement networks virtual and real. *Information, Communication and Society, 3*(3), 386–401.

Earl, J., Hurwitz McKee, H., Mejia Mesinas, A., Tolan, M., & Arlotti, A. (2013). This protest will be tweeted. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(4), 459–478.

Fenton, N., & Barassi, V. (2011). Alternative media and social network sites: The politics of individuation and political participation. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 179–196.

Field, A. (2005). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. London: Sage.

Fisher, D. R., & Boekkooi, M. (2010). Mobilizing friends and strangers. *Information, Communication and Society, 13*(2), 193–208.

Flanagin, A. J., Stohl, C., & Bimber, B. (2006). Modeling the structure of collective action. *Communication Monographs, 73*(1), 29–54.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Gonzalez-Bailon, S., Borge-Holthoefer, J., & Moreno, Y. (2013). Broadcasters and hidden influential in online protest diffusion. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 943–965.

Goss, K. A. (2004). Rethinking the political participation paradigm. *Women and Politics, 25*(4), 83–118.

Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *The American Journal of Sociology, 78*(6), 1360–1380.

Harlow, S., & Harp, D. (2012). Collective action on the web. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(2), 196–216.

Harlow, S. (2012) Social media and social movements: Facebook and an online Guatemalan justice movement that moved offline. *New Media and Society*, 14 (2): 225-243.

Jane. (2012). *Participant at FânFest* [interview by author]. Rosia Montana: 18 August 2012.

Jasper, J. M. (1997). *The art of moral protest: Culture, biography and creativity in social movements.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Jasper, J. M., & Poulsen, J. D. (1995). Recruiting strangers and friends: Moral shocks and social networks in animal rights and anti-nuclear protests. *Social Problems, 42*(4), 493–512.

Jeff (2012). *Participants at FânFest* [interview by author]. Rosia Montana: 18 August 2012.

Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2011). The early bird catches the news: Nine things you should know about micro-blogging. *Business Horizons, 54*(2), 105–113.

Kavada, A. (2009). Email lists and the construction of an open and multifaceted identity. *Information, Communication and Society, 12*(6), 817–839.

Keira. (2012). *Member of the FânFest coordination team* [interview by author]. Cluj, Romania, 10 August 2012.

Klandermans, B. (2004). The demand and supply of participation: Social-psychological correlates of participation in social movements. In D. A. Snow, S. A. Soule, & H. Kriesi (Eds.), *The Blackwell companion to social movements* (pp. 360–379). Oxford: Blackwell.

Lim, M. (2013). Framing Bouazizi: White lies, hybrid network, and collective/connective action in the 2010–11 Tunisian uprising. *Journalism, 14*(7), 921–941.

Maireder, A., & Schwarzenegger, C. (2012). A movement of connected individuals. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(2), 171–195.

Margetts, H., John, P., Escher, T., & Reissfelder, S. (2012). Social information and political participation on the Internet: An experiment. *European Political Science Review, 3*(3), 321–344.

McAdam, D. (1986). Recruitment to high-risk activism: The case of Freedom Summer. *The American Journal of Sociology, 92*(1), 64–90.

McAdam, D., & Paulsen, R. (1993). Specifying the relationship between social ties and activism. *The American Journal of Sociology, 99*(3), 640–667.

McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. (1977). Resource mobilization and social movements; a partial theory. *American Journal of Sociology, 82*(6), 1212–1241.

McDonald, K. (2002). From solidarity to fluidarity: Social movements beyond "collective identity" – the case of globalization conflicts. *Social Movement Studies, 1*(2), 109–128.

Melucci, A. (1996). *Challenging codes: Collective action in the information age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Menard, S. (2002). *Applied logistic regression analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mercea, D., Nixon, P., & Funk, A. (2013). Unaffiliated socialization and social media recruitment: Reflections from occupy the Netherlands. In P. Nixon, R. Rawal, & D. Mercea (Eds.), *Politics and the Internet in comparative context: Views from the cloud*. London: Routledge.

Mosca, L. (2008). A double-faced medium? The challenges and opportunities of the Internet for social movements. In T. Hayhtio & J. Rinne (Eds.), *Net working/networking: Citizen initiated Internet politics* (pp. 41–73). Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Myers, D. (1994). Communication technology and social movements: Contributions of computer networks to activism. *Social Science Computer Review, 12*(2), 250–260.

Neuman, W. L. (2003). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic phoenix: Reinventing political activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pickavance, C. G. (1999). Democratization and the decline of social movements: The effects of regime change on collective action in Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and Latin America. *Sociology, 33*(2), 353–372.

Pickerill, J. (2003). *Cyberprotest: Environmental activism online*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Postmes, T., & Brunsting, S. (2002). Collective action in the age of the Internet: Mass communication and online mobilization. *Social Science Computer Review, 20*(3), 290–301.

Rootes, C. (Ed.). (2003). *Environmental protest in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Saunders, C., Grasso, M., Olcese, C., Rainsford, E. E., & Rootes, C. (2012). Explaining differential protest participation: Novices, returners, repeaters and stalwarts. *Mobilization, 17*(3), 263–280.

Segerberg, A., & Bennett, W. L. (2011). Social media and the organisation of collective action: Using Twitter to explore the ecologies of two climate change protests. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 197–215.

Snow, D. A., Burke Rochford, E., Jr., Worden, S. K., & Benford, R. D. (1986). Frame alignment processes, micromobilization, and movement participation. *American Sociological Review, 51*(4), 464–481.

Theocharis, Y. (2012a). The contribution of websites and blogs to the students' protest communication tactics during the 2010 UK university occupations. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(9), 1477–1513.

Theocharis, Y. (2012b). The wealth of occupation networks? Communication patterns and information distribution in a Twitter protest network. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 10*(1), 35–56.

Thorson, K., Driscoll, K., Ekdale, B., Edgerly, S., Gamber Thompson, L., Schrock, A., Swartz, L., Vraga, E. K., & Wells, C. (2013). Youtube, Twitter and the occupy movement: Connecting content and circulation practices. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(3), 421–451.

Tufekci, Z., & Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahir Square. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 363–379.

Valenzula, S., Arriagada, A., & Scherman, A. (2012). The social media basis of youth protest behavior: The case of Chile. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 299–314.

van Dijck, J. (2013). *The culture of connectivity: A critical history of social media*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Laer, J. (2010). Activists 'online' and 'offline': The Internet as an information channel for protest demonstrations. *Mobilization, 15*(3), 405–417.

van Stekelenburg, J., & Klandermans, B. (2010). Individuals in movements: A social psychology of contention. In B. Klandermans & C. Roggeband (Eds.), *Handbook of social movements across disciplines*. New York: Springer.

Verhulst, J., & Walgrave, S. (2009). The first time is the hardest? A cross-national and cross-issue comparison of first-time protest participants. *Political Behavior, 31*(3), 455–484.

Vissers, S., & Stolle, D. (2012). Spill-over effects between Facebook and on/offline political participation. Evidence from a two-wave panel study. Paper presented at the *Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting*, 15–17 June 2012.

Walgrave, S., & Verhulst, J. (2009). *Protest surveying. Testing the feasibility and reliability of an innovative methodological approach to political protest*. Retrieved February 10, 2010, from http://www.protestsurvey.eu/index.php?page=publications

Weisberg, H. F., Krosnick, J. A., & Bowen, B. D. (1996). *An introduction to survey research, polling and data analysis* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

CHAPTER 5

Organisational Form

In this chapter and building on the analysis in Chap. 3, I return to discuss the prefigurative participation occasioned by the networked communication of social movement organisations who publicise their collective action on social media. Specifically, I assay the scope for deliberative decision-making by social movement organisations (SMOs) and their Facebook audiences (see also Kavada 2009; della Porta 2011; Loader and Mercea 2011; Agarwal et al. 2014). I use the term *audience* in a narrow sense to designate Facebook users who consume content whilst also collaborating towards its co-creation or circulation (Östman 2012). My focus on this topic was prompted by intimations that inherent to social media is a collaborative ethos that stimulates an appetite for democratic participation both on and offline (Östman 2012). As I discuss this possibility, I concentrate on the form of social movement organisations and the transformations it may have suffered when becoming interwoven with connective action. I wade into this topic with original social media data gathered on the Facebook groups of the 2008 Camp for Climate Action and the 2012 Occupy Den Haag encampment (The Hague, Netherlands), which I examined in light of interviews I conducted with the administrators of those outlets.[1]

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_5

The Participatory Culture of Social Media

A first element to the theoretical backdrop of this chapter was the notion that social media are the latest embodiment of cultural aspirations—largely spawned by the commercial developers of the technology—to reposition audiences away from a static and into an interactive ontology of direct involvement in the collective production of the very content they consume (Hinton and Hjorth 2013, p. 18). This desire has a long-standing association with the rise of the Internet and the rhetoric—now largely spurned—of a progressive redistribution of the means of (cultural) production down to the ordinary user of media technologies.

Internet-based applications developed for commercial profit in the first decade of the century to foreground user input in networked communication and social interaction were regarded as the cornerstone to a renewed participatory culture (Jenkins 2006; Jenkins and Carpentier 2012). Predicated on voluntary exchanges of information, knowledge and emotions, this vaunted participatory culture promised to breathe new life into collective forms of organisation and production towards economic, political or social ends (Benkler 2006). The term *participation* at once conjured up pro-social behaviour and creative forms of engagement readily scaled up through networked communication, and, contrariwise, a persistent apprehension about the scope (van Dijk 2006), quality (Zillien and Hargittai 2009) and social diversity it engendered (Yardi and Boyd 2011).

The major premise of this cultural project has been that conversation (Hinton and Hjorth 2013, p. 8) and collaboration (Bruns 2008) are the dominant modalities of interrelation between various actors who share the same technological environment construed as a social space (Zuckerman 2008). Rudiments of this theory have seeped into multiple domains of social enquiry soon becoming an object of both sustained criticism (Andrejevic 2014; Freedman 2012; Fuchs 2014; van Dijck 2013) and empirical testing (see among many others Ellison et al. 2007; Tufekci 2008; Hargittai and Litt 2012; Papacharissi 2011; Mandiberg 2012; Jenkins et al. 2013).

A preferred object of the above cultural projections, social networking sites have been held up as a potent illustration of the renewed opportunities to connect with friends and strangers alike, to socialise, debate, share and collaborate (BaeBrandtzaeg and Heim 2009). Platforms or database-driven websites, these networking services 'act as portals to diverse kinds of information, with nested applications that aggregate content, often

generated by users themselves' (Hands 2013:1). Notwithstanding, there has been a foreboding sense of an imminent deflection of this rejuvenated collective impetus by commercial imperatives. Critical voices such as José van Dijck (2013; see also Fuchs 2012) have raised the alarm about the active interference of social media platforms like Facebook with the development of social networks and the circulation of so-called user-generated content through proprietary sorting algorithms.

In the next few passages, I outline the theoretical rationale for the empirical study. At this point, I would highlight a relative paucity of sources examining the bearing the networked communication of SMOs with their online audiences has on decision-making. By contrast, the insights into the virtual public sphere, its structural properties, social composition, engagement protocols and democratic outcomes are particularly extensive (see Mercea et al. 2013 for an overview). In my eyes, the necessity to visit the subject of organisational decision-making, its deliberativeness and democratic outcomes derives from the cognizance that democratic organisation is a basis of legitimate authority (Luhman 2006). This insight, I will attempt to show, is particularly significant against the backdrop of the widening array of collective action modalities, many of which no longer necessarily pivot on an organisational lynchpin (see Bimber et al. 2005; Flanagin et al. 2006). Many obstacles previously impeding the orchestration of collective action (e.g. the administration of resources and incentives for action, Olson 1965) may be overcome through the self-organisation of individuals who, as I posited earlier, may no longer need to be associated with an organisation. This possibility would by-and-large be realised through networked communication. Whilst not completely removing organisations from the collective action equation (Bennett and Segerberg 2013), the prospect presents these with challenges, not least in respect to their legitimacy.

The Shifting Terrain of Social Movement Organisation

Social movement organisations (SMOs) have been successful early adopters of information and communication technologies (ICTs), particularly as a means to galvanise public support (Castells 2009; della Porta et al. 2006; Chadwick 2007). In the eyes of some social movement activists (Harlow and Harp 2012), social networking sites have lent themselves well to the same purpose. My scrutiny of the communication instigated on Facebook by activists from the Climate Camp and Occupy Den Haag helps interrogate

how SMOs have embraced networked communication. To this end, my guiding question has been, what scope is there for a democratic expansion of SMO organisational forms through SNS communication?

As discussed in Chap. 2 term organisational form refers to the internal structure of interpersonal relations in an SMO (Clemens 1996). The fundamental characteristic of those relations is that they are the upshot of a twofold strategic organisational aim, to wit to mobilise and sustain the commitment of participants to collective (Clemens 1996; Tarrow 1998: 124). If one imagines collective action as a meeting point of aggrieved individuals, organisational form transpires as a protean category subject to adaptations dictated by those goals. Against the backdrop I began to sketch out in the previous chapter, of retrenching modern structures of solidarity embodied by trade unions and civic associations (see Giddens 1991; Putnam 2000; Bennett 2003; Dalton 2006), surpassing material and immaterial obstacles to collective action has been achieved 'by expressing or acting on an individual (i.e. private) interest in a way that is observable to others (i.e. public)' (2006:32). Despite the possibility of a substitution of organisations with composite structures combining networked communication technologies, the publicness they engender and a self-guided readiness to contribute to the common endeavour (Bennett and Segerberg 2012), organisations have far from faded into oblivion. On the contrary, many have started to experiment with organisational forms to face up to more transient involvement in their actions drawing on networked communication (Flanagin et al. 2006).

Even when organisations have a formal and prescriptive relationship with their members and sympathisers (what Flanagin and colleagues call an 'institutionalized' relationship, 2006:36), they may still be in a position to nurture a 'free-wheeling, uncoordinated, network-based periphery' (2006:38) of perhaps otherwise unaffiliated individuals who have a desire for the public experience of collective action (see McDonald 2002 and the analysis in the previous chapter). The latter could be activated at key moments and be provided with opportunities to make scalable personalised contributions to a common effort (Bennett and Segerberg 2011). To illustrate this argument, Bennett and Segerberg (2011:777) cite the example of 'Put People First', a vast coalition of conventional NGOs such as Oxfam, Friends of the Earth or the Catholic Overseas Development Agency, which orchestrated a 35,000 strong demonstration against the 2008 London G8 Summit. For those organisations, their online outlets—from official websites to bespoke social media—constituted an invitation

to personalised involvement permitting individuals 'to join on their own terms' (2011:780). Thus, on the one hand, the publicness of networked communication renders personalised participation and thus connective action possible. Equally, it may present organisations with a direct challenge to their internal structures (Gustafsson 2012:13).

Social movement organisations that aggregate and give voice to the interests of their constituents may find the democratic character of their conduct is liable to scrutiny (see Hirschman 1970; della Porta and Diani 2006:135–40; Gamson 1991). SMOs at the forefront of modern-day movements (e.g. the peace or the environmental movement) struggled to reconcile a necessity to centralise decision-making for the sake of greater leadership efficiency with a moral imperative to make their decision-making more democratic (Klandermans 1997:134). At stake in this dilemma has been the organisational form, historically under strain due to the predominately voluntary nature of involvement in the workings and actions of SMOs (see Hirschman 1970). Whilst holding the promise of an upsurge in mobilisation, the quoted scope for personalised participation often added to the dilemma as SMOs seized the opportunity to reach out anew to sympathisers but remained wary of the level of control over their operations they might have to cede in the process. Thus, for example, there was significant restraint in how environmental organisation interacted with their online audience through websites, which were a cheaper and more easily accessible channel for information dissemination than the mass media (Stein 2009). The same approach was later exemplified by Occupy Boston and the networked communication it conducted through social media (Juris 2012).

On the basis of these and similar observations, it has become amply apparent that there is no deus-ex-machina and a democratisation of SMO organisational forms to incorporate online audiences in decision-making processes is by no means inevitable (Mosca 2008; Vromen 2008). Indeed, organisational forms are not solely an upshot of rational strategies; they carry many of the values and the cultural idiosyncrasies of their own societies (Castells 2007). At the same time, SMOs have found strength and opportunities in the global network of exchanges, transfers and cooperation made more accessible by inexpensive ICTs (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005). Reflecting on the implications to accrue from the networked communication of SMOs, Castells asserted that 'the Internet provides the essential platform for debate, their means for acting on people's mind and ultimately serves as their most potent political weapon'

(2007:250). The likelihood, the measure, and the organisational context which would engender a democratic debate open to digitally networked though potentially sizeable constituencies periphery remain subject to empirical investigation. In this chapter, my interest lies with the possibility of an intersection between the networked communication of SMOs with their audiences on social media, on the one hand; and the decision-making on which their collective action is predicated, on the other.

The Organisational Precedents of Distributed Decision-Making

Evidence of SMOs erected on distributed online communication among its membership coupled with direct involvement of the latter in organisational affairs (Downing 2001; Dahlgren and Olsson 2007; Olsson 2008) has been cited in support of the idea that a political culture of participatory democracy is associated with such organisational form (Dahlgren 2009: 198–99). The latter ethos would be predicated on collaborative and communal values, as documented in the Open Source Movement (Weber 2004). Inclusive deliberation aided by networked and horizontal communication has previously been documented among social movements; prominently, the Global Justice Movement (Juris 2008; della Porta 2011).

The variety of deliberative decision-making the Global Justice Movement typified was transparent and inclusive whilst allowing participants an equal opportunity to persuade others of the validity of their arguments and thereby to rally individual preferences behind a vision for the public good that concerned them (2011:812). Listservs epitomised the communication technology facilitating this process (della Porta 2009). They were inexpensive to run and relatively easy to secure. An inherent difficulty with their exploitation as a decision-making platform arose from the low entry threshold and weak ties connecting the range of participants in that movement. Under such conditions, fostering trust and accountability is a particularly taxing task (Etzioni and Etzioni 1999). Put differently, the technological possibilities opened up by networked communication would not remove the social quandary of how to generate collectively-assented outcomes in heterogeneous groups. An answer maximising the technological affordance for participation, according to Kavada's (2009:832) comparative study would be to catalyse homogeneity among the participant body by instigating communication around a

shared notion of cohesive identity. This exercise in communicative participation would socialise participants into a 'vision of the public good' to be pursued collectively, helping to spawn trust and support for the organisation (della Porta 2013:9).

This realm of possibility was infused with further anticipations of democratic engagement pinned on the scalability, visibility and the expedience of volunteer collaboration on social media (Benkler 2006; Bruns 2008; Gustafsson 2012). Collaboration would encompass the shared practice of 'posting, judging, and commenting on the contributions made by self or others in UGC [user-generated content] environments online' (Östman 2012:5). Facebook has been a prime example of a fertile environment for this social practice (Chiu et al. 2008).

In an early theorisation of ramifications for democratic participation, Andrew Chadwick looked upon social networking sites as the main stage for a democratic mode of individual involvement in projects instigated by organisations seeking the activation of loosely coordinated latent social networks to carry out collective action (Chadwick 2007). This seductive prospect, we were nonetheless warned, would not save the user from becoming a commodity (Fuchs 2009) in a business model that turns the ingredients of collaboration—individual preferences and expressiveness—into advertising revenue (Goldberg 2011). Whilst such commercial reroutings of collaboration may indeed be in train, users of social network sites (SNS) are similarly likely to become immersed into a 'participatory culture' of content consumption that hinges on the aggregation of their preference rankings (Beer and Burrows 2010). According to these two authors, such aggregation—unfolding in the public eye—underpins the inner workings of social media rendering them into a stage where collective efforts at mobilisation are readily visible and potentially germinal for democratic participation (Margetts et al. 2012).

Critical observers have warned of the inconsequence of expressive political action characterised as democratic by virtue of its publicness, voluntarism and networked distribution (Dean 2009; Karpf 2010; Morozov 2011; Östman 2012). In this guise, participation purportedly materialises in posts, comments and the viral circulation and valuation of content enacted through social media. Circumspect commentators have sought to dispel claims that the augmented social networking capacity of social media inevitably translates into higher levels of public participation in meaningful collective action. They have argued that social networking sites, much like websites before them (Stein 2009), are chiefly a 'microbroadcasting'

instrument for one-way content distribution, including by SMOs (Juris 2012). In their hands, social networking sites can quickly become an effective instrument for the rationalisation of the communication with the support base. SNS thereby aid with 'quickly, cheaply, and effectively blast[ing] out vast amounts of information, links, and updates [albeit] via person-to-person, ego-centered networks' (Juris 2012, p. 267). Turning earlier hopeful assumptions on their head, instead of enablers of concerted democratic deliberation and horizontal association among social movement actors and organisations, SNS have been depicted as an instrument for transient attention and low-commitment to collective action (Skoric 2012).

Notwithstanding the above, SNS remain a terrain for messy and unruly collaboration (Jenkins 2006, p. 246). A structure of interpersonal relations may take shape as people communicate through SNS outlets dedicated to collective action without necessarily converging on the parameters of their collaboration. An interactive audience provides a performative and open stage for people to bolster their 'skills and confidence necessary for voicing political ideas and standpoints' (Östman 2012, p. 1008). Distributed expressivity and heuristic rules of engagement will help delineate the outlines of an emerging organisation (Olsson et al. 2009, p. 247). This modality of collaboration has been regarded as distinctly not teleological as it may often see 'each participant appl[y] their own rules…none of which are wrong at face value. Debates about rules are part of the process' (Jenkins 2006, p. 53).

The fact remains that collaboration in the form of debates or sharing and consuming content has been far more infrequent on social networking sites than the phatic validation of social bonds (BaeBrandtzaeg and Heim 2009, pp. 147–149). Instances have, however, been recorded of collaboration predicated on distributed forms of leadership (Jameson 2009). Based on a horizontal, informal and flexible approach to group coordination, distributed leadership both encourages and is contingent on active participant contributions to the articulation of a collective project. In sum, an informed analysis on the question of whether democratic organisation may be coextensive with distributed collaboration will necessarily dwell on the expectations that actors party to it bring to the table and, in equal measure, the rules of engagement they formulate and perhaps also dispute together. SMOs harnessing SNS collaboration may thus see audiences made party to the coordination of a collective project. Audiences would in turn become active stakeholders in a collective action project to whose shaping they contribute through commentary and circulation. The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to assaying these propositions.

From Mobilisation to Decision-Making: An Unlikely Path

The intricacies of the communication on the Facebook groups of the Climate Camp and Occupy Den Haag were pieced together with research data gathered from a plurality of sources.[2] The comparative analysis entailed the literal replication of case studies (Yin 1994). Accordingly, cases were selected in the knowledge that they bore many similarities allowing for a consistent treatment of the research data. The protest camps were akin to each other in their open and horizontal organisational structures and their consensus-seeking decision-making protocols. Most significantly, they both seized on Facebook for the chance the service presented to engage and nurture the support base.

Their Facebook groups[3] stood apart in one important regard, namely the size of their membership. The Climate Camp group had 1500 members in August 2008. By contrast, several weeks into its occupation, in December 2011, Occupy DH had attracted 245 members. The two were further dissimilar in the scope of member activity though on this score Occupy DH outshone the Climate Camp. I retrieved 189 posts and comments from the Climate Camp group covering the period from January 2007 when the group was created and up until January 2009. I collected 1800 posts and comments from the Occupy DH group from October to December 2011. One explanation for the latter discrepancy may be that at the time of the Climate Camp, Facebook was still a novelty tool used exploratively (Rachel 2008). At Occupy DH it was the primary channel of communication with the world beyond the encampment (Joost 2011). Facebook's express facilitation of expressivity (Hunt et al. 2012, p. 189) coupled with the continual growth in the amount of time and intensity of Facebook usage (Hunt et al. 2012) might be part of the reason for the gap recorded in the number of posts. Despite the contrast, in both settings there was anxiety about the groups' communication on Facebook. I examined the Facebook data with qualitative content analysis (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009).[4]

In Chap. 2, I argued that two protest camps were exemplars of self-governed autonomous physical spaces temporarily and intentionally removed from the authority of the state (see Frenzel et al. 2014). Historically, protest camps have been sites of innovation in collective action, host to cultural experimentation with identity, organisation and modalities of political action and expression. They depart from the established institutional practices of liberal democracies and subscribe to deliberative models

of decision-making (Jowers et al. 1999; della Porta 2011). The Camp for Climate Action was a protest camp established as an incubator for direct action against the largest carbon polluters in the UK. It followed in the tracks of direct action protest camps of earlier decades staged by the peace movement (Doherty 2000). Occupy DH was one of the many protest camps around the world inspired by the Occupy Wall Street protest in the US. Both protest camps were part of ample, trans-national movements confronting topical problems with a global impact, i.e. climate change (Flowers and Chodkiewicz 2009) and the global financial crisis (Tharoor 2011).

Both camps bore characteristics typifying social movement organisations (SMOs). I embrace the term SMO especially in light of the mission statements of the camps. Climate Camp occupied the radical flank of the UK environmental movement spectrum previously depicted as cliquey and detached from the mainstream of the movement (Saunders 2008). The camp, however, was envisioned as the organisational lynchpin of a new-fangled social movement on climate change, fundamentally predicated on direct action (Rachel 2008; Saunders and Price 2009). As already noted, its organisational form comprised a loose and informal network of local, variably sized activist groups. Its public national gatherings as well as its networked communication—especially its listserv and Facebook outlets—were key avenues devised to usher in new recruits (Larry 2008; Rachel 2008).

The organisational contours of the Occupy Movement remained elusive due to its articulation as a pluralist aggregation of individuals (Juris 2012). The Occupy encampments constituted the organisational groundwork for the movement of individual participants transitorily orbiting the protests, chiefly by recourse to social media (Juris 2012, p. 269). From the outset, in a similar vein to the Climate Camp (see Saunders and Price 2009), Occupy DH developed as a loose, horizontal and autonomous gathering of individuals congregating out of solidarity with other encampments around the world and in the attempt to bring the symbolism of the Occupy Movement to the Hague (Joost 2011). Closely following the example of Occupy Wall Street and again resembling the Climate Camp, Occupy DH resisted any imposition of agendas and organisational procedures emanating from established activist organisations (Tharoor 2011). In the following paragraphs I pore over the communication on the Facebook group of the protest camps to ponder the possible ramifications for their organisational form to derive from it.

The Climate Camp

From the very outset, for the Climate Camp, Facebook was an entryway into a terrain with a large density particularly of individuals unaffiliated with either the camp or other activist entities connected to it (Rachel 2008). Initial estimates by the activists who set up the Facebook outlets of the camp were that outreach via e-mail would outstrip dissemination on Facebook (Rachel 2008). The camp would be able to reach an expected 10–15,000 people with e-mail updates (Connor 2008). The Facebook group, on the other hand, promised a distributed and highly visible dissemination of calls to participation that marked a qualitative turn towards more sustained communication with unaffiliates (Rachel 2008). This outcome would follow as activist content cascaded from a nucleus of activists close to the camp into their personal networks and beyond. Young people—'sort of sixteen to twenty five…ish'—(Rachel 2008) were expected to form the mainstream of the 'Facebook demographic' who had previously been inaccessible with activist media including e-mails. It was this intuition that sealed the decision to create the Facebook group. Rachel (2008), one of the three group administrators, argued that '[the group] is… a good way of reaching out to non-activist types because you can easily contact all of your friends regardless of whether or not they're in activist circles'.

Once the group went live and started to attract interest, communication on it began to fall into a twin-tracked pattern. First, group members sparked conversations with one another. There were instances, Rachel observed, when members would chat amongst themselves on the Group wall, its public noticeboard system. Administrators took a deliberate decision not to intrude into this communication. Second, group members would send direct messages to the group administrators. Rachel viewed this development as an opportunity for the camp to build affinity with Group members and therefore made a deliberate effort to respond to queries in a timely fashion. She recalled that a good number of messages surprised her particularly because of the distinction senders drew between Facebook and e-mail communication. Many of those who preferred Facebook over e-mail believed the matters they wished to raise were too trivial to be put in an e-mail to the official camp account. More personal, communication via direct messages on the Facebook group was a more immediate, informal way to get in touch with a camp representative. As she recollected,

> 'I also, as the administrator of the group, got a lot of Facebook messages from people with concerns, or questions, or strange rants… which was really good because… I think it was mostly people who wouldn't have felt it was quite serious enough or their question was important enough to sort of email one of the official Climate Camp emails but it was OK to send somebody a quick message on Facebook' (Rachel 2008).

The questions for the group administrators were often relayed by these via e-mail to other camp activists, for an informed response. In that manner, the administrators generated a feedback loop linking two different organisational regions, which Rachel identified as 'informal and formal networks'. The former comprised chiefly Facebook group members with no prior involvement with the camp. The formal networks to which Rachel referred were the interconnected activist task groups in charge of specific aspects of the protest. This message exchange, not dissimilar to the operation of an earlier telephone switchboard proved effective at wiring the camp's Facebook audience into the network of interpersonal relations underpinning that SMO's organisational form. To put it more simply, Rachel viewed the exchanges she facilitated among members of the Facebook group and the camp networks as essential for those 'informal, loose networks, loose groupings to organise, to form' (Rachel 2008). Her efforts pertained to collaboration between the camp and the Facebook audience albeit not geared towards the co-development of collective resources. Further, there was no suggestion that at any point the messages for the camp had flowed into its decision-making. Instead, the aim pursued by the camp was to enable group members to self-organise into autonomous groups ahead of the protest and in order for them to independently define the parameters of their participation. The indications of collaboration were further cross-examined through the qualitative content analysis of the messages posted on the wall of the Facebook group. The classification of those messages is presented in Table 5.1.

All messages conveying factual information regarding the actions choreographed by the Climate Camp and other affiliated organisations as well as references to various news sources covering them were coded as 'information'. 'Deliberation' was the code clustering messages that either solicited or responded to another member's comment. Topics raised encompassed the science and politics of climate change; the merit and consequences of the campaign against plans to build a new power station at Kingsnorth; or ways to adapt one's lifestyle to climate change. Third,

Table 5.1 Code descriptors and the inter-coder reliability test frequencies for the Climate Camp and Occupy Den Haag Facebook Groups

Code	*Code descriptions*	*Frequencies*[a] *Climate Camp*	*Frequencies*[a] *Occupy Den Haag*
Information	References to information that comes from sources external to the Facebook group and is not commented by the poster	135 (27%)	163 (39%)
Mobilisation	Calls to participate in online or offline activism as well as to recruit others into it (including the camp and online/offline petitions)	84 (17%)	29 (7%)
Deliberation	Comments or questions that instigate or contribute to discussions on the politics at the heart of the camp	170 (34%)	106 (26%)
Self-organisation	Comments and questions on one's preparations to attend and enquiries about logistics at the camp as well as other protests	89 (18%)	36 (9%)
Solidarity	Praise for past, on-going or forthcoming actions including for the present camp	18 (4%)	18 (4%)
Personal Communication	Messages raising issues unrelated to protest that concern private interactions between one or more individual posters	–	61 (15%)
Total	–	496	413

[a]The final code count is larger than the number of text units (Facebook posts) examined because, depending on its semantic complexity, each unit could fall under more than one code

'mobilisation' comprised calls to action—mostly offline but also online—in support of various causes and campaigns. Of the rallying cries for action online, a large number invited members to join other activist groups on Facebook or visit their fan pages. Fourth, 'solidarity' grouped all posts signalling members' determination to attend the Climate Camp as well as posts commending previous camps; or posts offering moral support to various other actions. Finally, 'self-organisation' was the code for messages guiding members on how to organise independently to attend the Climate Camp or to participate in other actions in a similar manner.

To ponder any possible followthrough from Group communication into decision-making, I first delved deeper into the evidence pertaining to deliberation. Recurring most frequently was deliberation on the politics of climate change. Perhaps surprisingly polarised given the camp's explicit belief in an anthropogenic causation of climate change, the vibrant polemic encountered was seen as testimony to the agonistic democratic engagement that can ensue in online venues where commentaries and rejoinders challenge each other and any entrenched discursive boundaries (Dahlberg 2007). Illustratively, one contributing group member remarked:

> 'I must say, I am very worried about the current theories regarding global warming being a result of human CO_2 emissions. This has become a highly politicised movement which frequently presents information in an improper context and seems reluctant to accept findings that contradict the idea that human emissions cause climate change. I would consider myself an environmentalist and this is why I am worried by the possibility that an entirely new 'environmental' movement may have been created on the auspices of flawed science'.

Yet, deliberation did not dwell on decision-making by the Climate Camp on aspects relating to the protest itself or any other issues concerning the workings of the SMO. Instead, it was predominately argumentative. There were, nonetheless, several messages chiming with the idea that group members determine the coordinates of their own participation. Wall posts appealing to self-organisation did not allude to specific ways in which people should organise themselves. Instead, most posts referenced events and topics to organise around inviting members to take their own decisions on how to arrange their participation. Such posts were regarded as potentially empowering to group members willing to prepare autonomously for their collective action (Rachel 2008). Indeed, there seemed to be an implicit conception among contributors that self-organisation was a possibility that group members were not reluctant to embrace.

Both the communication dynamics identified on the group—among members and between the latter and administrators—may be deemed as instances of collaboration. On the one hand, Climate Camp activists attempted to forge a connection between Facebook group members and the camp's organisational core. On the other, group members swapped information pertaining to participation priming in the run-up to collective action. The camp administrators were able to seamlessly append the Group communication to the camp's organisational form which was itself

predicated on a horizontal mobilisation and coordination structure (Larry 2008). Thus, the existing organisational form presented activists with enough flexibility for them to be able to bring Facebook group members into the fold of the Climate Camp organisation. However, the process was grounded on an anarchist affinity for autonomous self-organisation traceable back to the Earth First! ethos that was quoted in several interviews with camp activists.

A normative assumption thus appeared to underpin the appeals to self-organisation made by the group administrators and perhaps also the messages posted by other contributors on the group. The assumption was that the camp's support base would congregate in small, self-guided groups, which were the prevalent organisational unit at the camp (Larry 2008) as was evidenced by the network of local groups that volunteered to host the itinerant national gatherings preceding the week-long protest. Group members who would find the recommendation to self-organise impracticable were pointed in the direction of existing local groupings wherever these were already in place. Ultimately, the Facebook group administrators were instrumental in connecting the camp's organisational core, which although itself highly decentralised, arguably stood in contrast to what was the more distant Climate Camp's Facebook periphery. Indirectly connected to the Camp via the mediation of the group administrators, the relation of the Facebook group to the Camp seemed ad hoc, transient and removed from any decision-making.

Occupy Den Haag

In the wake of the first Occupy DH demonstration on 15 October, some of the people who had attended it went on to establish the Occupy encampment. One of the first items on the order of the day for them was to have an Internet connection in place so that all on-site activities—including workshops, do-it-yourself and self-sufficiency tutorials—would be broadcast live online (Joost 2011). The underlying objective was for anyone off site with an interest in the goings-on to have the opportunity to stay up to date. Equally, the desire was that remote access would be interactive and takers would have the option to address comments and questions to the occupiers. To realise this goal, the camp created its own account on the purpose-built website www.livestream.com. The site had an on-board facility to link to Facebook so that comments made on the SNS would be synchronised with the livestream.

This initial drive to interconnect on-site and online activities had a distinct imprint on the organisational form of the encampment. Unlike the Climate Camp, Occupy DH nurtured an audience that would be able to have an immediate input in camp affairs. Its organisational form was thus premised on this very contiguity of on-site and online participation. Interpersonal relations at the heart of the camp decidedly straddled both domains and were a lifeline that helped keep the organisation going even when participants would temporarily go off site to attend to pressing affairs in their personal lives (Joost 2011).

Despite the express emphasis on contiguity, Joost, the media coordinator of Occupy DH, called attention to a definite division of labour whereby on-site activists were principally concerned with the smooth running of the encampment whilst the online audience prioritised movement-building to bolster the ranks of its supporters. In this respect, Joost (2011) saw a merit in the metricisation of outreach expressed in the automated membership count on Facebook groups. The count provided an immediate measurement of the camp's support garnered through its Facebook outlet. Reflecting on the camp's relationship with this digital constituency, he voiced both scepticism and hope in the same breath. While it was an integral part of the Occupy Movement, prefiguring the establishment of Occupy DH, Joost saw the Facebook audience as unlikely to add to numbers on the ground at the camp. Illustrating the point, he said:

> 'I think we've got 1400 fans on Facebook and I think 900 people are just there to show off. Okay, we are occupying, you know - but it doesn't involve [us] in any [other] way. But that's fine, you know, as long as they spread the word everybody is welcomed, from my part. And, uhm, you are also occupying when you only speak about it, you know' (2011).

If for the camp there was a low marginal benefit to using Facebook for onsite mobilisation, decision-making was a consensus-seeking undertaking at general assemblies that took place solely on location at the DH encampment. Joost (2011) noted that '[Facebook] is only mostly for people to let me know: I got a new video, I got this new link, I got this [and] this. But it's not used…as a platform for decision-making'. Consequently, although Facebook was instrumental to liaising with a significantly larger number of people than those present on the ground, the engagement had no bearing on decision-making. Joost suggested the design of the platform, i.e. the asynchronous nature of communication in comment threads as well as the

limited operability of Facebook's chat component, were the main hurdles precluding this possibility. In his words,

> '… you don't have like, I don't know…a group-chat function, I don't know. But if you really want to have like decision-making, you really have to…[have] a round table and…discuss certain points….you can put something on Facebook and wait for reactions, but that's not a [practical] way of decision-making' (2011).

Members' posts on the group wall attested to group collaboration chiefly directed toward circulating information and raising the profile of the camp on Facebook, and within the transnational Occupy Movement. Examining the wall posts, one immediately noticed that not unlike at the Climate Camp, the largest share of messages comprised topical information ranging from updates about upcoming actions, demonstrations and talks to articles and opinion pieces poring over the global financial crisis and the fallout from it. Deliberation was also lively albeit less argumentative than on the Climate Camp wall. Contributors touched on the mainstream media coverage of the Occupy Movement; berated capitalism for its entrenched contradictions that led to the latest economic crisis and opined on the effectiveness of the Occupy protests to galvanise opposition and alternatives to it; or commented on commonalities with other mobilisations such as the Stop-ACTA movement. Posts where contributors expressed an intention to go down to the camp site in Malieveld field or asked for advice on the essentials one had to procure for living in the encampment revealed a logic of self-organisation in play similarly to that at the Climate Camp. The posts exposed a periphery of the SMO whose apparent liminality was a consequence of their physical absence from the encampment and myriad camp activities.

Among the group members' messages one stood out for raising an issue to be put to Occupy DH's General Assembly. The post related to the provision of shelter to 'one-night occupiers' who turned up at the encampment. Its author proposed the creation of a list of volunteers who would be ready to put up such participants for a night. The postee wished that the point be placed on the agenda for the next assembly. The comment was thus meant to feed into the decision-making process at Occupy DH. Upon further inspection of the whole Occupy DH dataset I retrieved four more examples of posts that reinforced the existing decision-making process. These put forward items for deliberation in the General Assembly or put out reminders for people to attend an assembly.

Pondering ramifications for Occupy DH's organisational form led me to remark on the contradictions that networked communication may pose. The initial imbrication of on-site action and online mobilisation culminating with the establishment of the Occupy DH encampment became gradually tinted with scepticism as the Facebook group members were regarded as distinct from the on-site contingent chiefly in terms of preoccupations. The valorisation of activist conduct resulted in a ranking that placed on-site involvement above networked communication and online movement-building. Self-organisation messages acted as a bridge between these two organisational regions of Occupy DH. They sketched out various routes for the Facebook audience to join the embodied occupation. The success of a conversion of Facebook activity into embodied participation at the encampment was doubtful (Joost 2011).

The messages aimed at introducing items on the decision-making agenda were examples of ad hoc initiatives that made apparent the limited contiguity between the online and on-site domains of the encampment. There was no clear-cut protocol whereby items raised on the Group would be conveyed to the General Assembly (not even an informal arrangement as the one put in place by the administrators of the Climate Camp group) and the idea was met with increasing reluctance as the on-site occupation endured. The Facebook group did, however, bear traces of a possible mechanism whereby its members would be able to place items on the agenda for the camp's assembly. Put differently, the type of communication that I encountered might be an illustration of a gateway into decision-making for the Facebook audience of an SMO with an open and heterarchic organisational form and consensus-building decisional routines. Such potential was only very marginally fulfilled because it did not seem to be systematically pursued by either the representatives of the physical encampment or the members of its Facebook group. The group appeared to function as a noticeboard system rather than a deliberation agora where contributors raised issues they likely would have had to take to the assembly themselves to ensure they would be considered by the decision-making body.

Conclusion

At both the Climate Camp and Occupy Den Haag, Facebook was chiefly as an outlet for mobilisation and movement-building. To cascade mobilisation beyond movement infrastructures and reach out to new cohorts was the primary goal of the camp's Facebook group administrators.

Occupy DH initially embraced the goal as the encampment grew out of the networked communication sparked by the transnational Occupy Movement. Gradually, thereafter, activists on site became increasingly wary of networked communication citing its diminishing returns for mobilisation and anxiety about state surveillance (see also Mercea et al. 2013). More surprising in the case of the Climate Camp than Occupy DH, the content analysis revealed that mobilisation posts were not prevalent on either of the groups. Embracing SNS for mobilisation may relate to a perception on the part of the SMOs of the opportunity they have to access 'non-activist' prospective participants, namely unaffilates. Equally, SNS audiences appeared to be an increasingly important area of an SMO's organisational form for the purpose of protest diffusion (see also Gonzalez-Bailon et al. 2013). In the last instance, communication on the Facebook groups of the two protest camps may have been consequential to their organisational forms in that it instigated the self-organisation of autonomous groupings and individuals.

Membership of the Facebook groups would possibly have enhanced a capacity to independently decide on the parameters of one's participation and its autonomous coordination with peers. In addition, the Facebook groups were recognised by the activists who created them as integral to the loose network of variably sized groupings that collectively formed the two encampments. An organisational accommodation of self-organised groupings and individuals remained unlikely outside the confines of physical meetings, in the case of the Climate Camp. The national gatherings were the sole avenue for involvement in the array of camp processes encompassing decision-making. At Occupy DH, the Facebook audience and the on-site occupiers seemed divergent in their interests. On Facebook, this protest was embedded in a collaborative cross-national network of encampments spawned by the Occupy Movement. Offline, it grew roots in its immediate physical setting marked by localised concerns. Despite the seeming discrepancy, the Occupy encampment and its Facebook group audience appeared to operate with a common technological frame, namely a shared understanding of the group's role as an effective communication platform (Orlikowski and Gash 1994), principally adopted for information exchange and political discussion.

The best way one can depict collaboration on the two camps' Facebook groups was as narrowly focused on the circulation of information or the explication of activist politics through deliberation. Deliberation revolved around ideological moot points and did not bear directly on

decision-making at either of the camps. At the Climate Camp, the networked organisational model was predicated on the devolution of decision-making to the level of autonomous groupings. The camp's group administrators encouraged self-organisation. Conversely, there were no bottom-up calls from group members for the camp to make accommodations for their remote input in the decision-making process. In the case of Occupy DH, the group was used, inter alia, to propose items for the decision-making agenda. This was the only indication found of how Facebook communication could have ramifications for organisational form as an entry point into the co-locational decision-making process, for the SMO's Facebook audience.

The insights I have tried to provide in this chapter amount to an exploratory foray into potential implications for SMO organisational forms derived from their communication with Facebook audiences. Within the broad and fraught debate about the potential contribution of social media to civic and political participation (Loader and Mercea 2011), the analysis puts extant organisational forms in the spotlight questioning the readiness of SMOs (and likely other interest groups and collective action organisations, see Bimber et al. 2012) to perpend and respond to what amounts to heightened publicness. Equally, by looking at the demand side of this organisational equation, I alluded to a limited appetite of Facebook audiences to become immersed in those organisations.

As the research cases were selected following the principle of literal replication, my arguments could be put to the test by further studies applying the logic of theoretical replication to contrast SMOs with dissimilar organisational forms. Evaluations of the communication occurring on the Facebook outlets of other SMOs could advance this research by providing more evidence to show under what conditions SMOs may democratically alter their organisational forms as they engage with their Facebook audiences, possibly over longer periods of time. My own results indicated that despite the structural horizontality of an SMO and its consensual decision-making, Facebook may at most act as a conduit for feeding proposals into existing decision-making arrangements. More often, though, it might act constitute medium for deliberation and the circulation of information, both of which may ultimately have a purchase on mobilisation into collective action (Boulianne 2009; Margetts et al. 2012). Deliberation has been applauded for giving scope to robust democratic engagement that foregrounds voice over consensus (Dahlberg 2007), an all the more significant development in settings where one may expect a high degree of

ideological affinity. Yet, such interchange may imprint only marginally on the collective decisions that validate the actions of an SMO.

Perhaps redolent of de Certeau's (1984) ruse that disguises the subversion of dominant power into everyday practice, mobilisation drawing on the prescriptive connectivity of Facebook (van Dijck 2013) may be read off as a 'manipulation of the mechanism of discipline' (1984, p. xiv). In this light, networked communication on Facebook is a vehicle for the publicisation and dissemination of resistance. The ubiquity of surveillance—encoded in the algorithmic architecture of Facebook—does not entirely preclude the possibility of activism (see also Skeggs and Yuill 2015). Rather, the platform may inadvertently lend further impetus to activism through its automated system of social recommendation and group membership tallies (Margetts et al. 2012).

A final and fitting theoretical overtone to invoke is the distinction proposed by Geert Lovink (2011) between *networked organisation* and *organised networks*. The former pertains to 'an instrumental view of networks as tools for organisations…to exchange information and experiences' whilst the latter is an alternative organisational modality that foregrounds close project-based collaboration (2011, p. 166). Lovink berates the triumphalism extolling the participatory possibilities entailed by networked organisations to the detriment of a more vibrant imaginary that cultivates organised networks. In this chapter, I have laid out some reasons for why social movement organisations may at best be cautiously embracing this imaginary whilst ring-fencing areas of decision-making that speak of organisational path-dependence and a worldview either distrustful of collaboration or seeking to embed it into tried and tested organisational protocols and practices.[5] Lastly, the continued existence of the Facebook groups in time, beyond the flashpoint of the physical encampment, as evidenced in this study, may aid in the memorialisation (see Kaun and Stiernstedt 2012) of contention, acting as a latent resource and emblem for renewed occupations of physical space.

Notes

1. The Facebook groups were part of wider panoplies of Facebook outlets that also included fan pages and individual accounts.
2. The data reported in this study were collected at different stages in the course of a sequential, multi-annual project on the use of computer-mediated communication in social movement protest (see Mercea 2012; Mercea et al.

2013). The chapter elaborates on field work conducted at the Climate Camp and at Occupy DH, which included participant observation and semi-structured interviews with four media coordinators at the two protest camps. The topic of organisational transformations wrought by the use of SNS was raised in in-depth interviews with the Camp for Climate Action and the Occupy Den Haag organisers. In the course of those interviews the activists were invited to reflect on their motivation for adopting social media platforms in their external communication. Moreover, they were queried about the expectations and any subsequent evaluations of the communication with the audience on those platforms. In addition, the activists were encouraged to ponder on the implications for their organisations to derive from such communication. Textual data were collected solely from the Facebook groups of the protest camps. This particular type of outlet was common to both camps whilst the layout and functionality of this type of Facebook venue remained largely unchanged between 2008 and 2011.

3. According to Facebook, groups are designed for people to gather together around mutual interests, to discuss and organise collectively (Pineda 2010). The two Facebook groups were public (Sveningsson Elm 2009) in the sense that they were freely accessible to all Facebook users and contributions were not moderated by administrators. Both camps had other Facebook outlets, which I discounted from the analysis. These were either walled spaces strictly for vetted members, which would have therefore posed complex privacy ethical issues for research (2009) rendering it impractical; or they were not used by both organisations.
4. Data coding was an iterative process, which entailed discussing and amending the coding manuals to attain agreement between the coders (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, p. 4). Each post was treated as a single unit of analysis. Each unit was amenable to multiple coding, depending on the semantic complexity of the post. In practical terms, this approach was undertaken to identify and map out key themes (Zhang and Wildemuth 2009) to emerge from the communication on the Facebook groups. An inter-coder reliability test on the emergent themes was carried out to verify the consistency as well as the internal and external validity of the codes (Lindlof and Taylor 2002; Zhang and Wildemuth 2009, p. 4). The coding manuals were applied to a comparable amount of text units, i.e. the entire Climate Camp data set (N = 189) and random sample almost equal in size comprising every tenth post from the Occupy DH data set drawn without replacement (N = 183 or 10%, an optimal sample size for inter-coder reliability tests; Neuendorf 2002). Krippendorff's Alpha values were .836 for the Climate Camp data and .915 for the Occupy sample. These values suggested a good level of inter-coder agreement (Krippendorff 1980). In the final stage, all Occupy DH posts that were text-based ($n = 945$) were coded with the tested coding

manual. Excluded from the count were free-standing images not accompanied by any commentary and posts automatically generated by Facebook, e.g. whenever a new member joined or was added to the group; and all the 'likes', the automated endorsements Facebook allows users to make should they appreciate someone else's post. The between-code distributions were in line with the frequencies presented in Table 5.1 with the notable, though anticipated, exception (Stein 2009) of the higher proportion of units coded as information (54%). The distributions for the other codes were: mobilisation (8%), deliberation (22%), self-organisation (7%), solidarity (3%) and personal communication (6%).

5. In making these claims I draw on insights from the new institutionalism approach in political science. For an overview, see Hall and Taylor (1996).

References

Agarwal, S., Barthel, M. L., Rost, C., Borning, A., Bennett, W. L., & Johnson, C. N. (2014). Grassroots organizing in the digital age: Considering values and technology in Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(3), 326–341.

Andrejevic, M. (2014). *Infoglut*. London: Routledge.

BaeBrandtzaeg, P., & Heim, J. (2009). Why people use social network sites. In A. A. Ozok & P. Zaphiris (Eds.), *Online communities* (LNCS, Vol. 5621, pp. 143–152). Berlin: Springer.

Beer, D., & Burrows, R. (2010). Consumption, presumption and participatory web cultures: An introduction. *Journal of Consumer Culture, 10*(3), 3–12.

Benkler, Y. (2006). *The wealth of networks: How social production transforms markets and freedom*. New York: Yale University Press.

Bennett, W. L. (2003). Communicating global activism. *Information, Communication & Society, 6*(2), 143–168.

Bennett, L., & Segerberg, A. (2011). Collective action dilemmas with individual mobilisation through digital networks. *Information, Communication & Society, 14*(6), 770–799.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(5), 739–768.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2013). *The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bimber, B., Flanagin, A., & Stohl, C. (2005). Reconceptualizing collective action in the contemporary media environment. *Communication Theory, 15*(4), 389–413.

Bimber, B., Flanagin, A., & Stohl, C. (2012). *Collective action in organization: Interaction and engagement in an era of technological change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boulianne, S. (2009). Does Internet use affect engagement? A meta-analysis of research. *Political Communication, 26*(2), 193–211.

Bruns, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, second life, and beyond: From production to produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.

Castells, M. (2007). Communication, power and counter-power in the network society. *International Journal of Communication, 1*, 238–266.

Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chadwick, A. (2007). Digital network repertoires and organizational hybridity. *Political Communication, 24*(3), 283–301.

Chiu, P. Y., Cheung, C. M. K., & Lee, M. K. O. (2008). Online social networks: Why do *we* use Facebook. In D. L. Miltiadis, J. M. Carroll, E. Damiani, R. D. Tennyson, D. Avison, G. Vossen, et al. (Eds.), *The open knowledge society. A computer science and information systems manifesto* (pp. 67–74). Berlin: Springer.

Clemens, E. S. (1996). Organizational form as frame: Collective identity and political strategy in the American Labor Movement, 1880–1920. In D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy, & M. N. Zald (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings, Cambridge [England]* (pp. 205–226). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Connor. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. London, U.K., 07 June 2008.

Dahlberg, L. (2007). Rethinking the fragmentation of the cyberpublic: From consensus to contestation. *New Media and Society, 9*(5), 827–847.

Dahlgren, P. (2009). *Media and political engagement: Citizen, communication and democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dahlgren, P., & Olsson, T. (2007). Young activists, political horizons and the Internet: Adapting the net to one's purposes. In B. D. Loader (Ed.), *Young citizens in the digital age: Political engagement, young people and new media* (pp. 68–81). London: Routledge.

Dalton, R. J. (2006). *Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced industrial democracies*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkley: University of California Press.

Dean, J. (2009). *Democracy and other neo-liberal fantasies: Communicative capitalism and left politics*. Durham: Duke University Press.

della Porta, D. (Ed.). (2009). *Another Europe*. London: Routledge.

della Porta, D. (2011). Communication in movement. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 800–819.

della Porta, D. (2013). *Can democracy be saved? Participation, deliberation and social movements*. Cambridge: Polity.

della Porta, D., Andretta, M., Mosca, L., & Reiter, H. (2006). *Globalization from below: Transnational activists and protest networks*. Mineapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Doherty, B. (2000). Manufactured vulnerability: Protest camp tactics. In B. Seel, M. Paterson, & B. Doherty (Eds.), *Direct action in British environmentalism* (pp. 62–78). London: Routledge.

Downing, J. (2001). *Radical media: Rebellious communication and social movements.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ellison, N., Steinfeld, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook 'friends': Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 12*(4), 1143–1168.

Etzioni, A., & Etzioni, O. (1999). Face-to-face and computer-mediated communities: A comparative analysis. *The Information Society, 15*(4), 241–248.

Flanagin, A. J., Stohl, C., & Bimber, B. (2006). Modeling the structure of collective action. *Communication Monographs, 73*(1), 29–54.

Flowers, R., & Chodkiewicz, A. (2009). Developing a more research-oriented and participant-directed learning culture in the Australian environmental movement. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 49*(2), 294–317.

Freedman, D. (2012). Web 2.0 and the death of the blockbuster economy. In J. Curran, N. Fenton, & D. Freedman (Eds.), *Misunderstanding the Internet* (pp. 69–95). London: Routledge.

Frenzel, F., Feigenbaum, A., & McCurdy, P. (2014). Protest camps: An emerging field of social movement research. *The Sociological Review, 62*(3), 457–474.

Fuchs, C. (2009). Information and communication technologies and society: A contribution to the critique of the political economy of the Internet. *European Journal of Communication, 24*(1), 69–87.

Fuchs, C. (2014). *Social media: A critical introduction*. London: Sage.

Gamson, W. A. (1991). Commitment and agency in social movements. *Sociological Forum, 6*(1), 27–55.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Goldberg, G. (2011). Rethinking the public/virtual sphere: The problem with participation. *New Media and Society, 13*(5), 739–754.

Gustafsson, N. (2012). The subtle nature of Facebook politics: Swedish social network site users and political participation. *New Media and Society, 00*, 1–17.

Hall, P. A., & Taylor, R. C. R. (1996). Political science and the three new institutionalisms. *Political Studies, 44*(4), 936–957.

Hands, J. (2013). Introduction: Politics, power and platformativity. *Culture Machine, 14*, 1–8.

Hargittai, E., & Litt, E. (2012). Becoming a Tweep. *Information, Communication & Society, 15*(5), 680–702.

Harlow, S., & Harp, D. (2012). Collective action on the web. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(2), 196–216.

Hinton, S., & Hjorth, L. (2013). *Understanding social media*. London: Sage.
Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations and states*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Hunt, D., Atkin, D., & Krishnan, A. (2012). The influence of computer-mediated communication apprehension on motives for Facebook use. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, 56*(2), 187–202.
Jameson, J. (2009). Distributed leadership, trust and online communities. In A. A. Ozok & P. Zaphiris (Eds.), *Online communities* (LNCS, Vol. 5621, pp. 226–235). Berlin: Springer.
Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.
Jenkins, H. and Carpentier, N. (2013). Theorizing participatory intensities: A conversation about participation and politics. Convergence, 19(3), 265-283.
Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2013). *Spreadable media: Creating value and meaning in a networked culture*. New York: New York University Press.
Joost. (2011). *Media coordinator at occupy Den Haag* [interview by author]. The Hague, The Netherlands, 9 December 2012.
Jowers, P., Dürrschmidt, J., O'Docherty, R., & Purdue, D. (1999). Affective and aesthetic dimensions of contemporary social movements in South West England. *Innovation, 12*(1), 99–118.
Juris, J. (2008). *Networking futures: The movements against corporate globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.
Karpf, D. (2010). Online political mobilization form the advocacy group's perspective: Looking beyond clicktivism. *Policy and Internet, 2*(4), 7–41.
Kaun, A., & Stiernstedt, F. (2012). Media memories: The case of youth radio DT64. *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies, 9*(2), 337–359.
Kavada, A. (2009). Email lists and the construction of an open and multifaceted identity. *Information, Communication and Society, 12*(6), 817–839.
Keck, M.E., & Sikkink, K. (1998). Activists Beyond Borders. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
Klandermans, B. (1997). *The social psychology of protest*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. London: Sage.
Larry. (2008). Climate camp activist [interview by author]. London, UK, 08 June 2008.
Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2002). *Qualitative communication research methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking democracy? Social media innovations and participatory politics. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*(6), 757–759.

Lovink, G. (2011). *Networks without a cause: A critique of social media*. Cambridge: Polity.

Luhman, J. T. (2006). Theoretical postulations on organizational democracy. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 15*(2), 168–185.

Mandiberg, M. (Ed.). (2012). *The social media reader*. New York: New York University Press.

Margetts, H., John, P., Escher, T., & Reissfelder, S. (2012). Social information and political participation on the Internet: An experiment. *European Political Science Review, 3*(3), 321–344.

McDonald, K. (2002). From solidarity to fluidarity: Social movements beyond "collective identity" – the case of globalization conflicts. *Social Movement Studies, 1*(2), 109–128.

Mercea, D. (2012). Digital prefigurative participation: The entwinement of online communication and offline participation in protest events. *New Media and Society, 14*(1), 153–169.

Mercea, D., Nixon, P., & Funk, A. (2013). Unaffiliated socialization and social media recruitment: Reflections from occupy the Netherlands. In P. Nixon, R. Rawal, & D. Mercea (Eds.), *Politics and the Internet in comparative context: Views from the cloud*. London: Routledge.

Morozov, E. (2011). *The net delusion: How not to liberate the world*. London: Allen Lane.

Mosca, L. (2008). A double-faced medium? The challenges and opportunities of the Internet for social movements. In T. Hayhtio & J. Rinne (Eds.), *Net working/networking: Citizen initiated Internet politics* (pp. 41–73). Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Olson, M. (1965). *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Olsson, T. (2008). The practices of Internet networking – a resource for alternative political movements. *Information, Communication & Society, 11*(5), 659–674.

Olsson, T., Toivola, H., Wäljas, M., Väänänen-Vainio-Matilla, K., & Lehikoinen, J. (2009). Collective content as facilitator of community interaction: A user study of four close-knit communities. In A. A. Ozok & P. Zaphiris (Eds.), *Online communities, LNCS 5621* (pp. 246–255). Berlin: Springer.

Orlikowski, W. J., & Gash, D. C. (1994). Technological frames: Making sense of information technology in organizations. *ACM Transactions on Information Systems, 12*(2), 174–207.

Östman, J. (2012). Information, expression, participation: How involvement in user-generated content relates to democratic engagement among young people. *New Media and Society*, 00:1–18. Accessed February 18, 2012.

Papacharissi, Z. (Ed.). (2011). *A networked self: Identity, community, and culture on social network sites*. New York: Routledge.

Pineda, N. (2010). Facebook tips: What's the difference between a Facebook page and group. *The Facebook* Blog. Retrieved September 10, 2010, from http://www.facebook.com/blog/blog.php?post=324706977130

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rachel. (2008). *Climate camp activist* [interview by author]. Kingsnorth, UK, 5 August 2008.

Saunders, C. (2008). Double-edged swords? Collective identity and solidarity in the environmental movement. *The British Journal of Sociology, 59*(2), 227–253.

Saunders, C., & Price, S. (2009). One person's eu-topia, another's hell: Climate camp as a heterotopia. *Environmental Politics, 18*(1), 117–122.

Skeggs, B., & Yuill, S. (2015). Capital experimentation with person/a formation: How Facebook's monetization refigures the relationship between property, personhood and protest. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1111403.

Skoric, M. M. (2012). What is slack about slacktivism? *Methodological and Conceptual Issues in Cyberactivism Research, 77*, 77–92.

Stein, L. (2009). Social movement web use in theory and practice: A content analysis of US movement websites. *New Media and Society, 11*(5), 749–771.

Sveningsson Elm, M. (2009). How do various notions of privacy influence decisions in qualitative Internet research? In A. N. Markham & N. K. Baym (Eds.), *Internet inquiry* (pp. 69–87). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tarrow, S. (1998). *Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and politics* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Tarrow, S. (2005). *The new transnational activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tharoor, I. (2011). Hands across the world. In Time (Ed.), *What is occupy? Inside the global movement* (Kindle Edition). New York: Time Books.

Tufekci, Z. (2008). Grooming, gossip, Facebook and Myspace. *Information, Communication and Society, 11*(4), 544–564.

van Dijck, J. (2013). *The culture of connectivity: A critical history of social media*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Dijk, J. A. G. M. (2006). Digital divide research, achievements and shortcomings. *Poetics, 34*(4–5), 221–235.

Vromen, A. (2008). Political change and the Internet in Australia: Introducing get up. In T. Hayhtio & J. Rinne (Eds.), *Net working/networking: Citizen initiated Internet politics* (pp. 103–126). Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Weber, S. (2004). *The success of open source*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Yardi, S., & Boyd, D. (2011). Dynamic debates: An analysis of group polarization over time on Twitter. *Bulletin of Science, Technology and Society, 30*(5), 316–327.

Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research design and methods* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B. M. (2009). Qualitative analysis of content. In B. M. Wildermuth (Ed.), *Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science* (pp. 1–12). Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. Retrieved May 21, 2011, from http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~yanz/Content_analysis.pdf

Zillien, N., & Hargittai, E. (2009). Digital distinction: Status-specific types of Internet usage. *Social Science Quarterly, 90*(2), 274–291.

Zuckerman, E. (2008). *The cute cat theory talk at Etech.* Retrieved March 10, 2010, from http://www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2008/03/08/the-cute-cat-theory-talk-at-etech/

CHAPTER 6

Participatory Coordination

With the benefit of hindsight, in this book I have visited some of the most influential arguments to tackle the questions left in the wake of a particularly vibrant decade for contentious politics.[1] In this chapter, I deepen the scrutiny of the capacity historically unique to organisations to coordinate collective action and the multiple elements that make it possible. Organisations have been uniquely competent at incentivising individual participation in collective action (Olson 1965). There has been, however, one blind spot in the collective action theory that has prompted recent reassessments. The theory has placed emphasis on organisational capacity discounting the possibility that collective action is an equilibrium contingent on social interaction whereby individual motives are aligned with collective resources and goals (Baldassarri 2009, p. 394). Put differently, the classical theory of collective action has failed to look upon communication as the primary vehicle that connects the various actors that orchestrate and partake in collective action.

In the previous chapter, I pored over the opportunities and pitfalls that befall social movement organisations embracing networked communication as a means to galvanise participation in the collective actions they orchestrate. In this chapter, I turn my attention to what I understand to be an organisational modality I call *participatory coordination*. My starting point here is the proposition that scalable, informal and often transient organisational structures erected on human-technological networks have come to mirror the coordinational capacity of long-standing organisations

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_6

(Bennett and Segerberg 2012). Contemporary *connective action* typifies an expressive mode of participation predicated on individual acts of sharing 'political demands and grievances…in very personalized accounts' (2012, p. 742). Rather than to forestall the capacity for coordination, individual contributions help produce, integrate and curate information and resources (adapted from Bennett et al. 2014, p. 234) immediately available through the organisational infrastructure assembled with social media and other custom-made Internet applications.

A distinct possibility to attain organisation made viable with networked communication (Flanagin et al. 2006; Castells 2007; Earl and Kimport 2011; Bimber et al. 2012; Gerbaudo 2012), *connective action* is only beginning to be the subject of etic empirical treatments following the seminal theoretical work by Bennett and Segerberg (2013). So far we have learned that in the Indignados and the Occupy movements, for example, 'brick-and-mortar' organisations played a residual role. Instead, ad hoc, organic decision-making bodies and the sustained use of networked communication by their broader support base were the lifeblood of those movements, being instrumental to their operation (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Castells 2012; Juris 2012) and identity (Monterde et al. 2015). In a more recent article, Bennett and his colleagues (2014) treat us to a large-scale perspective on organisational tasks carried out in the multilayered networks of Occupy Wall Street that engendered organisation as a cumulative outcome of myriad inputs.[2] The operation of those networks was embedded in local settings (2014, p. 238) defined inter alia by political opportunity structures, relations among activists, location or communication architectures.[3]

Like Bennett and his collaborators before her, Kavada (2015:13) surveyed the Occupy Movement, contending that although it was undoubtedly a 'movement of the squares' (Gerbaudo 2012), it was equally a meeting point of many voices that contributed to the articulation of its identity through their communication, of which a significant part took place on social media. In this chapter, I tap into these and cognate investigations in order to evaluate the scope for a participatory development of motivations and resources to undertake collective action through Facebook and Twitter communication. Both social networking services were used ahead of the concerted 9 June 2012 protest against the international Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA). Their usage in the Green Revolution in Iran (Segerberg and Bennett 2011), the Arab Spring (Tufekci and Wilson 2012), the Indignados (Castells 2012) and

the Occupy Movements (Pickerill and Krinsky 2012) has generated many of the influential insights that I review in this book. The ACTA data was collected ahead and during the day of the pan-European protest.[4]

A key feature of social networking services has been the public display of highly individualised and personalised exchanges among users (Langlois et al. 2009; Poell 2014). Facebook and Twitter leave distinct imprints on the public communication taking place on them (Poell 2014, p. 719). Twitter hashtags—key words or abbreviations preceded by the hash sign (#)—are an apt illustration of how Twitter has sought to help classify, aggregate and make prominent discussions around issues of public concern (Bruns and Burgess 2012, p. 804). The #ows hashtag was a lynchpin of the process whereby various networks subsumed to the Occupy Movement would interface and become integrated (Bennett et al. 2014, p. 239). Hashtags are thus an example of how both *restrictive* and *productive* possibilities for social, political or cultural interrelations can be coextensive with the use of social media (Langlois et al. 2009, pp. 417–419). Facebook, on the other hand, has created event and fan pages.

The above are templates service subscribers can customise, including in terms of their degree of publicness, in direct relation to the interest they seek to attract from fellow subscribers. Such modalities for assembling *networked publics* (Langlois et al. 2009) have proved especially valuable for political activism. In one illustration, activists from Guatemala established Facebook pages to circulate calls to action, disseminate timely information about their actions or to voice opinions and document their protest participation (Harlow 2012, p. 12). Similarly, in the course of the Arab Spring, Twitter was repurposed by activists chronicling the events, their messages systematically displaying a sense of solidarity with on-going street protests (Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira 2012, p, 275).

Both these illustrations point to a spectrum of activist practices enacted with social networking services. Grounded in the social psychology of collective action, the research I report here, which I undertook together with Andreas Funk was simultaneously aimed at further explicating and testing the theory of connective action. We thus undertook to build a theoretical model whereby to ascertain the likelihood that coordination would flow from the networked communication of prospective participants in the 9 June protests. Identifying two previously disparate strands of research into the scope for coordination in networked communication, we came to see coordination as encompassing (1) efforts to source and administer necessary resources for collective action (see Bennett and Segerberg 2012,

p. 749; Bennett et al. 2014), and (2) to foster commitment to collective action (Garrett 2006; Enjolras et al. 2012; Valenzula 2013). The ensuing empirical exploration culminated in the term *participatory coordination*.

Theorising Participatory Coordination

First, the potential was scrutinized for individual motives to engage in collective action to be elicited through communication on social media platforms. This focus represented a departure from enquiries into the antecedent individual motives for either sharing content (Leung 2009) or for becoming involved in collective action through the medium of networked communication (Postmes and Brunsting 2002; Enjolras et al. 2012). In turn, we proposed motivational coordination as an amalgamation of framing theory and the social-psychological scholarship on individual participation in collective action. Fundamentally, the concern at the heart of the project was with the *productive* aspects of both Facebook and Twitter and, with the social, technological and discursive parameters and implications of enacting (contentious) politics with networked communication technologies (see Langlois et al. 2009, p. 417).

As connective action theory draws on the substantial body of scholarship on framing, I should outline how both fit into our attempt to define participatory coordination. Framing is the process of 'assign[ing] meaning and interpret[ing] relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists' (Snow and Benford 1988, p. 198). Historically, framing has been the preserve of social movement organisations. A cardinal critique of the frame-analytical perspective has consequently been that 'individual actors do the framing but the frames are ascribed to [superordinate] social movements' (Opp 2009, p. 273). The penetrating argument that Opp made was that within social movements, the construction and negotiation of collective action frames was yet to be unpicked systematically. The idea was iterated also in relation to the networked communication of collective action frames (see Bennett and Toft 2008).

Collective action frames are discursive objects thrashed out in communication. They are an upshot of 'the talk and conversations—the speech acts—and written communication of movement members that occur primarily in the context of, or in relation to, movement activities' (2000, p. 623). The construction of frames thus assumes active participation in a discursive process. Evidence of its intricacies is however limited (Gamson

1992). In studies that have looked at networked communication, attention has concentrated on the part played by organisations in frame-building, i.e. the distillation of activist narratives into poignant frames disseminated within sprawling constellations of activist websites (Bennett et al. 2011). Cognate work has shed light on underlying digital network structures that facilitate frame-building whilst looking at how frames travel from organisations to individuals through the medium of stories (Bennett and Toft 2008). Whilst frames are a distillation of fuller narratives, narratives are the product of at least three convergent viewpoints—of the narrator, the protagonist and the audience (Polletta 1998, p. 223). As assumed experts in an area of contention who are prized for their 'well-evidenced and clearly specified arguments', activists often have to refrain from self-expression (1998, p. 230). Conversely, ordinary participants may take an active role in the discursive processes unfolding within the self-expressive communicative environment of social media. Studying the articulation of movement narratives and collective action frames can reveal the input made by various actors populating the digital networks weaved around a protest. Participatory coordination would be one analytical instrument whereby to capture discursive processes and any dynamic relationships among the actors engaged in them.

In the theory of connective action, *personal action* frames encapsulate 'different personal reasons for contesting a situation that needs to be changed' (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 744). Personal action frames (PACs) have been juxtaposed to entrenched group identities and ideologies that are organisational paraphernalia one has comes to embrace whenever joining organisationally choreographed collective action (2012, p. 746). PACs, by contrast are *multitudinous* in the sense proposed by Monterde and his collaborators (2015, p. 945), who stressed the 'multiplicity, changing nature and diversity of interactions between singular actors, groups and collective initiatives' they encountered within the galaxy of Facebook outlets integral to the Indignados Movement in Spain. PACs aid in the coordination and enactment of embodied protest (Castells 2009, 2012) although meso-level studies stress there is a persistent inequality of influence within distributed connective action networks (Gonzalez-Bailon et al. 2013).

Seeking to pin down the motivational aspect of participatory coordination we took a second cue from social psychology. The discipline has foregrounded personal motivation as a catalyst to participation in collective action. Motivation has been delineated as 'the desire to achieve a goal,

combined with the energy to work toward that goal' (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010, p. 179). A psychological drive, motivation may be represented as a positive alignment of cognitions and emotions favourable to involvement in collective action and a sense of identification with an aggrieved reference group. In what follows, I introduce *motivational coordination* as the peer expression and publicisation through networked communication of information capturing one or several of the four types of individual motives to partake in collective action: instrumental motives, identity motives, group-based anger motives and ideological motives (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010).

Aggrieved groups form to galvanise a collective impetus for remedial action (Simon and Klandermans 2001). Groups are founded on a shared perception among members that together they are a more 'efficacious social agent' (2001, p. 321). Research that has investigated group formation online has evinced that peer circulation of information relative to collective action is conducive to mobilisation if recipients deem the membership tally as high enough for the collective effort to be successful (Margetts et al. 2012). The implication is that variegated social networks may embrace a cause in the absence of a strong collective identity. This would happen as long as network members were reassured that they added their support to a likely efficacious group by virtue of its size. The operation is tantamount to a cost-benefit analysis of participation that epitomises instrumental motives.

Instrumental motives are expectations that, on the one hand, others will participate, rather than to free-ride, in large enough numbers to make goal-attainment likely; and on the other, that one's marginal contribution will raise the odds of success of the collective action (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010, p. 180). In networked communication, positive assessments of participant numbers are a key basis for individual commitment to collective action (Margetts et al. 2012, p. 19). These expectations may be answered with information about an aggrieved group retrieved from media accounts. Another suggestion may be that they are an upshot of peer exchanges on social media (Tufekci and Wilson 2012), a hypothesis that we set out to test ourselves.

Key to note is that individual instrumental motives for participation do not form in isolation. Instead, they are nurtured by one's relationship with an aggrieved group. Identification with a group—the *identity motive*—is one of the principal predictors of individual participation in collective action. A collective identity is a sense of 'we-ness' (Melucci 1996).

Predicated on a cognizance of common traits, experiences, grievances or goals, at minimum the motive is digested into the premise that 'what *I* want is what *we* want' (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010, p. 181). Instrumental and identity motives are interconnected. Solidarity with a group and its members acts as a tipping point in calculations relative to a desired outcome of collective action.

Collective action is further stirred by a sense of injustice about the unfair treatment received by an aggrieved group (Klandermans 1997, p. 38). Unfairness will stoke outrage (Goodwin et al. 2004:422) which in turn builds *social opinion support* or 'the perception that fellow group members share the experienced unfairness' (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010, p. 182). The resultant *group-based anger* is a motive fostered and amplified by social interaction among individual group members (Gamson 1992). Finally, one's readiness for collective action may be induced by a moral imperative to safeguard one's values. Values are rank-ordered and normative conceptions of the world and one's conduct in the world. *Ideological motives* are a perception of threats to a group's entrenched values and its worldview (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010, p. 183). Notably, ideological motives and group-based anger have recently been designated as emotional motives. They may be informed by different cognitions but they engender the same response, anger (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009, p. 462). The insight prompted us to operationalise motivational coordination as the collective articulation of instrumental, identity and emotional motives. We proposed that motivational coordination would be an important yet perhaps overlooked mode of distributed organisational coordination (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Bennett et al. 2014) capturing the interactional development of the motivation to partake in collective action through networked communication.

The second component to participatory coordination was resource mobilisation. Resource mobilisation designates the aggregation of requisite means for collective action (McCarthy and Zald 1977, p. 1216). In resource mobilisation theory (RMT) the lynchpin of collective action are social movement organisations due to their capacity to accumulate and channel material and immaterial resources—money, facilities, labour or legitimacy (1977, p. 1220)—into purposeful collective action. Critics of RMT (see Jasper 1997; Klandermans 1997) have disputed the amalgamation of a wide gamut of aspects—material, cultural and socio-psychological such as symbols and emotions—into a quantifiable term. Collective action would result from the most optimal combination of such conditions, each of which

is regarded to be a resource with a measurable utility value for goal-attainment (Jasper 1997, pp. :30–31).

The cultural critique of resource mobilisation portrays it as an expressly communicative process of extracting 'usable resources from a population' (e.g. money; Jasper 1997, p. 31). In those instances where organisations are marginal to collective action, resource mobilisation is a shared task of eliciting and administering contributions to a common cause—both material and immaterial, namely money, materials, maps, plans of action and one's own time (Jasper 1997)—that cascade through trusted social relationships that underpin connective action (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 753). Rather than being an aggregative capacity residing in concrete organisation(s), resource coordination would be the interpersonal communication directed at assembling tangible means for collective action. The added value of the concept for social movement research derives from the ability it provides the researcher to investigate networked communication as a channel for planning collective action as witnessed in the clean-up operation following in the wake of the London riots in 2011 (Lewis et al. 2011). Indeed, in similar research we have shown (Bastos et al. 2015) how flows of information about plans to occupy public space during the Indignados Movement on social media preceded the action itself. Moreover, other colleagues have documented how on-site actions in the course of the G20 protests in Pittsburgh were synchronised via Twitter (Earl et al. 2013). In sum, to investigate participatory coordination we devised and addressed the following objectives:

1. To map out the communication on the Stop ACTA Facebook outlets and with the Twitter '#ACTA' hashtag. This was done in order to determine the scope for motivational and resource coordination.
2. To probe the relationship between motivational and resource coordination.
3. To scrutinise the time distribution of motivational and resource coordination posts on both Facebook and Twitter.
4. To see whether the structural markers of messages on those platforms may help predict their coordinational character and impact.

Putting the Theory to the Test

To contend with the four objectives we constructed a mixed-method research design. We combined content and computer-mediated discourse analysis, with correlational and logistic regression analysis. Content analysis was conducted on a probabilistic sample of Facebook and Twitter posts and comments extracted from the data without replacement, at a 99 percent confidence level and a confidence interval of +/−3 percent (N = 3343). We coded the combined Facebook and Twitter data corpus for the presence or absence of participation motives as well as for evidence of resource coordination (Objective #1).[5] As well as coding instances of motivational and resource coordination, we recorded the occurrence of a 'like' associated with a Facebook post and retweets (RT) on Twitter. There are two types of 'likes' on Facebook. There are 'likes' signifying an endorsement for a fan page, previously used by activists as a heuristic measure of their support (Caren and Gaby 2011, p. 13); and 'likes' attached to a post whereby users may both show their support for it (Harlow 2011, p. 9) and, concomitantly, disseminate its content through ego-networks (van Dijck 2012, p. 168). Our analysis concentrated on the latter type of likes as our unit of analysis were individual posts.

Retweets—the republication of a message by other users than its original author—have been regarded as a source of reference-based 'information cascades…[that] alter the metrics of popularity and signal the value of content both to future viewers and to algorithms that determine search results or recommend content' (Thorson et al. 2013, p. 3). Facebook keeps a public tally of the number of 'likes' accrued by a post on a fan page. Retweets are more difficult to capture as data collection on Twitter tends to be limited by the configuration of the Twitter application programme interface (API) or limitations in the software used to gather the tweets (for a comprehensive review see Highfield et al. 2013). At the stage of data collection we were cognizant that our data corpus likely was not exhaustive (Driscoll and Walker 2014). The real-time, round-the-clock collection we performed, nonetheless, closely approximated the ebb and flow of the Twitter communication, mirroring developing events (2014, p. 1759) in the ACTA movement. Accounting for these constraints meant that our overarching aim would be to do theory-building with the empirical results rather than to make any statistical generalisations.

We began the coding process with reliability testing. The testing was performed by two independent coders on a subsample representing a stan-

dard 10% of the sampled units (Neuendorf 2002; N = 339). Ensuing reliability scores were robust. They are summarised in Table 6.1 alongside frequency counts for the types of coordination encountered. Objective # 2 entailed running a set of bivariate correlations to assess the degree to which motivational and resource coordination were coextensive. We reflected on the results with a view to identifying possible coordination patterns. The third objective was an opportunity for us to test the argument made by Earl and her colleagues (2013, p. 3) that communication on Facebook would peak ahead of a protest. This would be because Facebook communication is suited for increasing the visibility of a protest and building up momentum for participation. Twitter communication, on the other hand, would be more intense in the course of a protest, being synchronised with events on the ground. We queried these claims with reference to motivational and resource coordination. We sought to add to the evidence-based assessment of the apparent distinctions between the platforms. To this end, ,we plotted the 5 coordination variables in SPSS against the date variable to obtain a measure of the number of times in a day any of the researched forms of coordination occurred (Figs. 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6).[6] In the final step, by means of exploratory logistic regression (Field 2005), we assayed the bearing of several structural characteristics of a post (also known as its meta-data, namely, the date and language of publication, organisational membership of the postee and the frequency of his/her contributions, the retweets and 'likes' a post received) on its coordinational character and impact (Objective #4).

Table 6.1 Motivational and resource coordination on Facebook and Twitter

Code	*Total frequency (N = 1843)*	*Facebook frequency (N = 763)*	*Twitter frequency (N = 1080)*	*Krippendorf's alpha*
Instrumental motives	280	81	199	.86
Identity motives	142	57	85	.85
Group-based anger motives	70	23	47	.90
Ideological motives	219	43	176	.97
Resource coordination	1132	559	573	.84

Note: The number of coded units (N = 1843) is smaller than the total sample size (N = 3333) because 45% of the posts were coded as non-occurrences of the designated forms of coordination. See appended coding instructions for a detailed description of the coordination codes.

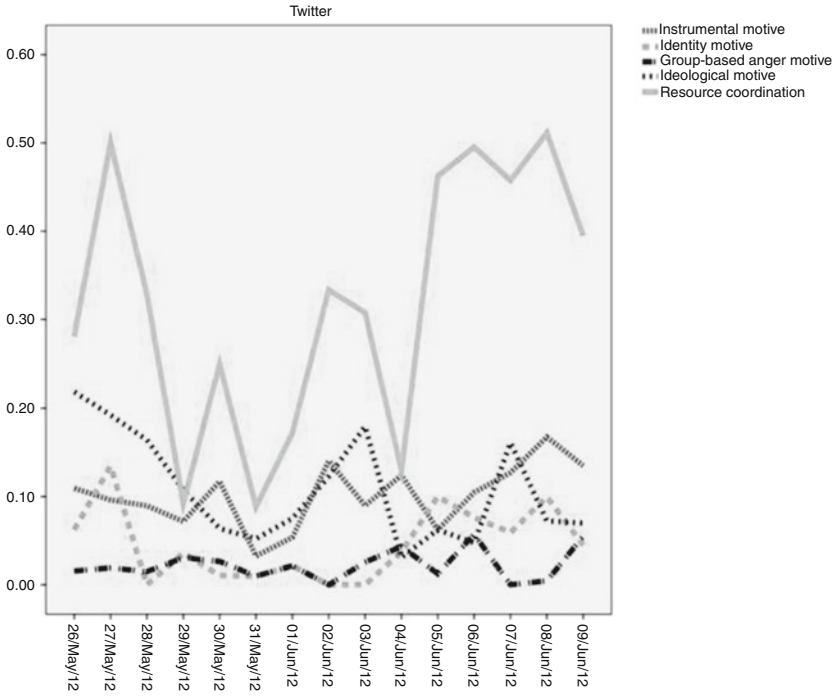

Fig. 6.1 Motivational and resource coordination on Twitter

All dependent variables in the logit model were binaries for the presence or absence of a post's characteristic of interest, e.g. the expression of an instrumental participation motive. The independent variables (IVs) were Twitter retweets and Facebook 'likes', which we took to be proxies for a posts' impact, meaning its ability to trigger a public reaction (Bruns and Burgess 2012, p. 807; Harlow 2011). We also relied on a date variable to perform an additional verification of the relationship between the moment a message was posted and its (coordinational) content. Earl et al. (2013, p. 4) indicated that tweets published in the course of a protest event were likely to contain locational data. In our turn we hoped to determine the likelihood of a link forming between the coordinational information found in a Facebook or Twitter post and the moment of its airing.

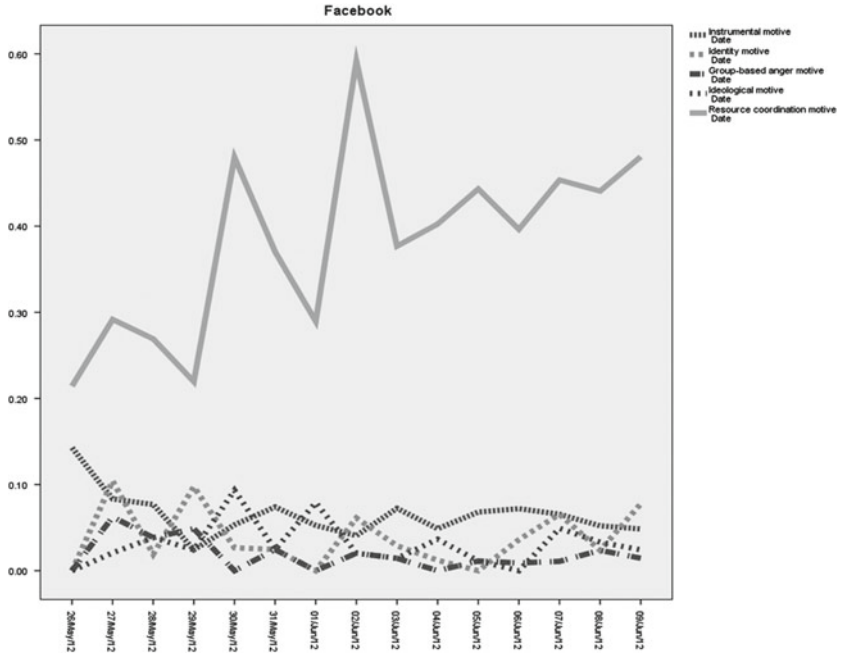

Fig. 6.2 Motivational and resource coordination on Facebook

An additional set of IVs allowed us to test for any relationships between the dependent variables and (a) organisational membership; (b) the language of publication; and (c) the level of activity of the postees. For the first of these three variables we adopted Bennett and Segerberg's (2012) terminology to build an ordinal variable comprising three categories: (1) 'brick-and-mortar' organisations; (2) network-based or ethereal organisations and (3) individual contributors for postees who did not identify themselves as being or being affiliated to an organisation. We surmised that as connective action theory posits, brick-and-mortar organisations would be marginal to participatory coordination. Second, language was a control variable for any possible coordinational patterns attached to any language community of the many present in our dataset. Language may be a vehicle for the avowal of one's attachment to a subculture (Barton

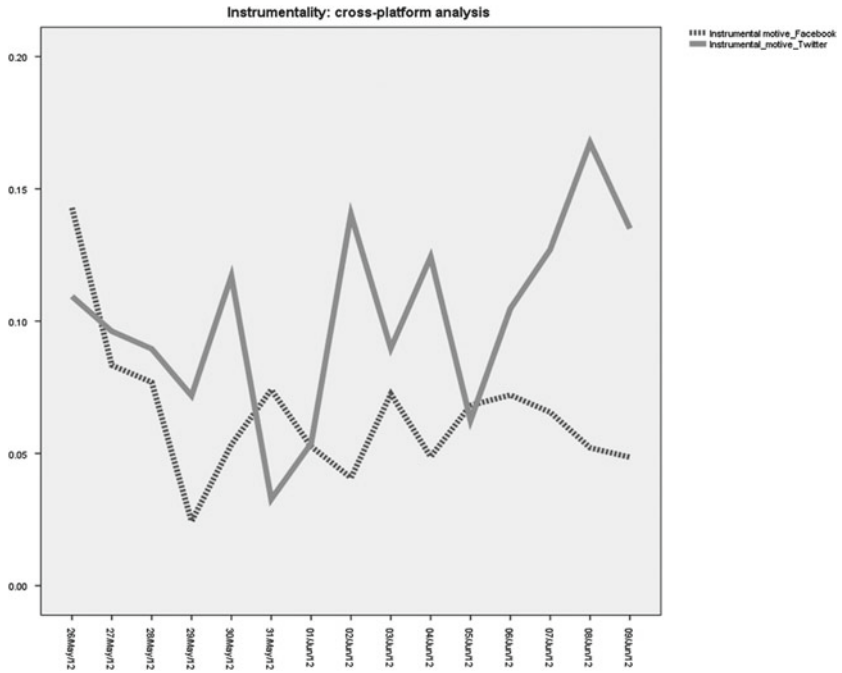

Fig. 6.3 The articulation of instrumental motives on Facebook and Twitter

and Lee 2013, p. 68), which in our case we conceived of as an organisational subculture. Third, on the basis of the earlier ranking of Facebook contributors as high, medium and low-frequency postees (Harlow 2011), we set out to ascertain whether the volume of published messages may account for any coordinational patterns on either Facebook or Twitter. According to existing indications, low-frequency postees often voice support and encouragement for their collective action with high-frequency postees more often attempting to mobilise their peers into action (Harlow 2011, p. 12).

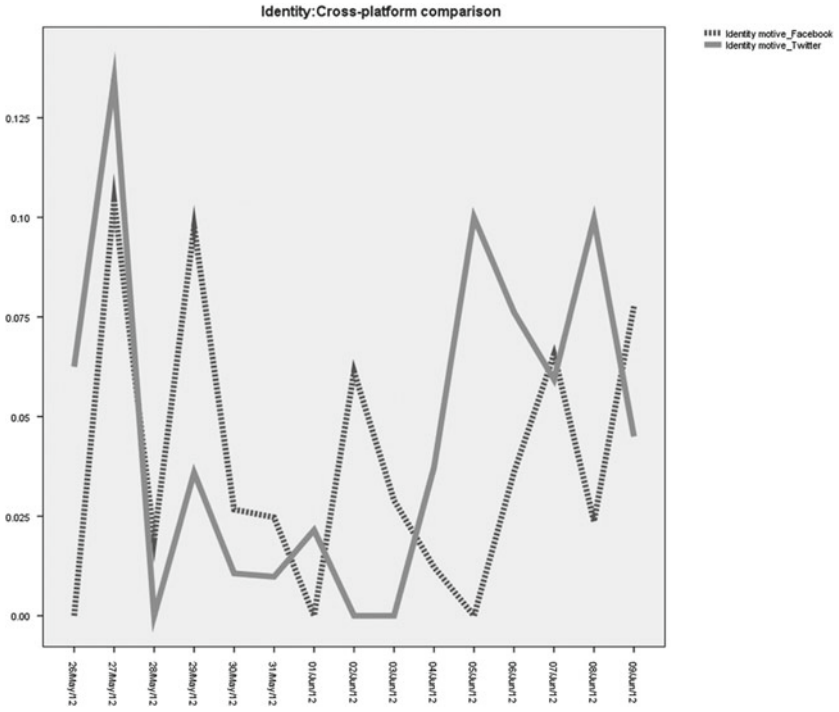

Fig. 6.4 The articulation of collective identity on Facebook and Twitter

Participatory Coordination: A Pragmatic Undertaking

I start the report of the empirical findings with frequency counts summarising the last three IVs. I do this to sketch out a picture of some of the defining aspects of the setting in which participatory coordination took place. In this sense, one of our initial steps was to distinguish empirically low-frequency contributors from medium and high-frequency contributors. On the basis of an initial count, we set the cut-off point for low-frequency postees at two posts made during the entire two-week period. By this measure, this was the most common type of contributor making up 75 percent of all postees on Twitter and 37 percent of those on Facebook. Next, medium-frequency postees wrote a post a day, accounting for 20

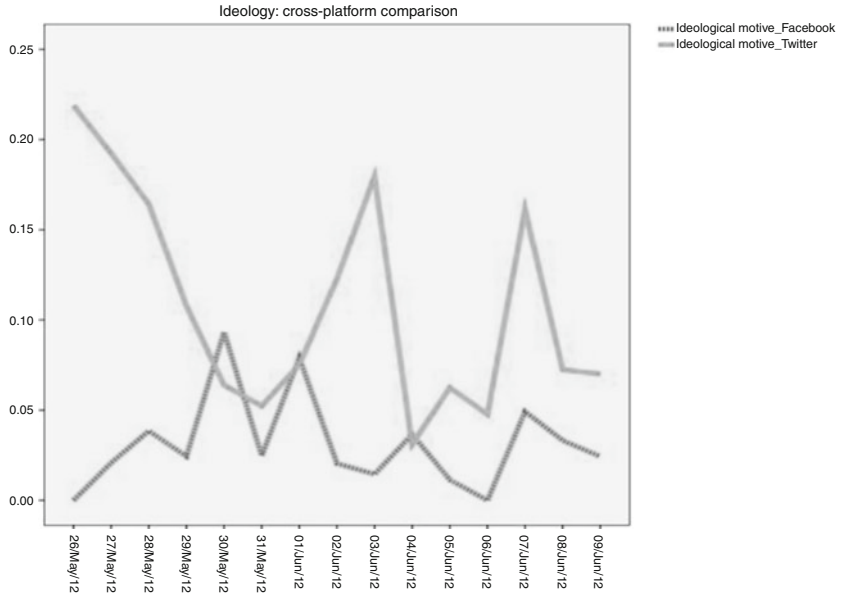

Fig. 6.5 The articulation of group-based anger on Facebook and Twitter

percent of posts on Twitter and 34 percent on Facebook. High-frequency postees—writing more than one post a day—were the least numerous cohort on both platforms. The discrepancy in terms of the number of contributions was higher on Twitter (3 percent were high-frequency postees) than on Facebook (30 percent). Taking stock of these results, we observed that despite the lower volume of posts on Facebook than on Twitter, communication among Facebook postees seemed to be more evenly distributed. There were more people making repeated contributions on Facebook than on Twitter.

We further noted that the vast majority of contributors on Facebook were individuals (96.5 percent). Representatives of networked-based organisations accounted for 3.3 percent of the postees. 'Brick-and-mortar' organisations were the fewest among them with only 0.1 percent of messages being traceable to one of them. The picture was slightly dissimilar on Twitter where there was a higher proportion of organisations. A proportion of 4 percent of the posts had been made by brick-and-mortar

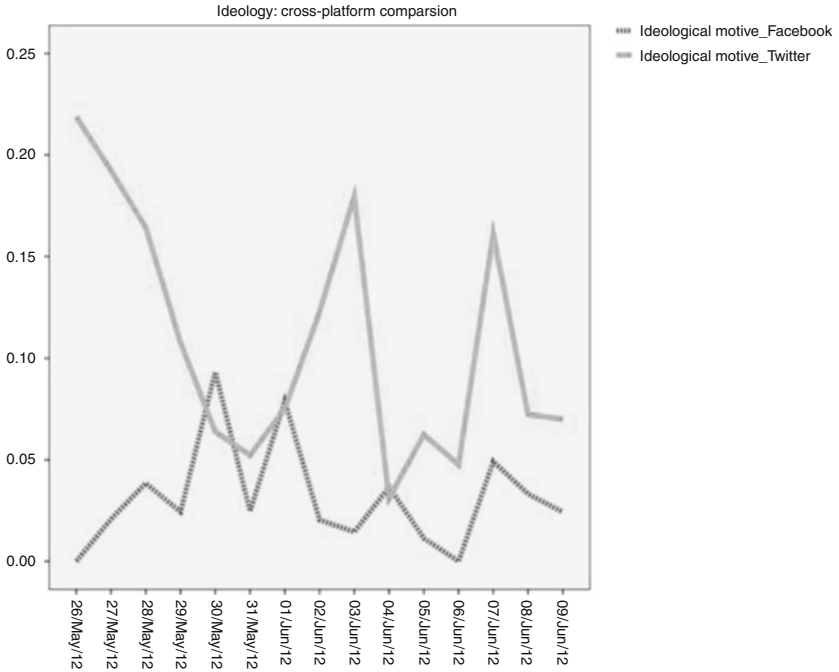

Fig. 6.6 The articulation of ideology on Facebook and Twitter

organisations, 6.5 by network-based organisations. Evidently, though, organisations still only constituted a small minority among the contributors, the majority of which were again individual Twitter users (89.4 percent). The typical brick-and-mortar organisation was the Pirate Party, on both platforms. Exemplifications of networked-based organisations were groups affiliated with the Anonymous hacktivist network or the French group La Quadrature du Net. Finally, the most vocal language cohorts on Facebook were the French (36 percent), Dutch (18 percent) and the German (17 percent) whilst at the other end were the Finnish, Luxembourg and Czech groupings totalling less than 1 percent of the posts. On Twitter, English (41 percent) and German (26 percent) were the most commonly used languages, Icelandic, Finnish and Romanian being the least common ones (less than 1 percent of posts).

Turning our attention to Objective #1, we immediately saw that resource coordination was significantly more prevalent than motivational coordination in the communication preceding the 9 June 2012 pan-European Stop ACTA protest (see Table 6.1). There was a more substantial proportion of contributions on social media directed at pooling instrumental resources for collective action then there were messages evoking one of the four types of motives for participation scrutinised here. Importantly, also, both varieties of coordination constituted just a little over half of the entire communication probed in the study. This meant that a sizeable amount of contributions related to other matters. The follow-up study looking at informal civic learning that I present in Chap. 7 unravelled some of the communication we coded as non-occurrences in this analysis.

The participation motive most frequently invoked in posts was the instrumental one followed by identity and ideological motives on Facebook and ideological and identity motives on Twitter. At first glance, the discourse that would stoke participation in collective action appeared as deeply imbued with rationality, on both platforms. In relative terms, Facebook proved to be more of an arena for affirming collective identity than Twitter. Whilst this finding could benefit from more ethnographic disambiguation, it may equally be interpreted as evidence that the communicative environment of Facebook pages is more conducive to the avowal of collective identities; or alternatively, that the absence of definite group boundaries on Twitter makes collective identities a topic of somewhat less prominent concern. Instead, Twitter communication exhibited an important amount of ideological talk whereby postees asserted their shared values in the face of the ACTA agreement.

Moving to the second research objective, a set of bivariate associations uncovered multiple relationships between motivational and resource coordination variables. If there was only an overall small degree of association between the two types of coordination on both platforms, on Facebook, the stronger associations were between instrumental and group-based anger on the one hand, and resource coordination on the other. We tentatively inferred that participatory coordination was a rational process imbued with a sense of unity fuelled by dissatisfaction with the conduct of public officials, arguably a significant out-group for the Stop ACTA protestors. Resource coordination on Twitter was coupled with ideological, instrumental and group-based anger motives. Thus, although a setting chiefly for rational and resource-orientated talk, the platforms were distinct motivational arenas. We substantiated this assertion with a Mann-Whitney

U test, which revealed distinct population distributions for instrumental and ideological motives on the two platforms (Tables 6.2 and 6.3).

Upon further examination of motivational coordination, no association was found for instrumental and any of the other motives on Facebook. Identity motives correlated with emotional motives but in turn neither of the latter related to each other. Instrumental motives on Twitter were associated with identity and ideological motives. We did not detect any

Table 6.2 Bivariate associations of coordination variables on Facebook

Variable	*Motivational coordination*	*Instrumental motive*	*Identity motive*	*Group-based anger motive*	*Ideological motive*	*Resource coordination*
Instrumental motive	–	–	.009	.039	.025	.099***
Identity motive	–	.009	–	.086**	.151***	.058*
Group-based anger motive	–	.039	086**	–	.041	.065*
Ideological motive	–	.025	.151***	.041	–	.042
Resource coordination	.122***	.099***	058*	.065*	.042	–

Note: ***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$. Reported statistic: Spearman's Rho

Table 6.3 Bivariate associations of coordination variables on Twitter

Variable	*Motivational coordination*	*Instrumental motive*	*Identity motive*	*Group-based anger motive*	*Ideological motive*	*Resource coordination*
Instrumental motive	–	–	.062**	.008	.045*	.091***
Identity motive	–	.062**	–	–	.031	.019
Group-based anger motive	–	.008	–	–	.010	.070**
Ideological motive	–	.045*	.031	.010	–	.101***
Resource coordination	.156***	.090***	.019	.070**	.101***	–

Note: ***$p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$. Reported statistic: Spearman's Rho

statistically significant relationship among the other motives. We viewed these results as reinforcing the observation made earlier that Facebook and Twitter nurtured disparate motivational environments.

To address the third objective we explored time-based variations in the invocation of participatory motives. Instrumental motives were uttered in a more consistent manner on both platforms at the start of the period, before simultaneously diving and then climb up again on Twitter around the end of the first week to remain more frequent than on Facebook thereafter. On Facebook, there was a steadier stream of instrumental motives throughout much of the period followed by a gradual decline three days ahead of the protest, which stood in contrast to a rising impetus on Twitter.

Identity motives were conjured up simultaneously on both platforms at the start of the period. Subsequently, there was a dissonant trend with identity-talk ebbing on Twitter whilst concurrently flowing on Facebook. At the end of the two weeks, identity motives featured more prominently on Facebook than on Twitter. Thereafter, in the immediate run-up to the protest, identity-talk gained more momentum on Twitter than on Facebook. It was also on Facebook that group-based anger was vented quite vigorously before steadily declining until the eve of the protest, when it rose again but not up to earlier levels. Contrariwise, there initially was hardly any group-based anger registered on Twitter. A build-up followed that peaked on protest day. Finally, ideological-talk started on a higher note on Facebook where it consequently fluctuated sharply ending up on an ascending path at the end of the first week. In the second week, it again oscillated considerably, this time both on Facebook and Twitter, spiralling up one day before the protest.

In sum, there were marked dissimilarities in the time-wise articulation of participation motives on the two platforms. The notable exceptions to this observation were instrumental and ideological-talk. The articulation of identity and group-based anger was markedly divergent on the day of the protest. Identity was affirmed vividly on Facebook on the day of action whilst at the same time identity-talk was tanking on Twitter. Finally, a steady build-up in communication pertaining to resource coordination was noted on Facebook whereas on Twitter midway through the two week interval there was a contrasting lull. Resource coordination peaked earlier on Twitter than on Facebook where it was more intense in the second week and ended up on an ascending trend on protest day.

The last of the four objectives was to see whether participatory coordination may be predicted with what we regarded as the structural

characteristics of a post. Beginning with Facebook, a prediction of the overall incidence of motivational coordination on that platform could be made with the language variable. Motivational coordination appeared as an unlikely occurrence on Austrian and Polish groups. Also on Facebook, the rate of motivational coordination was likely to increase as soon as motives were endorsed with a 'like'. Distinguishing between the four types of motives we found that none of the structural factors would help predict the expression of instrumental and emotional motives. Identity motives, however, were less likely to be evoked, on Facebook, on the day of the protest than on any other day; and least so among Austrian or Swedish groups. Additionally, they seemed to rise in frequency with the number of 'likes' they collected (Table 6.4).

Looking next at resource coordination, the process was especially unlikely to get underway at the beginning of the two-week run-up, taking a dip at the end of the first week when it was less likely to transpire than at any other point in time during the researched two-week period. On Facebook, the idea of communication representing an incremental build-up of efforts to take collective action did not stand up to scrutiny. Our data pointed to bursts of activity as a better characterisation of participatory coordination. 'Like' endorsements were statistically related not only to the expression of identity and ideological motives but also to resource coordination. We thus expected that those three types of posts made a particularly significant impact on the Facebook support base. But our most important conclusion was that Facebook coordination would be primarily focused on the pooling of instrumental resources, among a limited number of language groups.

Motivational coordination was unlikely to transpire on Twitter a week before the protest day (see Table 6.5). It rose significantly, however, with each post in Japanese, the language of the country where ACTA was signed. Concomitantly, it decreased with comments made in Portuguese and likely increased with each retweet. To unpack these results, it seemed that overall motivational coordination was mainly the province of a language community that was not directly involved in the 9 June pan-European protests. However, solidarity events were planned in Japan to coincide with the European demonstrations.

Further, we uncovered that instrumental and identity motives were particularly unlikely to be invoked a week ahead of the protests. Likewise was group-based anger, which in addition was particularly unlikely to be invoked on the day of the protest. Identity motives, on the other hand

Table 6.4 Logistic regression models predicting coordination character of Facebook posts (block entry method, Exp (B))

	Motivational coordination	*Instrumental motives*	*Identity motives*	*Group-based anger motives*	*Ideological motives*	*Resource coordination*
	N=1347	*N=1347*	*N=1347*	*N=1347*	*N=1347*	*N=1347*
Date	–	–		–		
26.07.2012						
27.05.2012						.416*
28.05.2012						.465*
29.05.2012						.283**
30.05.2012						
31.05.2012						.547*
01.06.2012 – 04.06.2012 – 09.06.2012			.286*			.410*
Postee	–	–	–	–	–	–
Brick-and-mortar organisation						
Network-based organisation						
Individuals						
Frequency	–	–	–	–	–	
High						
Medium						.484***
Low						.432***

(continued)

Table 6.4 (continued)

	Motivational coordination	*Instrumental motives*	*Identity motives*	*Group-based anger motives*	*Ideological motives*	*Resource coordination*
	N = 1347	*N = 1347*	*N = 1347*	*N = 1347*	*N = 1347*	*N = 1347*
Language		–		–	–	
Austrian	.142*		.101*			9.244*
Germany						
Danish						10.022*
Polish	.165*					14.149*
Swedish			.051*			6.658*
Likes	1.152***	–	1.208***	1.207*	1.153	1.124*
Model Sig: *.05, **.01, ***.001	R^2 = .064(Nagelkerke) χ^2 = 48.142, df = 32, p < .01	R^2 = .038(Nagelkerke) χ^2 = 18.594, df = 32, n.s.	R^2 = .155 (Nagelkerke) χ^2 = 63.190, df = 32, p < .001	R^2 = .404(Nagelkerke) χ^2 = 33.304, df = 32, n.s.	R^2 = .153 (Nagelkerke) χ^2 = 51.776, df = 32, p < .01	R^2 = .117 (Nagelkerke) χ^2 = 122.945, df = 32, p < .001

were very likely conjured up on the day of the protest. This suggested to us that despite the observed dip in identity-talk on Twitter, the evocation of this motive became important for the Twitter contingent on the day of the protest. As to group-based anger, there were more chances of it being voiced systematically by networked-based organisations. This was the only evidence that organisations, albeit of the networked-based variety, made a significant contribution to participatory coordination. Conversely, ideological inflections were common at several points in time throughout the period, suggesting that those motives had been invoked more keenly than any of the other three. In particular, Japanese postees were likely to brandish ideological motives for collective action (Table 6.5).

The likelihood of resource coordination decreased on Twitter as on Facebook towards the end of the first week with another low predicted on 4 June, five days before the protest. Whilst German-writing postees appeared more likely to engage in resource coordination, the opposite was true of Spanish and Japanese postees. Appeals to resource coordination were unlikely to be retweeted. This result prompted us to infer that this type of posts had not been viewed equally as salient as motivational coordination by the Stop ACTA twittertariat. By the same token, motivational posts will have had a significant positive impact.

Conclusion

Another proof of concept (see the discussion of digital prefigurative participation in Chap. 3), participatory coordination was an empirical offshoot of the theoretical proposition in connective action theory that organisation may be a distributed and cumulative outcome of granular individual contributions. We were able to identify a significant amount of activity on Facebook and Twitter—more than half the posts reviewed—pertaining to participatory coordination in both its motivational and resource-pooling varieties. We were further able to establish that participatory coordination saw very little input from activist organisations involved in the pan-European drive against the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement. This finding reinforced our supposition that participatory coordination would be an exemplar of connective action.

The only partial exception to this conclusion was group-based anger, which had been vented principally by networked-based or ethereal organisations on Twitter. By virtue of their loose, informal structures and the absence of formal registration or designated offices, we regarded ethereal

Table 6.5 Logistic regression models predicting coordination character of Twitter posts (block entry method, Exp (B))

	Motivational coordination	*Instrumental motives*	*Identity motives*	*Group-based anger motives*	*Ideological motives*	*Resource coordination*
	N=1984	*N=1984*	*N=1984*	*N=1984*	*N=1984*	*N=1984*
Date						
26.05.2012					3.011*	
27.05.2012					2.801*	
28.05.2012						
29.05.2012						.185***
30.05.2012						.552*
31.05.2012	.281***	.248***	.247*	.182*		.122***
01.06.2012 –						.337***
03.06.2012					3.034*	
04.06.2012 –						.188***
07.06.2012						
08.06.2012					3.690***	
09.06.2012			2.352**	.063*		
Postee		–	–		–	–
Brick-and-mortar organisation						
Network-based organisation				5.344***		
Individuals						
Frequency		–	–	–	–	–
High						
Medium						
Low						

	Motivational coordination	*Instrumental motives*	*Identity motives*	*Group-based anger motives*	*Ideological motives*	*Resource coordination*
	N=1984	*N=1984*	*N=1984*	*N=1984*	*N=1984*	*N=1984*
Language				–		
German						2.622**
Spanish		–	–			.264*
Japanese	4.947**				5.952*	.316*
Portugal	.082*					
Retweet	1.265*	–	–	–	–	.619**
Model	R^2 = .147	R^2 = .083	R^2 = .157	R^2 = .141(Nagelkerke)	R^2 = .160(Nagelkerke)	R^2 = .305
Sig: *.05,	(Nagelkerke)	(Nagelkerke)	(Nagelkerke)	χ^2 = 57.065,	χ^2 = 148.237,	(Nagelkerke)
**.01,	χ^2 = 205.374,	χ^2 = 80.009,	χ^2 = 95.232,	df = 37, p < .01	df = 37, p < .001	χ^2 = 476.520,
*** .001	df = 37,	df = 37, p < .001	df = 37,			df = 37,
	p < .001		p < .001			p < .001

organisations (e.g. Anonymous) as spinoffs of the medium. The finding prompted the reflection that particularly Twitter may be approached as a front stage setting (Goffman 1959/1990) especially by activist organisations employing it as a primary vehicle for asserting their public mission (see also Treré 2015). Ultimately, though, we saw ethereal organisations as an embodiment of the organisational affordance of networked communication (Bennett and Segerberg 2012). To tie this and the previous chapter together, the question of a cultural lag between entrenched organisational forms and communicative affordances (see Hallam 2015), and potential explanations for it, appeared as a pressing line for future empirical enquiry.

Resource coordination was the predominant form of coordination, suggesting that seasoned claims to the effect that new media are more often than not an instrumental means for the orchestration of collective action had been further substantiated (see from Diani 2000; Stein 2009; to Theocharis 2012). Facebook has been characterised as a medium for emergent cooperation by individuals who congregate on the Facebook page of a protest and have an individual input in its organisation (Rosen et al. 2010). To this insight we added and tested a classification of participant contributions whilst highlighting that these may be a composite of instrumental resources and appeals arousing one's motivation to partake in collective action.

Fundamentally, we viewed our analysis as an early attempt at a systematic mapping of motivational coordination with social media. Preceding observations of, for example, Facebook usage to express support for collective action or to rally up participants (Harlow 2011) heralded the phenomenon. To move that scholarship forward, we hypothesised that joined up instrumental and resource-driven modes of coordination may be at play in connective action on both Facebook and Twitter. Echoing the notion of a 'double articulation of code and politics' (Langlois et al. 2009, p. 417), we posited that the ostensible affordance of Facebook event pages to galvanise the formation of affiliative protest networks (see Rosen et al. 2010) may be accompanied by its deployment to boost collective identities and emotions. These postulates may help pinpoint patterns of motivational coordination. Future studies may go on to situate motivational coordination in more specific socio-cultural settings, to engage with some of the other arguments we made relative to language groups. On Twitter, on the other hand, ideological motives may be a proxy for the expression of solidarity and shared identity for in-groups who do not benefit from the same technological affordance for group

formation as on Facebook. A probe into the degree to which the articulation of collective identities may vary alongside technological affordances and socio-linguistic practice peculiar to an individual platform (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; see Barton and Lee 2013) now seems timely.

Participation motives are mutually reinforcing at the level of individual cognitions (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010, p. 181). A similar process may also be at work in protest-related networked communication. In particular, identity and instrumental motives would appear to be interconnected on Twitter. Ideological and identity-talk were co-occurring on Facebook public outlets, i.e. groups and pages, whilst identity motives fed into emotional motives on the same platform. Lastly, motivational talk had what seemed as a higher impact than resource-coordination posts on both platforms. Despite their smaller numbers, this was perceived as an apparent sign of the particularly positive reception of motivational posts.

In the two weeks preceding the 9 June Stop ACTA demonstrations, we noted that motivational and resource-generating activity saw an early start on both platforms. The flow of coordinational communication we recorded appeared to dispel the distinction between Facebook and Twitter, suggesting according to which Twitter activity would by and large be confined to the day of action, with Facebook communication following the opposite trend and declining on protest day having previously helped to build momentum behind the protest (Earl et al. 2013). Resource coordination witnessed a more momentous onset on Twitter than on Facebook, where, contrary to expectations, it ended up on an ascending trend that stood in contrast to corresponding Twitter activity. Dissimilarities in the occurrence of participation motives on the two platforms prompted a description of the Facebook public outlets as being marked by spells rather than build-ups in motivational coordination. A sharp illustration of this was that of identity-talk, which saw a significant rise on Facebook a day before the protest, only to subsequently become particularly unlikely to occur on the day of the event.

The dynamics I have recounted up to this point show participatory coordination as transpiring in particular patterns on social media. The definition of the concept itself required further qualification to better grasp the phenomenon before subjecting it to further analysis. To this end, we drew inspiration from socio-linguistics as we came to discern participatory coordination as a *literacy event*. A literacy event is an instance wherein text informs human interaction and interpretations thereof (Heath 1982, p. 50). The participatory coordination we encountered appeared to

stimulate the conveyance of motivations and resources for participation in collective action thereby aiding to create an appreciation of its necessity, shared purpose, scope (Margetts et al. 2012) as well as emotional underpinnings (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009). There was, nevertheless, an important amount of communication on the same social networking services, which did not touch on these aspects, a fact that cautions against any bold assertions regarding the prevalence and bearing of participatory coordination. Moreover, the evidence of coordination we identified did not fit into a coherent—either platform-based or cross-platform—pattern.

Retrospectively, our principal conclusion reiterated here was that the central plank of our analysis, the concept of participatory coordination, would require further verification. We felt this was necessary, principally in order to cast more light on whether online motivational talk and attempts at resource coordination contribute to actual participation in collective action. Expressly, our results call for further empirical research to put to the test the argument that social media are a key expedient to the aggregation of individual participants in physical protests (Juris 2012). The evidence we reviewed throws into question the reductionism to which aggregation refers. Instead, even the rather inchoate coordination patterns we were able to identify seemed to substantiate the idea of multiplicity, not only of identities (Monterde et al. 2015) but also of rational and emotional motivations for participation and their amalgamation with instrumental resources sustaining collective action.

Lastly, to bridge this and the following chapter, I contemplate ramifications for civic participation. To that end, I would call attention to the prominent place held in the Stop ACTA communication streams by the cold consideration of rational reasons for collective action to arrest the course of (an intergovernmental) policy. The imbrication of instrumental, identity and emotional motives reinforced the image of their nurturing rather than incongruous relationship (Jasper 1997) previously seen to make social movements susceptible to irrational behaviour (Blumer 1969; see Crossley 2002 for a critique). Once again, cognitions and emotions may interconnect to add to a ‘sense of a movement’ (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013, p, 155) bubbling up on social media.

Notes

1. The protest wave that peaked at the turn of the decade brought renewed attention to activist practices and actions (Papacharissi and Fatima Oliveira 2012; Tufekci 2013), their networks (Gonzalez-Bailon et al. 2013), identities (Gerbaudo and Trere 2015), visions for social change (Graeber 2014) or their technologies (Milan 2013), which combined to result in collective action.
2. This organisational configuration may be increasingly characteristic of fragmented network societies (see Quandt 2012). As I have already alluded to in the previous chapter, established movement organisations have embraced elements of it to drive up their efficiency and public appeal (Bennett and Segerberg 2012, p. 756). Bennett and Segerberg (2011, 2012) provide a fuller account of this adaptation, which I discussed in Chap. 5.
3. A pertinent example would be the application designed during the student protest in the UK called Sukey. The software acted as an information clearinghouse for demonstrators seeking to outmaneuver the British police. See http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/feb/02/inside-anti-kettling-hq.
4. The data at the heart of this project were gathered upon a close following of the activity associated with the Stop ACTA movement on Twitter and Facebook in March–May 2012. Following systematic ethnographic observation, the data was collected two weeks prior to the 9 June protest when a noticeable peak in activity was expected (Earl et al. 2013) and recorded. A total of 19,000 tweets bearing the hashtag #ACTA were retrieved by interrogating the Twitter Search API. The tweets were in 14 different languages. A second database comprised 7000 Facebook messages archived from 28 public Stop-ACTA event pages, 16 Stop ACTA groups and 6 Facebook pages dedicated to the 9 June protests. These Facebook outlets, administered out of 16 European countries, were identified with the platform's embedded search engine.
5. Depending on its semantic complexity, each coding unit was amenable to multiple coding (see also Mercea 2013). A detailed description of the coding protocol can be found in Appendix 1. We devised the coding categories to take account of the proposition that online, text-based communication is a vehicle for performing action online as well as for signifying embodied action in an ecology devoid of physical presence (Herring 2004). Epistemologically, we grounded the empirical investigation in the computer-mediated discourse analytical (CMDA) approach. Specifically, we estimated that (1) patterns may be present in discourse that may be revealed upon systematic, second-order examination by the researcher; (2) in parsing discourse, one may gain access to linguistic as well as non-linguistic acts as texts provide insights into language choice, cognitive and social underpinnings of a statement; (3) CMDA necessarily interrogates technological features of

any online platform for their bearing on communicative acts occurring on them (Herring 2004, p. 341).

The *y* axes in the time-series reported in Figs. 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 present a ratio of the per-day occurrence of a coordinational post relative to the total amount of the same type of post.

References

Baldassarri, D. (2009). Collective action. In P. Hedström & P. Bearman (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of analytical sociology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barton, D., & Lee, C. (2013). *Language online: Investigating digital texts and practices*. London: Routledge.

Bastos, M. T., Mercea, D., & Charpentier, A. (2015). Tweets, tents, and events: The interplay between street protests and social media. *Journal of Communication*. doi:10.1111/jcom.12145.

Benford R.D. and Snow, D.A. (2000) Framing processes and social movements: an overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology,*. 26: 611-639..

Bennett, W. L., Foot, K., & Xenos, M. (2011). Narratives and network organisation: A comparison of fair trade systems in two nations. *Journal of Communication, 61*, 219–245.

Bennett, L., & Segerberg, A. (2011). Collective action dilemmas with individual mobilisation through digital networks. *Information, Communication & Society, 14*(6), 770–799.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(5), 739–768.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2013). *The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bennett, W. L., Segerberg, A., & Walker, S. (2014). Organization in the crowd: Peer production in large-scale networked protests. *Information, Communication & Society, 17*(2), 232–260.

Bennett, W. L., & Toft, A. (2008). Identity, technology and narratives: Transnational activism and social movements. In A. Chadwick & P. N. Howard (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of Internet politics* (pp. 246–260). London: Routledge.

Bimber, B., Flanagin, A., & Stohl, C. (2012). *Collective action in organization: Interaction and engagement in an era of technological change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blumer, H. (1969). Collective behaviour. In A. McClung-Lee (Ed.), *Principles of sociology*. New York: Barnes and Noble.

Bruns, A., & Burgess, J. (2012). Researching news discussion on Twitter. *Journalism Studies, 13*(5–6), 801–814.

Caren, N., & Gaby, S. (2011). Occupy online: Facebook and the spread of occupy Wall Street. *Social Science Research Network*. Retrieved September 9, 2013, from http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1943168

Castells, M. (2007). Communication, power and counter-power in the network society. *International Journal of Communication, 1*, 238–266.

Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Castells, M. (2012). *Networks of outrage and hope: Social movements in the Internet age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Crossley, N. (2002). *Making sense of social movements*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Diani, M. (2000). Social movement networks virtual and real. *Information, Communication and Society, 3*(3), 386–401.

Driscoll, K and Walker, S (2014) Working within a black box: Transparency in the collection and production of big Twitter data. International Journal of Communication,8: 1745-1764.

Earl, J., Hurwitz McKee, H., Mejia Mesinas, A., Tolan, M., & Arlotti, A. (2013). This protest will be tweeted. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(4), 459–478.

Earl, J., & Kimport, K. (2011). *Digitally enabled social change: Activism in the Internet age*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Enjolras, B., Steen-Johnsen, K., & Wollebaek, D. (2012). Social media and mobilization to offline demonstrations: Transcending participatory divides? *New Media and Society, 15*(6), 890–908.

Field, A. (2005). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. London: Sage.

Flanagin, A. J., Stohl, C., & Bimber, B. (2006). Modeling the structure of collective action. *Communication Monographs, 73*(1), 29–54.

Gamson, W. (1992). *Talking politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Garrett, R. K. (2006). Protest in an information society: A review of literature on social movements and new ICTs. *Information, Communication & Society, 9*(2), 202–224.

Gerbaudo, P. (2012). *Tweets and the streets: Social media and contemporary activism*. London: Pluto Press.

Goffman, E. (1959/1990). *The presentation of the self in everyday life*. London: Penguin Books.

Gonzalez-Bailon, S., Borge-Holthoefer, J., & Moreno, Y. (2013). Broadcasters and hidden influential in online protest diffusion. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 943–965.

Goodwin, J., Jasper, J. M., & Polletta, F. (2004). Emotional dimensions of social movements. In D. A. Snow, S. A. Soule, & H. Kriesi (Eds.), *The Blackwell companion to social movements* (pp. 413–433). Oxford: Blackwell.

Graeber, D. (2014). *The democracy project*. London: Penguin.

Hallam, R. (2015). How the Internet can overcome the collective action problem: Conditional commitment designs on Pledgebank, Kickstarter and The Point/Groupon websites. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1109696.

Harlow, S. (2012) Social media and social movements: Facebook and an online Guatemalan justice movement that moved offline. *New Media and Society,*14 (2): 225-243..

Heath, S. B. (1982). Protean shapes in literacy events: Ever-shifting oral and literate traditions. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Herring, S. C. (2004). Computer-mediated discourse analysis: An approach to researching online behaviour. In S. A. Barab, R. Kling, & J. H. Gray (Eds.), *Designing for virtual communities in the service of learning* (pp. 338–376). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Highfield, T., Harrington, S., & Bruns, A. (2013). Twitter as a technology for audiencing and fandom. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(3), 313–339.

Jasper, J. M. (1997). *The art of moral protest: Culture, biography and creativity in social movements*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.

Kavada, A. (2015). Creating the collective: Social media, the Occupy Movement and its constitution as a collective action. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043318.

Klandermans, B. (1997). *The social psychology of protest*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Langlois, G, Elmer, G, McKelvey F, Devereaux, Z (2009) Networked publics: The double articulation of code and politics on Facebook.*Canadian Journal of Communication,*34 (3): 415-434.

Leung, L. (2009). User-generated content on the Internet: An examination of gratifications, civic engagement and psychological empowerment. *New Media and Society, 11*(8), 1327–1347.

Lewis, P., Newburn, T., Taylor, M., & Mcgillivray, C. (Eds.). (2011). Reading the riots: Investigating England's summer of disorder. *The Guardian and The London School of Economics and Political Science*. Retrieved September 9, 2013, from http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/46297/1/Reading%20the%20riots%28published%29.pdf

Margetts, H., John, P., Escher, T., & Reissfelder, S. (2012). Social information and political participation on the Internet: An experiment. *European Political Science Review, 3*(3), 321–344.

McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. (1977). Resource mobilization and social movements; a partial theory. *American Journal of Sociology, 82*(6), 1212–1241.

Melucci, A. (1996). *Challenging codes: Collective action in the information age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meraz, S., & Papacharissi, Z. (2013). Networked gatekeeping and networked framing on #Egypt. *The International Journal of Press/Politics, 18*(2), 138–166.

Mercea, D. (2013). Probing the implications of Facebook use for the organizational form of social movement organizations. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(8), 1306–1327.

Monterde, A., Calleja-Lopez, A., Aguilera, M., Barandiaran, X. E., & Postill, J. (2015). Multitudinous identities: A qualitative and network analysis of the 15M collective identity. *Information, Communication and Society, 18*(8), 930–950.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Olson, M. (1965). *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Opp, K. D. (2009). *Theories of political protest and social movements: A multidisciplinary introduction, critique, and synthesis*. London: Routledge.

Papacharissi, Z., & Fatima Oliveira, M. (2012). Affective news and networked publics: The rhythms of news storytelling on #Egypt. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 266–282.

Pickerill, J., & Krinsky, J. (2012). Why does occupy matter? *Social Movement Studies, 11*(3–4), 279–287.

Poell, T. (2014). Social media and the transformation of activist communication: Exploring the social media ecology of the 2010 Toronto G20 protests. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(6), 716–731.

Polletta, F. (1998) Contending stories: Narrative in social movements. Qualitative Sociology,21(4): 419-446.

Postmes, T., & Brunsting, S. (2002). Collective action in the age of the Internet: Mass communication and online mobilization. *Social Science Computer Review, 20*(3), 290–301.

Quandt, T. (2012). What's left of trust in a network society? An evolutionary model and critical discussion of trust and societal communication. *European Journal of Communication, 27*(1), 7–21.

Rosen, D., Kim, J. H., & Nam, Y. (2010). Birds of feather protest together: Theorizing self-organizing political protests with flock theory. *System Practice and Action Research, 23*(5), 419–422.

Segerberg, A., & Bennett, W. L. (2011). Social media and the organisation of collective action: Using Twitter to explore the ecologies of two climate change protests. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 197–215.

Simon, B., & Klandermans, B. (2001). Politicized collective identity: A social psychological analysis. *American Psychologist, 56*(4), 319–331.

Snow, D. A., & Benford, R. D. (1988). Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization. *International Social Movement Research, 1*(1), 197–218.

Stein, L. (2009). Social movement web use in theory and practice: A content analysis of US movement websites. *New Media and Society, 11*(5), 749–771.

Theocharis, Y. (2012). The contribution of websites and blogs to the students' protest communication tactics during the 2010 UK university occupations. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(9), 1477–1513.

Thorson, K., Driscoll, K., Ekdale, B., Edgerly, S., Gamber Thompson, L., Schrock, A., Swartz, L., Vraga, E. K., & Wells, C. (2013). Youtube, Twitter and the occupy movement: Connecting content and circulation practices. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(3), 421–451.

Treré, E. (2015). Reclaiming, proclaiming and maintaining collective identity in the #YoSoy132 movement in Mexico: An examination of digital frontstage and backstage activism through social media and instant messaging platforms. *Information, Communication and Society, 18*(8), 901–915.

Tufekci, Z. (2013). 'Not this one': Social movements, the attention economy and microcelebrity networked activism. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 848–870.

Tufekci, Z., & Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahir Square. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 363–379.

Valenzula, S. (2013). Unpacking the use of social media for protest behavior. The roles of information, opinion expression, and activism. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 920–942.

van Dijck, J. (2012). Facebook as a tool for producing sociality and connectivity. *Television and New Media, 13*(2), 160–176.

van Stekelenburg, J., & Klandermans, B. (2010). Individuals in movements: A social psychology of contention. In B. Klandermans & C. Roggeband (Eds.), *Handbook of social movements across disciplines.* New York: Springer.

Verhulst, J., & Walgrave, S. (2009). The first time is the hardest? A cross-national and cross-issue comparison of first-time protest participants. *Political Behavior, 31*(3), 455–484.

CHAPTER 7

Informal Civic Learning

In this chapter, I look one final time at the networked communication that precedes street demonstrations. My primary interest is in practice-based informal civic learning about conventional politics and mainstream media. I have begun to develop this interest partly because I would like to begin to offset the mounting attention paid to activist self-organisation and self-reflexivity (to which I have dedicated two chapters in this book) with a more careful scrutiny of networked communication as a civic literacy event, a notion I introduced at the end of the preceding chapter. For the purpose, I juxtapose several bodies of literature from socio-linguistics (Barton and Lee 2013), civic education (Biesta 2007; Bennett et al. 2009a, b) and activist media (Rucht 2004; Thorson et al. 2013) as I undertake to tease out intertextual linkages between activist discourses and the institutional structures wherein activists pursue social change. I will go on to show that scepticism and criticality directed at media and political institutions provide fertile justification for their challenge, thereby rendering intertextual informal learning an expedient to collective action.

The expression of contentious politics and the eduction of requisite resources to put them into practice were aspects of the STOP ACTA communication on social media I explored in the preceding chapter. Herein, I ask whether the same communication constituted a possible avenue for learning about conventional politics. To that end, I review and expand the online civic learning schema devised by Bennett et al. (2009b), so as to outline and evaluate collective and informal—rather than organisationally

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_7

nurtured—articulations of civic literacies (Bennett et al. 2009a; Wells 2013). Thereby, I attend to the wider question of how digitally enabled contentious politics of late may help institute a counter-democracy (Rosanvallon and Goldhammer 2008) of continuous public scrutiny or *publicness* (Habermas 1989).

Knowledge of political institutions and organisations, the means and ways to act on them arise from informal talk (Dahlgren 2009). I interrogate this premise in search for discursive inflections of citizenship (see Lindgren 2011) in networked communication foregoing collective action. I do this with analytical instruments borrowed from the scholarship on civic literacy and informal learning. Informal civic learning with social media is a topic that has just begun to gain momentum in social movement studies (see Gleason 2013). Gleason examined informal learning bearing on the internal organisation of the Occupy Movement. I concentrate on mainstream political institutions and organisations, enquiring into the *civicness*—the preoccupation with political institutions and citizenship (Evers 2009, p. 242)—of activist networked communication. I embrace this topic in an attempt to embed civic learning more deeply into social movement studies[1] and thereby to help evaluate the robustness of civic participation instigated by the widening panoply of claim-making actors caught up in contentious politics.

Stop ACTA and Cosmopolitan Citizenship

A concerted effort that extended over several months, climaxing on 9 June 2012, Stop ACTA was integral to a wider movement[2] against legislation to curb copyright infringement, which in the USA included the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and the PROTECT IP Act (PIPA). A central tenet of this opposition was that networked communication was increasingly restricted at the behest of commercial organisations ready to encroach on freedom of expression and online privacy to safeguard their profits (Losey 2014). The concern that oppositional movements showed for the parameters of networked communication has been shared widely due to the prominent place that expressivity, playful creativity and the social production of ideas—many of which turned into ground-breaking ideas for web-based services—have taken in the expanding digital economy (see Benkler 2006; Lessig 2001, 2004). Many of those same phenomena have also been tapped by social scientists tracking the dynamic transformations of democratic citizenship. Although the latter have been rooted in the deep-seated structural and cultural shifts in society I charted

earlier in the book, particularly the practice of citizenship has found a renewed outlet in networked communication; a development that has been the source of much scholarly debate (Bennett et al. 2009a, b; Dahlgren 2009; Papacharissi 2010; van Dijck 2012).

Stop ACTA transpired at a time when a notion of cosmopolitan citizenship had been swept into public consciousness on the coattails of neoliberal individualisation. Cosmopolitan citizenship percolated into politics globally as the individual was envisioned simultaneously as the central subject of unfettered market relations and of a universalising human rights regime (Beck 2000, p. 83). Cosmopolitan citizenship has fuelled what some regard as a deterritorialised democratic political culture (Dahlgren 2006) variably materialising in contentious collective action; imagined in reactionary responses (Castells 1997) or by resistance movements such as the Zapatistas (Russell 2005) in the face of global pressures bearing down on hard-pressed local communities.

The mobilisation against the transnational treaty on copyright infringement touched on its multiple implications among which were those for fundamental human rights such as freedom of speech (Losey 2014). The Stop ACTA protest blasted the inroads made by corporate interests on democratic decision-making (Crouch 2004), berating the opaqueness of the negotiations behind closed doors, which led to the signing of the international agreement prohibiting file-sharing and other practices underpinning user-generated content and the wider governance of intellectual property rights. In step with other contemporary movements such as the Indignados or Occupy movements (della Porta 2013), Stop ACTA called for the institution of participatory mechanisms and accountability processes in contemporary transnational policy (Losey 2014) to enshrine the rights-based conception of cosmopolitan citizenship. In the coming paragraphs, I go through the Stop ACTA dataset once more to discern how activists represented conventional institutions and organisations and the relationship envisaged with them. At the heart of this empirical analysis is my concern with civic literacy and the steps activists take to educate each other and their social media support base about institutional politics.

Civic Literacy and Learning

Civic literacy is the 'knowledge and ability of citizens to make sense of their political world' (Milner 2002, p. 1). Weaving this characterisation together with the view that citizenship represents one's 'willingness and ability to

engage in public discourse and evaluate the performance of those in office' (Galston 1991, p. 227), it follows that civic literacy is a nurturing source of democratic citizenship. Yet, proceeding from the foregoing definition of citizenship, it is perhaps surprising that critics of digital activism decry its apparent momentum around the world as citizenship-by-convenience and a fleeting din of little resonance in democratic politics (Morozov 2011). The more sanguine outlook that I outline here is counterposed to this fixation with the 'real' impact of networked communication on the polity. Instead, I concentrated on civic literacies and parsed the ACTA dataset for evidence of the building blocks of civic learning (Bennett et al. 2009a, b). I then go on to reflect on the *democratic person* (Biesta 2007) articulated in such communication.

Literacy events can bolster civic literacy. Literacy events unfold as individuals act socially through text—verbal, visual or written (Heath 1982; Barton and Lee 2013, p. 12). In a civic literacy event, individuals will convey interpretations of common interests or concerns and piece together in social interaction ideas and orientations toward various aspects of democracy. A *democratic subjectivity* espousing the values and beliefs that reproduce democracy is cultivated through actions wherein these are played out (2007, p. 744). Indeed, it has been contended that 'the best way to prepare for democracy is through participation in democratic life itself' (2007, p. 747). The persistence, however, of a socio-economic gap in civic participation (Best and Krueger 2005), marking both the desire and the capacity to be an active citizen (Christensen and Bengtsson 2011) is well-documented. Notwithstanding, there has been a documented 'activating effect' from networked communication to forms of participation ranging from petitions to demonstrations (2011, p. 906); and more specifically, it has been proposed that the active use of social media bears a positive relationship to political participation (Ëkstrom and Östman 2013).

Networked communication is a medium for informal talk. It is in casual conversations initiated on various dedicated outlets—from chat fora to content sharing websites such as Flickr or Instagram—that people can seek and develop specialist knowledge repertoires and expert discourses (Barton and Lee 2013, p. 124). Informal civic learning represents the acquisition of citizen knowledge, skills, beliefs and values. It is an upshot of informal conversation that at once aids with the delineation of the individual citizen and of democratic politics (Dewey 1916 [1957]; Biesta 2007). aligned with a social conception of democracy that places emphasis on the social construction of democratic values, beliefs and norms within the wider

environment encompassing democratic institutions (Pateman 1970; della Porta 2013), informal civic learning is distinguished on two levels, of the environment where it occurs and of the practices whereby one enunciates her/his citizenship.

Canonical civic education predicated on the instrumental reproduction of democratic institutions in formal settings such as classrooms has begun to be matched by practice-based learning about democratic participation unfolding in extracurricular activities for which a primary medium is networked communication (Bennett et al. 2009a, b; Wells 2013). Informal civic learning is performed outside the confines of educational (formal) and social (non-formal) institutions (Schugurensky and Myers 2008, p. 75). Schugurensky and Myers's study enquired into what the authors termed 'mediation spaces' or ad hoc meeting points, (2008, p. 74; see also the introduction to this volume).

A drive to both envision (Coleman and Blumler 2009; Manosevitch et al. 2014) and map out (Wright and Street 2007; Graham and Wright 2014) the seemingly expanding array of mediation spaces has grown exponentially with the diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Bennett et al. (2009b) surveyed websites of youth organisations and online-only youth portals for civic and political engagement whilst inviting further research into whilst more recently Wells (2013) looked at the use of social networking services by youth organisations. In his turn, Lindgren (2011) wrote of the 'knowledge communities' emanating from conversations among commentators of urban free running sport *parkour* on Youtube video blogs (vlogs). In Lindgren's reading, through their exchanges, contributors were producing knowledge about the sport, learning more about it from each other in the process and ultimately expanding their literacy of it.

Secondly, informal civic learning encapsulates an interactive, organic, exchange among participants who are active subjects rather than passive recipients of citizen knowledge, skills, beliefs or values (Bennett et al. 2009a). Interactivity, mutuality and collaboration (Jenkins 2006) are marks of its conceptual distinctiveness as an *actualising* information style that stands in contrast to a *dutiful*, more passive and top-down mode of communication exchanges perpetuating extant institutions and attendant social relations (Bennett et al. 2009b, p. 108; Wells 2013). Following this line of argumentation, informal civic learning on social media may be defined as 'active participation in social practices' (Barton and Lee 2013, p. 125) speaking to public concerns.

In the theoretical development of the notion of the actualising information style, Bennett and his colleagues (2009b) proposed a practice-based learning model associated with self-guided networked communication around issues of direct concern to individuals. The model stood in contrast to the dutiful, prescriptive and formal mode of imparting civic information about conventional politics. The parallel existence of these two modalities, they argue, has brought both the formation and the meaning of citizenship into flux. Equally, it is purported that the actualising mode does not preclude the acquisition of dutiful understandings (2009b, p. 110). This was the cardinal claim to which I turned my attention, as I applied the classification scheme for dutiful civic information designed by Bennett et al. (2009a) in a second textual analysis of the Stop ACTA data.

The Stop ACTA Twitter and Facebook communication was scrutinised for evidence of whether how and why dutiful civic information may come to permeate digital exchanges among individuals involved in it (Bennett et al. 2009b, pp. 110–111). The first of the four types of information, *knowledge*, pertains to user exchanges about national history and the operation of government. *Media literacy* relates to the understanding of contemporary media, the evaluation of their operations, agenda and output. *Organisation* designates a cognizance of 'the role of parties, interest organisations and civic groups and the reasons and bases for joining them' (2009b, p, 111). *Action/participation* denotes the capacity to tell apart suitable participation routes—voting, petitioning or campaigning—for winning the assent of democratic governments, e.g. for a policy plan. Finally, Bennett et al. (2009b, p. 111) nominated *orientation/attitudes* as the enunciation of a sense of trust, of political efficacy—namely, the ability to get across to government—and justice values.

Civic knowledge, organisation and action as well as the orientations expressed in networked communication are attributes of civic information that have figured prominently in scholarship on political engagement—both in mainstream and unconventional politics (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Bennett et al. 2014; Earl et al. 2013; Thorson et al. 2013; Vaccari et al. 2015). Insights into how activists sidestep, critique or counter mainstream media, embracing new media as an avenue for public communication have been forthcoming in the literature on alternative media (Meikle 2002; Atton 2004; Fenton and Barassi 2011). Equally, the parameters of the relationship between movement actors and mainstream media have been the subject of intricate studies (Gitlin 2003; Rucht 2004).

Rucht (2004) has differentiated among activist responses to the media's news values, namely the criteria that shape the selection and reporting of a news story by the media (Ryan 1991). Activists may adopt four types of responses: abstention, attack, adaptation and alternatives (Rucht 2004, pp. 36–37). Herein, the treatment of media literacy was guided by the aim to both capture knowledge and attitudes toward the media (necessarily stemming from a dutiful comprehension of their workings) and to tie them to any self-actualising visions for countering adverse news values. Consequently, the latter form of response, *alternatives* was actively probed in the empirical study. Alternatives refer to attempts by social movement actors to develop their own means of mass communication so as to compensate for perceived inadequacies or inaccuracies in mainstream media coverage. Following a quantitative content analysis, a discursive analysis of media literacy addressed this aim in depth.

The data selected for analysis covered the first two days of the research period (26–27 May) and the final day of action (9 June 2012). These three data points were chosen to perform an additional ascertainment of the putative distinction between the usage of Facebook and Twitter. The use of the former platform has been portrayed as more extensive in the run-up to protests. Conversely, Twitter usage would be concentrated concentrated on the day of action (Earl et al. 2013). In addition, the same authors submitted that on the day of the protest, particularly on Twitter, communication centered on developments at the site of the action (e.g. police movements). In the run-up to the protest event, especially Facebook would be an instrument to 'publicize…and drive participation' (2013, p. 461).

In the previous chapter, I reviewed results from the first analysis of the Stop ACTA communication, which did not entirely verify this assessment. On both Facebook and Twitter, we encountered comparable amounts of interlocution ahead of as well as on 9 June (see Figs. 7.1 and 7.2). By comparison with the days in the data corpus, the first two days of the research period saw the lowest levels of communication on both platforms. At the other end, there were relative peaks in activity on both platforms on the day of action with comparable volumes of posts on the days before the protest. This trend was bucked on a single occasion on Twitter where a surge was recorded a week prior to the day of action when news broke and cascaded that the Dutch parliament had voted against ratifying the ACTA agreement, a step that precipitated its repeal.

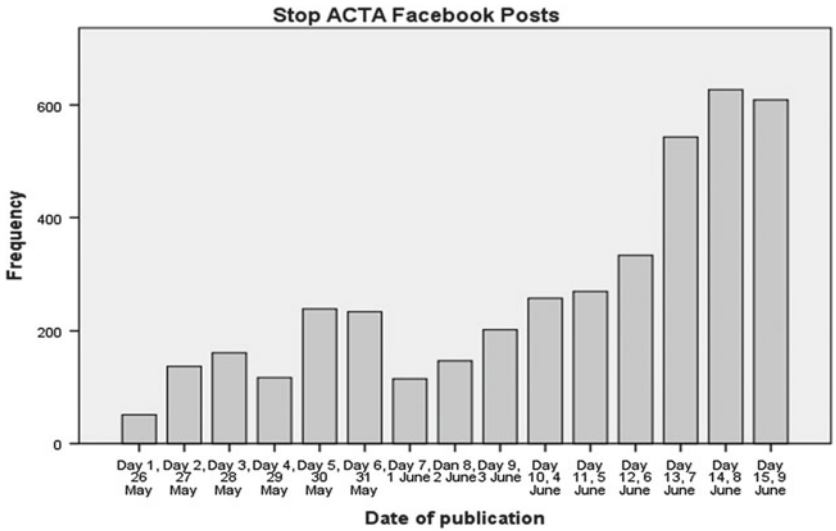

Fig. 7.1 Facebook ACTA posts (26 May–9 June 2012)

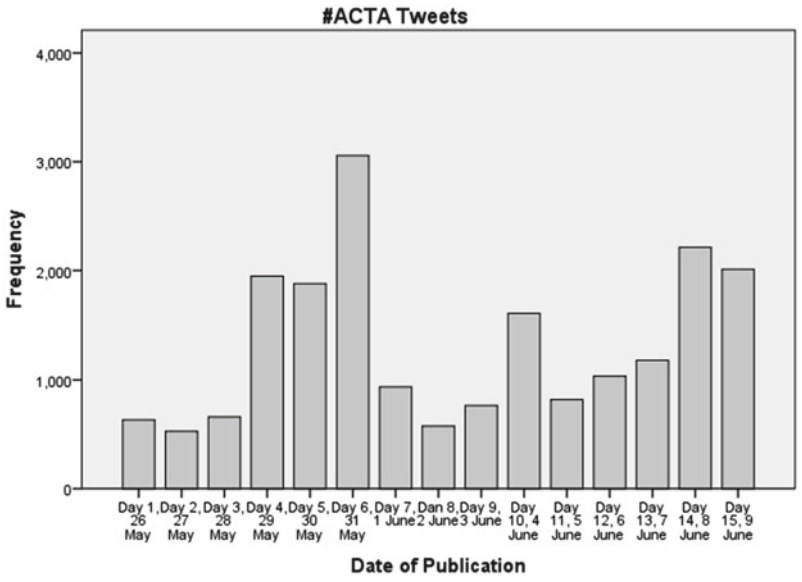

Fig. 7.2 #ACTA Twitter communication (26 May–9 June 2012)

The random sample of Stop ACTA messages we drew when surveying participatory coordination fit the aim of charting time-wise variations in the level of communication on both platforms. The same selection method would have been ill-suited for an exploration of intertextuality. Intertextuality denotes the idea in literary (Kristeva 1980) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1992) that texts are interconnected, mutually inflect on each other and bear marks of competing interpretations in a hegemonic struggle over meaning (1992, p. 136).[3] The scrutiny of intertextuality at the three data points lent itself to the question of whether civic information would be differentially interwoven on the day of the protest than furthest in advance of it, within the research period. In discussing this question, in turn, I considered the imbrication of dutiful and actualising information.[4]

Patterns of Civic Information on Facebook and Twitter

The empirical analysis was conducted with a sequential mixed method design (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009, p. 143). Initial quantitative content analysis helped gauge the scope and character of the civic information encountered whilst subsequent discourse analysis charted its social construction. The quantitative component of the study was based on the operationalisation of civic learning proposed by Bennett and colleagues (2009b)[5] further extended to cover *alternatives* to mainstream media into the category for media literacy (Rucht 2004). This approach served to delineate an image of the relative prevalence (Neuendorf 2002) of civic information thereafter supplemented with a map of patterned relationships among types of civic information rendered with Textometrica, an online academic application for discursive network analysis (Lindgren and Palm 2011). Those relationships were situated back into their original (con)text so as to interrogate their intertextuality, together with the vernacular discourse on government and media institutions and user epistemic stances (Barton and Lee 2013) exhibited in the posts.

To uncover (dis)connections between the contentious politics of the Stop ACTA protest and the institutions that it contested, I delved into vernacular discourses—'people's own ways of talking' (Barton and Lee 2013, p. 132)—in Facebook posts and hashtagged tweets. These were examined as potential building-blocks of civic literacies taking shape in

Table 7.1 Civic information in Facebook posts[a] ($N = 767$)

Code	*Total Posts (N/%)*		*Posts (N/%) 26–27 May*		*Posts (N/%) 9 June*		*Krippendorf Alpha*
Civic knowledge	55	*7%*	30	*17%*	25	*4%*	.67
Media literacy	121	*16%*	22	*12%*	99	*17%*	1
Organisation and membership	19	*2%*	11	*6%*	8	*1%*	.92
Action and participation	249	*32%*	44	*25%*	205	*35%*	.97
Orientation and attitudes	40	*5%*	9	*5%*	31	*5%*	.74

[a]Rates vary from 100% because the text units (posts) were amenable to multiple coding. This is true also for the day counts because the proportions express a ratio of code occurrence out of the total units on the day

a discursive field of civic information about the ACTA agreement. A discursive field represents the bounded cultural terrain where 'groups construct diagnoses, prognoses and calls to action' (Steinberg 1999, p. 748). A field is the locus for the expression of epistemic stances, 'the stating of facts, knowledge, or beliefs toward certain stance objects' (Barton and Lee 2013, p. 92) such as, in this case, public institutions or the minutiae of the ACTA agreement (Table 7.1).

To begin, I give a descriptive overview of civic information on Facebook. More than half of the Facebook posts contained at least one type of civic information (484 posts); out of that total, more than half referenced action and participation aspects (249 posts). This was prima facie confirmation that civic participation is a prominent topic among the social media audience of informal, loosely coupled civic groupings or organisations (Wells 2013 p. 629). The high volume of messages dwelling on civic action did not foreclose dutiful reflections on the political system. The elicitation of civic knowledge about government in the broad sense of the institutions mandated to steer society was the third most frequent civic activity observed on Facebook. Slightly more frequent were comments associated with the media—either mainstream or activist. Media criticism directed at mainstream organisations was the more infrequent of the two types of messages (15 posts). When occurring, it conveyed a necessity to grasp the workings of the media as a prerequisite to maximising the impact of collective action and to combatting negative media spin (Gitlin 2003). Self-generated activist media (106 posts about photos, videos and reports produced by activists) substantiated this credo. Volunteer media

production was often quoted as fundamental to the augmentation of the public impact generated by the protests.

Fourth, references to parties, interest groups or civic organisations were few and far between. Organisations such as civic associations and fringe actors like the Pirate Party who were supporting the common cause of preventing the ratification of ACTA were commanded; much unlike mainstream political parties that were slated for their more ambiguous or outright hostile position. Finally, remarks on orientations and attitudes evoked both positive and negative sentiments stirred by the ACTA agreement and the secretive handling of treaty negotiations by democratic governments. But affective comments were also directed at the collective action itself.

The initial descriptive overview continued with bivariate tests of association (see Neuendorf 2002, p. 178) between civic information and the date of publication (Cramer's $V = .223$, $p < .001$ for knowledge and date; Cramer's $V = .153$, $p < .001$ for organisation and date; and Cramer's $V = .101$, $p < .01$ for participation and date of publication). Accounting for differences in the volume of posts, knowledge of government was invoked over four times more often on 26–27 May (17% posts) than on 9 June (4% posts); organisation was discussed again four times more often ahead of (6%) than on the day of the protest (1.5%). By contrast, participation made up approximately one-third of the posts on the day of action and only one-quarter two weeks in advance. These results corroborated with Earl et al.'s (2013) contention that commentary on participation—counting in messages on the action itself—was likely on the day of the protest itself, albeit on Facebook. At the same time, references to the media were more prevalent on the day of action (17% posts) than two weeks prior to it (6.5% of posts). This fact seemed mainly attributable to a drive to publicise the pan-European demonstration by pushing self-generated content through social media. Finally, orientations toward government and official stances on the ACTA agreement were aired in an equal measure both in advance and on the day of protest (5% of posts). These last results were not statistically significant. The figures should be interpreted with caution and only as tentative signs of variability in activist communication.

Next, I detected a moderate association between the variables of interest and their endorsement with a Facebook 'like' (ranging from Cramer's $V = .233$ for knowledge and participation, respectively, to Cramer's $V = .309$, $p < .001$ for orientation). It appeared that partisan comments making clear-cut pronouncements on the egregiousness of

the trade agreement were received more favourably by the Facebook group members than any of the other types of posts. All message categories being, in turn, endorsed by members suggested the 'like' button was a technological affordance whereby a collective identity was asserted through the venting of anger (van Zomeren et al. 2008), the object of which was ACTA and its makers. Finally, I did not find any statistically significant associations among the variables of interest themselves apart from a weak one between knowledge and orientation (Cramer's $V = .094$, $p < .01$), which pointed to a small number of messages being both a commentary on government workings and a value statement relating to them. Notwithstanding the absence of statistical significance, a further exploration of semantic linkages in the expression of civic information was undertaken with Textometrica. The software rendered an image of the within-post occurrence of civic information, i.e. the simultaneous referencing of 2 or more types of civic information in a message.

I generated Fig. 7.3 with Textometrica. It is a network map of the five types of civic information. The size of the nodes is a measure of code occurrence whilst the links between the codes are expressed both in absolute figures and, visually, in terms of thickness of edges (ties). The visualisation exposed all intersections between actualising and dutiful civic modalities including those which had turned out as statistically non-significant in the earlier tests. The strongest relationship I found was in posts where references to media literacy and civic action/participation co-occurred. As explained, media literacy pivoted on two axes—the critique of the media and the encouragement of self-generated alternative media. Both these themes tied in with civic action/participation. Expressions of disappointment with media coverage were counterbalanced by statements appealing for the development of alternative media by Facebook group members. The outcome corroborated the foregoing claim that loosely-coupled networked activism hinges on a personal investment in the definition and staging of collective action (Bennett and Segerberg 2012). Further, it was indicative of a primacy of self-actualisation over dutiful *civicness,* whereby conventional institutions were objects of critical reflection and contestation rather than observance.

Turning to the Twitter data, my first general observation was that the hashtag #ACTA was marked by a high degree of retweeting. This was by no measure a surprise; rather it appeared to fit with a previously recorded secular rise in the use of retweets in activist communication (Poell 2014, pp. 720–721). Approximately two-thirds of the posts were

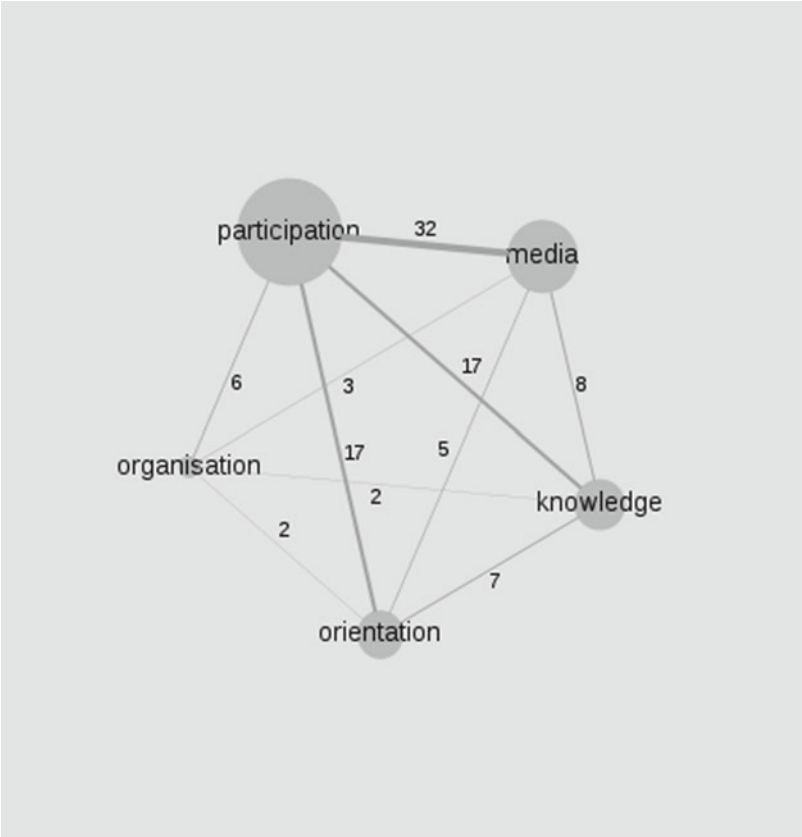

Fig. 7.3 Facebook Code Co-occurrence Map ($N = 767$)

retweets. Second, as on Facebook, the largest numbers of posts comprised information on action and participation (see Table 7.2). In contrast to Facebook, media literacy was second to the expression of civic knowledge and orientation/attitudes. Third, there was a statistically significant relationship between the date of publication and civic information styles with the strongest link observed for knowledge (Cramer's $V = .269$, $p < .001$) followed in descending order by orientation (Cramer's $V = .235$, $p < .001$), action/participation (Cramer's $V = .267$, $p < .001$), organisation (Cramer's

Table 7.2 Civic information in Twitter posts[a] ($N = 3190$)

Code	*Frequency (N/%)*		*Tweets (N/%) 26–27 May*		*Tweets (N/%) 9 June*		*Krippendorf Alpha*
Civic knowledge	769	*24%*	431	*38%*	333	*17%*	.97
Media literacy	425	*13%*	100	*9%*	323	*16%*	1
Organisation and membership	162	*5%*	89	*8%*	72	*4%*	.87
Action and participation	1439	*45%*	416	*35%*	1009	*50%*	.97
Orientation and attitudes	836	*26%*	451	*40%*	381	*19%*	.80

[a]Rates vary from 100% because the text units (tweets) were amenable to multiple coding. This is true also for the day counts because the proportions express a ratio of code occurrence out of the total units on the day

$V = .118$, $p < .001$) and last, media literacy (Cramer's $V = .108$, $p < .001$). On closer inspection of each of these cross-tabulations, I noted that information relating to civic knowledge, the role of organisations, attitudes and orientations toward government were conveyed proportionally, more often in advance of than on the day of action. This was in contrast to the communication of information about action and participation or media literacy that were more prevalent on the day of protest.

I found a weak measure of association for action/participation information and retweeting (Cramer's $V = .060$, $p < .001$) with all other types of civic exchange exhibiting no significant retweet patterns. In other words, civic self-actualisation—namely through communication pertaining to endogenous collective action and participation therein—garnered the largest amount of interest as measured by the retweets received. There were, conversely, stronger associations between the different types of civic information, the strongest of which was between civic knowledge and participation (Cramer's $V = .286$, $p < .001$), followed by knowledge and media literacy (Cramer's $V = .206$, $p < .001$); orientation and media literacy (Cramer's $V = .152$, $p < .001$); organisation and knowledge (Cramer's $V = .127$, $p < .001$), orientation and knowledge (Cramer's $V = .093$, $p < .001$) and finally, action/participation and organisation (Cramer's $V = .071$, $p < .001$). On the most general level, these results suggested an elaborately interwoven pattern of civic information combining dutiful and self-actualising content. Learning not only about the intricacies of activism (Gleason 2013) but also about the dutiful mode of citizenship thus represented a distinct possibility in informal settings such as the #ACTA communication on Twitter.

The map of the relationships between the types of civic information is reproduced in Fig. 7.4. It illustrates both statistically significant and non-significant connections, the latter of which were not reported in the correlational analysis. The link between orientation and participation, although non-significant, exhibited the largest number of code co-occurrences. Similarly, the connection between media and participation also became apparent in the co-occurrence map. Moreover, the linkages between knowledge and participation and knowledge and orientation were confirmed. The easiest way to explain the seeming discrepancies in this as opposed to the correlational analysis was by way of a reminder

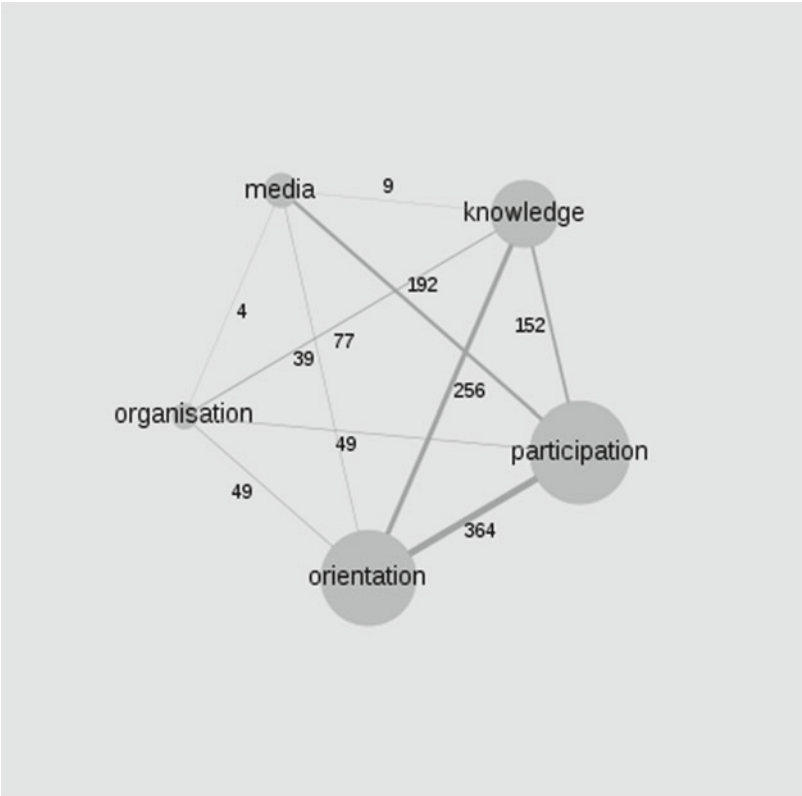

Fig. 7.4 Twitter Code Co-occurrence Map ($N = 3190$)

that the correlations expressed a ratio between the total number of code occurrences and their co-occurrences. Textometrica, on the other hand, captured only code co-occurrences, here expressed in absolute numbers.

In the end, although the network map did not provide a measure of the degree to which civic information would co-occur, it signalled that Twitter communication touching on action and participation was closely accompanied by information on orientation and attitudes, media and civic knowledge. In the next section, I try to press the point that these information patterns originated in fraught relationships with media organisations and political institutions as painted by the Stop ACTA audience, and a recurrent express desire amongst its membership for users to learn about the multifariousness of those relationships.

Intertextual Civic Discourse on Facebook and Twitter

The nexus of self-actualising and dutiful civic information on both Facebook and Twitter alluded to complex literacy events whilst arguably revealing the coordinates of the Stop ACTA discursive field. That interconnection appeared as a moving equilibrium between three discursive objects: first, a preoccupation with action and participation; second, the exchange of civic knowledge that anchored the communication in its institutional context whilst concurrently often taking a critical stance toward it; and third, commentary on the activist relationship with the mainstream media and the imperative that self-produced activist media output maximises the public impact of the collective action.

A vivid intertextual co-articulation of civic knowledge and, on the other hand, a critique of the media was apparent on Facebook in a post taking aim at the manner in which the German public broadcaster ARD covered the Stop ACTA campaign. The contributor decried the channel's prejudiced portrayal of the opposition to the agreement as uninformed. The person contended that the partial characterisation revealed an *ad hominem* attack on the members of the democratic, extra-parliamentarian opposition, as well as the unwillingness of the said media organisation to engage with the substantive issue of copyright protection. Conversely, an ample conversation thread was retrieved that instantiated the self-actualising link between participation and media literacy. The two types of civic information were fused

together in statements aimed at firming up the visibility of the 9 June protests. Participants in the thread reflected on their involvement in the protest exchanging opinions and advice on writing and disseminating a blog post summarising the day of action. More widely, the same aim to augment visibility and trade tips to that effect was pursued with calls to advertise video streams of the day of action or photo galleries and to ensure the systematic interlinking of the self-produced media content.

Resting on Facebook, knowledge and participation were connected in a post proposing a reflexive reassessment of fundamental democratic principles ostensibly eroded by mainstream politics. As a redress, inter alia, the person posting called for collective action to reassert popular referenda as a participatory institution of contemporary democracy. Finally, the post displayed a vernacular discourse imbricating dutiful and actualising information in order to voice a critical stance on mainstream politics.

> 'We must FIGHT for FREEDOM…freedom to cut the wages of our elected representatives, to call for referenda to impeach any politician who goes against the rights of the people… Freedom to live and not just to eke out a living…'

Despite striking a critical note against political institutions and the media, this post and all others in the same spirit remained within the bounds of civicness. Either on Facebook or on Twitter, there was no instance of explicit calls to abandon democratic politics and *exit* its institutional framework (Hirschman 1970). Overtly or in more implicit ways, several posts nevertheless demanded a retrenchment within the boundaries of the democratic nation state as a failsafe solution to ACTA and similar encroachments of an international neoliberal regime.

Next, I retrieved a tapestry of intertextual linkages combining civic knowledge with commentary on participation and civic organisations. A message against the European INDECT project provided a vivid illustration of the pattern. INDECT was a research project seeking to develop intelligent security systems for use by law enforcement agencies. The post identified the civic problem posed by the project—a direct threat to online privacy—and invoked collective action as a civic response to it, to be steered by the Anonymous organisation. By contrast with the previous example, the message offered a vision of cross-national mobilisation premised on ostensibly universal values.

> 'The INDECT project is a platform for global monitoring sitting on the collection and analysis of information. This project seriously undermines our privacy and completely neutralizes the free internet. In short, everything you do on your computer (and even elsewhere) will be monitored, all your actions will be controlled and censored. This project is clearly unconstitutional and goes against Human Rights and two fundamental rights: freedom of expression and the right to respect for private life. Together, unite to nullify this project!'

Separately, participation and organisation were conjured together to signal civic initiatives, to wit dedicated to advocating a parliamentary rebuttal to the ACTA treaty instigated through collective action. In addition, the grassroots Stop ACTA mobilisation provided the ferment for the creation of a civic organisation to defend the cause of the opposition to the agreement and use the day of action as a stage for membership recruitment. The post below presented an opportunity for intertextual civic learning as it built a bridge linking the more familiar terrain of the planned protest on 9 June with follow-up actions designed to maintain pressure on government institutions on the topic of the ACTA agreement.

> 'On June 9, the CSFA association will be there in Paris to demonstrate against ACTA. In the near future our newly established association (see our statute here) will seek to have delegates in all the departments together with action groups all across France. We therefore invite you to get in touch with us to talk about the different possibilities and projects we envisage'.

Finally, I spotlight the close enmeshment of participation, attitude and knowledge in Facebook messages whereby contributors depicted what was viewed as a troubling state of affairs whilst inciting a collective response to it. In the example below, the three types of civic information were referenced in an epistemic stance berating a narrow focus of the oppositional discourse on the detrimental effect of the ACTA agreement on the Internet to the exclusion of its equally if not more deleterious ramifications. The postee reviewed the expected negative consequences, described a desirable attitude to be adopted by its opposers—informed scepticism—and a necessary course of action to tackle them all, i.e. collective action.

> 'Well, if you think that ACTA is just about the Internet, you can be quite wrong… the price for medicine, food, operations, technology in general is going to be more expensive [because of] acta. [It is] possible that 19–21%

> [is] but a fraction [of the price hike] … M., [this is] what we know now huh;) (for we never read the documents directly from the EU site. Indeed, M., why respond to someone who has not signed up and will never read [the documentation]…T [stressed] the fact that we are incredibly besides sitting [on our hands] and he is absolutely right. Thnx)'.

On Twitter, the most frequent binary intertextual linkage—orientation and participation—connoted a more rhetorical tone. Often starting from a diagnosis of ACTA as an attack on shared democratic values, posts would avow the imperativeness of collective action (Chap. 6), instigating participation in it: 'Stop Internet #Censorship! Sign the urgent global petition @Avaaz urging the EU Parliament to reject #ACTA… '2.8 million signatures against #ACTA… You can't censor that… London rally'.

Similarly, the intertextual bridging of civic knowledge and orientation evoked an unprincipled departure of mainstream institutions from their core values: '#acta privacy, data protection, together with freedom of expression have always been considered as core elements of the European model'. Dutiful civic knowledge seemed to be a cornerstone of the civic literacy occasioned by the Stop ACTA mobilisation. Civic information formed the major premise for the collective action.

Dutiful civic knowledge flowed into the choice of protest tactics and action strategies which combined indirect pressure tactics, namely demonstrations, with more conventional means of addressing political representatives directly such as petitions. Illustratively, one postee pleaded: 'Let us ask the @ EU Commission to tell the European Court to halt the # ACTA and protect our rights. Signature Now!'. Likewise, knowledge of organisations was displayed to indicate that actions by interest groups (e.g. French consumer protection group UFC Que Choisir) fit into a wider tapestry of action designed to pressure authorities into rescinding the ACTA agreement: 'RT @Torrent_News: The UFC Que Choisir denounces # ACTA and contacts MEPs that have reject it| @Torrent_News'. Notwithstanding, references to political parties were by-and-large derogatory apart from those to the Pirate and the Green parties regarded as supportive of the collective action. The two parties were held up as refreshing alternatives to the entrenched political actors: 'European protests #ACTA on June 9 http://t.co/QU274qjk Find your demonstration, join in. #EGP has been a strong voice of opposition to ACTA'.

The intertextual linkage of media literacy and participation bridged the necessity and significance of the Stop ACTA protest with a supplication to

lend a hand to its diffusion. The tweet 'RT @Anon_Central: Today is the global protest day against #ACTA and Internet #censorship. Share your events, pictures and videos with us. #June9' emphasised the significance of the day for the Stop ACTA movement, inviting people to amplify it with testimonies from public demonstrations in their own locales. This variety of posts was the obverse to posts exuding scepticism about mainstream media. Whilst one postee remarked disparagingly, 'Somehow I have the feeling that you hardly reported today about the demonstrations against # ACTA … # media', others urged self-publication: 'broadcast with the mouse!' and 'Plz remember: Pics or it didn´t happen'. Thus, an attacking stance on the media did not amount to a rejection of its utility, suggesting that alternative media would simultaneously compensate for perceived shortcomings and aid in extending mainstream coverage (Rucht 2004). I take account of the entire set of findings in the final paragraphs below.

Conclusion

The networked communication enveloping protests such as Stop ACTA but also the Occupy Movement that fed into it was anchored in and stimulated active reflections regarding the relevant institutional settings. Further to the concern for the fundamental human right that is freedom of speech (Losey 2014)—a crucial building block of cosmopolitan citizenship—this research testified to a preoccupation within the loose grassroots of Stop ACTA with mainstream political institutions—both national and of the European Union—and their reform. Likewise, the US Occupy Movement, which did not concentrate so narrowly on a single policy issue gave voice to an ample institutional critique on social media platforms (Thorson et al. 2013, p, 440). Perhaps together, these insights may constitute at least modest grounds for continuing to dispute a notion that the networked communication foreshadowing numerous contemporary instances of collective action is wholly instrumental, being fundamentally geared towards mobilisation (Juris 2012).

Another argument I foreground in this chapter is that the networked communication of late appears to be generative of discourses instigating concrete changes to both policy and the institutional order (inter alia, by endeavouring to refocus public attention on inequality, poverty or unemployment in the case of Occupy, Juris 2012, p. 273; or on the accountability of public officials and due parliamentary process in that of Stop ACTA). In addition, discursive patterns were retrieved encompassing a

high measure of both emotional and cognitive investment in the description and evaluation of mainstream politics and the media, which were doubled by reflections on hands-on modalities to counter their actions. I would also stress, in light of cognate research, that communication relating to self-produced media amounts to the establishment of a commons that activists and sympathetic journalists alike may tap to build an account of the protests (similarly, see Thorson et al. 2013, p. 440).

In what may amount to a post-materialist dissolution of participant ties with traditional interest-based organisations (Theocharis 2011), mainstream parties and interest groups were either marginally invoked (on Twitter, and there largely as an object of criticism) or completely disregarded (on Facebook). A relative dearth of critical reflection on the media coverage of the demonstrations seemed amply compensated for by appeals to users to generate their own media. In this manner, the Stop ACTA activists were continuing the practice of producing self-generated content to countervail media accounts of rolling protests (Segerberg and Bennett 2011; Poell 2014, p. 721).

The argument by Earl et al. (2013) that information on action and participation would dominate on the day of action was substantiated. In addition, I showed that a discourse pertaining to media literacy was a close companion to action and participation talk on action day. This notion appeared to hold true for both Twitter and Facebook. Moreover, the high incidence of posts aimed at fostering wider participation in embodied collective action appeared to negate attempts to dissociate vernacular civic discourses on social media from everyday civic practices beyond the 'screen' as likely being misguided (see Bakardjieva 2012). As in other instances (Robles et al. 2013), a significant share of the communication probed in this research was directed at facilitating the participation of social media users in collective action, here against the ACTA agreement. Having accounted for the stance taken in those messages, it seems reasonable to infer that such communication would enable the enactment of civic participation in everyday life.

To recall, stance-taking has been described as a pivotal resource for intertextual learning whereby one can apply a familiar practice (e.g. to snap photos with a mobile phone) to an unfamiliar context such as a political demonstration (Barton and Lee 2013, p. 127), thereby developing an appreciation of the latter. Inevitably, the conversion rate from vernacular civic discourses to embodied participation would be influenced by other, principally socio-economic factors (Enjolras et al. 2012) or the usage of

particular social media platforms (Hughes et al. 2012). Crucially, however, the intertextual linkage of self-actualising and dutiful information may be viewed as an intermediary stage in this ostensible conversion process. To read this conclusion in light of the foregoing discussion on civic participation, I would note that dutiful information exchanged in the run- up to a protest may fuel a more sustained interest in institutional politics.

The 15-M movement of indignation with the mainstream political actors in Spain is a clear illustration of how this possibility may be realised. The 15-M movement reclaimed the mantle of the earlier 13-M flash mobs, which erupted in Madrid in the wake of the 2004 terrorist attacks as an outburst of outrage against the government and the incumbent Popular Party. In a perceived self-serving move, the Spanish government erroneously attributed the bombing of commuter trains three days prior to the general elections of 14 March that year to the Basque separatist movement ETA. Like 13-M, 15-M demanded accountability and transparency in institutional politics (Flesher Fominaya 2011, p. 304), a call that has been deeply resonant with the Stop ACTA agenda. Moreover, the 15-M movement was a hotbed for new political vectors such as the *Podemos* Party, which whilst seeking electoral gain is advocating a shake-up of democratic politics to open them up to more direct citizen participation (Borge and Santamarina 2015).

A time-series analysis pooling together social media and panel data comprehending in-depth interviews with postees may prove fruitful for both modelling any learning process attendant to the exchange of civic information and for testing its purchase on participants' political efficacy (Campbell et al. 1954). The findings I discussed are best viewed as a theoretical elaboration on discursive linkages between the nominated types of civic information. The results were conceived of as a stepping stone toward generalisable studies of user-generated informal civic learning in the networked communication occasioned by collective action; or critical studies disputing their significance.

The ample description of the witnessed intertextual linkages I provided was warranted by the aim to unpick discursive patterns of citizenship and sketch out how dutiful civic information may seep into, qualify and most importantly add to a collective stock of knowledge (Gleason 2013) used to justify the self-actualising communication and civic action of the Stop ACTA movement. In the end, the ideal-typical democratic person encountered in the parsed networked communication was sceptical of government

and the media but not oblivious of them; (s)he was immersed in an environment that can enhance an understanding of dutiful citizenship through an institutional critique of mainstream politics and the media. Most importantly, at stake for activists and the democratic person at large is an ability to grasp the nexus of meanings forged through intertextual linkages in the networked communication of contention. A similar analytical quest already impels the owners of the commercial platforms studied here in their development of sorting algorithms (Poell 2014) as well as insidious government surveillance (Fuchs 2013).

The witnessed exchange of civic information may not amount to a complete refutation of slacktivism, whose staunch asserters bemoan the flippancy of the self-selected networked activist demographic depicted as absorbed in opinionated chatter unlikely to feed into far-reaching collective action (Morozov 2011, p. 186). Research to date suggests that at least the general public might not bolster its knowledge of government and political organisations with digital media—to wit, online news outlets, social media and political party websites (Dimitrova et al. 2014). Contrariwise, the evidenced intertextuality may be a potent vehicle, whereby social movements make a claim on the cognitive field where collective action is performed (Eyerman and Jamison 1991).

In the case of the opposition to ACTA, that cognitive field was host to a fractured virtual cosmopolitanism (Sobré-Denton 2015, p. 2) that identified universalism—albeit of the global trade regime—as a threat to democracy. A counterweight to that regime was the apparently oxymoronic international rallying-call for national sovereignty. The Dutch Parliament's refusal to ratify ACTA, nevertheless, attested to the merit of political subsidiarity—the principle that decisions are to be taken as closely to the citizen as possible—in the EU (European Parliament 2015). The Stop ACTA networked communication was likewise a mediation space to the extent that contrasting views attracted agonistic and contradictory commentary, arguably a self-actualising practice (Bennett et al. 2009b, p. 108).

Notes

1. On social movements as producers of radical knowledge that informs social change see Cox and Flesher Fominaya (2009).
2. See my overview of Tarrow and Tilly's definition of social movements in the introduction.

3. The analysed corpus comprised a total of 3170 tweets and 767 Facebook posts from the first two and the final day of the research period (see Figs. 7.1 and 7.2).
4. If results of this textual research are inevitably partial (Phillipov 2012), they may nevertheless be an informing starting point for both ethnographic or survey studies bringing user views, experiences and circumstances to bear on patterns of informal civic learning encountered in contentious collective action.
5. Both the provision and requests for civic information were designated as code occurrences because the two types of actions were viewed as complementary sides of informal learning. As in the case of the content analyses presented in Chaps. 5 and 6, all message were amenable to multiple coding.

References

Atton, C. (2004). *An alternative Internet*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Bakardjieva, M. (2012). Reconfiguring the mediapolis: New media and civic agency. *New Media and Society, 14*, 63–79.

Barton, D., & Lee, C. (2013). *Language online: Investigating digital texts and practices*. London: Routledge.

Beck, U. (2000). The cosmopolitan perspective: Sociology of the second age of modernity. *British Journal of Sociology, 51*(1), 79–105.

Benkler, Y. (2006). *The wealth of networks: How social production transforms markets and freedom*. New York: Yale University Press.

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action. *Information, Communication and Society, 15*(5), 739–768.

Bennett, W. L., Segerberg, A., & Walker, S. (2014). Organization in the crowd: Peer production in large-scale networked protests. *Information, Communication & Society, 17*(2), 232–260.

Bennett, W. L., Wells, C., & Freelon, D. (2009a). Communicating civic engagement: Contrasting models of citizenship in the youth web sphere. *Journal of Communication, 61*, 836–856.

Bennett, W. L., Wells, C., & Rank, A. (2009b). Young citizens and civic learning: Two paradigms of citizenship in the digital age. *Citizenship Studies, 13*(2), 105–120.

Best, S. J., & Krueger, B. S. (2005). Analyzing the representativeness of Internet political participation. *Political Behavior, 27*, 183–216.

Biesta, G. (2007). Education and the democratic person: Towards a political conception of democratic education. *Teachers College Record, 109*(3), 740–769.

Borge, R., & Santamarina, E. (2015). From protest to political parties: Online and offline participation and deliberation in the new parties arising in Spain. *Protest Participation in Variable Communication Ecologies* Conference, The University of Sassari, Italy, 24–26 June.

Bruns, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, second life, and beyond: From production to produsage*. New York: Peter Lang.

Campbell, A., Gurin, G., & Miller, W. E. (1954). *The voter decides*. Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson.

Castells, M. (1997). *The power of identity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Cox, L., & Flesher Fominaya, C. (2009). Movement knowledge: What do we know, how do we create knowledge and what do we do with it? *Interface, 1*(1), 1–20.

Coleman, S. and Blumler, J.G. (2009) *The Internet and Democratic Citizenship: Theory, Practice and Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crouch, C. (2004). *Post-democracy*. Cambridge: Polity.

Dahlgren, P. (2006). Doing citizenship: The cultural origins of civic agency in the public sphere. *European Journal of Cultural Studies, 9*(3), 267–286.

Dahlgren, P. (2009). *Media and political engagement: Citizen, communication and democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

della Porta, D. (2013). *Can democracy be saved? Participation, deliberation and social movements*. Cambridge: Polity.

Dewey, J. (1916 [1957]). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York: Macmillan.

Dimitrova, D., Shehata, A., Strömbäck, J., & Nord, L. W. (2014). The effects of digital media on political knowledge and participation in election campaigns. Evidence from panel data. *Communication Research, 41*(1), 95–118.

Earl, J., Hurwitz McKee, H., Mejia Mesinas, A., Tolan, M., & Arlotti, A. (2013). This protest will be tweeted. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(4), 459–478.

Ëkstrom, M., & Östman, J. (2013). Information, interaction and creative production: The effects of three forms of Internet use on youth democratic engagement. *Communication Research*. doi:10.1177/0093650213476295.

Enjolras, B., Steen-Johnsen, K., & Wollebaek, D. (2012). Social media and mobilization to offline demonstrations: Transcending participatory divides? *New Media and Society, 15*(6), 890–908.

European Parliament. (2015). *The principle of subsidiarity*. Retrieved August 10, 2015, from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU_1.2.2.pdf

Evers, A. (2009). Civicness and civility: Their meanings for social services. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 20*, 239–259.

Eyerman, R., & Jamison, A. (1991). *Social movements: A cognitive approach*. Cambridge: Polity.

Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge: Polity.

Fenton, N., & Barassi, V. (2011). Alternative media and social network sites: The politics of individuation and political participation. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 179–196.

Flesher Fominaya, C. (2011). The Madrid bombings and popular protest: Misinformation, counter-information, mobilisation and elections after '11-M'. *Journal of the Academy of Social Sciences, 6*(3), 289–307.

Fuchs, C. (2013). Societal and ideological impacts of deep packet inspection Internet surveillance. *Information, Communication & Society, 16*, 1328–1359.

Galston, W. (1991). *Liberal purposes: Goods, virtues, and diversity in the liberal state*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gitlin, T. (2003). *The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making and unmaking of the new left*. Berkley: University of California Press.

Gleason, B. (2013). #Occupy Wall Street: Exploring informal learning about a social movement on Twitter. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 966–982.

Graham, T., & Wright, S. (2014). Discursive equality and everyday talk online: The impact of 'Super-Participants'. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 19*(3), 625–642.

Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere*. Cambridge: Polity.

Heath, S. B. (1982). Protean shapes in literacy events: Ever-shifting oral and literate traditions. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations and states*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Hughes, D. J., Rowe, M., Batey, M., & Lee, A. (2012). A tale of two sites: Twitter vs. Facebook and the personality predictors of social media usage. *Computers in Human Behavior, 28*, 561–569.

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.

Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.

Kristeva, J. (1980). *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lessig, L. (2001). *The future of ideas: The fate of the commons in a connected world*. New York: Random House.

Lessig, L. (2004). *Free culture: How Big Media uses technology and the law to lock down culture and control creativity*. New York: Penguin.

Lindgren, S. (2011). Collective problem solving and informal learning in networked publics. In E. Dunkels, G. Franberg, & C. Hällgren (Eds.), *Interactive media use and youth: Learning, knowledge, exchange and behavior* (pp. 50–64). Hershey: IGI Global.

Lindgren, S., & Palm, S. (2011). *Textometrica service package*. Retrieved from http://textometrica.humlab.umu.se

Losey, J. (2014). The anti-counterfeiting trade agreement and European civil society: A case study on networked advocacy. *Journal of Information Policy, 4*, 205–227.

Manosevitch, E., Steinfeld, N., & Lev-On, A. (2014). Promoting online deliberation quality: Cognitive cues matter. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2014.899610.

Meikle, G. (2002). *Future active: Media activism and the Internet*. New York: Routledge.

Milner, H. (2002). *Civic literacy: How informed citizens make democracy work*. Hanover: University Press of New England.

Morozov, E. (2011). *The net delusion: How not to liberate the world*. London: Allen Lane.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Papacharissi, Z. (2010). *A private sphere: Democracy in a digital age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Pateman, C. (1970). *Participation and democratic theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Phillipov, M. (2012). In defense of textual analysis: Resisting methodological hegemony in media and cultural studies. *Critical Studies in Communication, 30*, 209–223.

Poell, T. (2014). Social media and the transformation of activist communication: Exploring the social media ecology of the 2010 Toronto G20 protests. *Information, Communication and Society, 17*(6), 716–731.

Robles, J. M., De Marco, S., & Antino, M. (2013). Activating activists. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*, 856–877.

Rosanvallon, P., & Goldhammer, A. (2008). *Counter-democracy. Politics in an age of distrust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rucht, D. (2004). The quadruple A. Media strategies of protest movements since the 1960s. In W. v. d. Donk, B. D. Loader, P. G. Nixon, & D. Rucht (Eds.), *Cyberprotest. New media, citizens and social movements* (pp. 29–56). London: Routledge.

Russell, A. (2005). Myth and the Zapatista movement: Exploring a network identity. *New Media and Society, 7*(4), 559–577.

Ryan, C. (1991). *Prime time activism: Media strategies for grassroots organizing*. Boston: South End Press.

Schugurensky, D., & Myers, J. P. (2008). Informal civic learning through engagement in local democracy: The case of the seniors' task force of healthy city Toronto. In K. Church, N. Bascia, & E. Shragge (Eds.), *Learning through community: Exploring participatory practices*. Berlin: Springer.

Segerberg, A., & Bennett, W. L. (2011). Social media and the organisation of collective action: Using Twitter to explore the ecologies of two climate change protests. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 197–215.

Serup Christensen, H., & Bengtsson, A. (2011). The political competence of Internet participants. *Information, Communication and Society, 14*, 896–916.

Sobré-Denton, M. (2015). Virtual intercultural bridgework: Social media, virtual cosmopolitanism, and activist community-building. *New Media and Society.* doi:10.1177/1461444814567988.

Steinberg, M. W. (1999). The talk back of collective action: A dialogic analysis of repertoires of discourse among nineteenth-century English cotton spinners. *The American Journal of Sociology, 105*, 736–780.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research.* London: Sage.

Theocharis, Y. (2011). Young people, political participation and online postmaterialism in Greece. *New Media and Society, 13*, 203–223.

Thorson, K., Driscoll, K., Ekdale, B., Edgerly, S., Gamber Thompson, L., Schrock, A., Swartz, L., Vraga, E. K., & Wells, C. (2013). Youtube, Twitter and the occupy movement: Connecting content and circulation practices. *Information, Communication and Society, 16*(3), 421–451.

Vaccari, C., Valeriani, A., Barbera, P., Bonneau, R., Jost, J. T., Nagler, J., & Tucker, J. A. (2015). Political expression and action on social media: Exploring the relationship between lower- and higher-threshold political activities among Twitter users in Italy. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 20*(2), 221–239.

van Dijck, J. (2012). Facebook as a tool for producing sociality and connectivity. *Television and New Media, 13*(2), 160–176.

van Zomeren, M., Spears, R., & Wayne Leach, C. (2008). Exploring psychological mechanisms of collective action: Does relevance of group identity influence how people cope with collective disadvantage? *British Journal of Social Psychology, 47*, 353–372.

Wells, C. (2013). Two eras of civic information and the evolving relationship between civil society organizations and young citizens. *New Media and Society, 16*, 615–636.

Wright, S., Street, J. (2007) Democracy, deliberation and design: the case of online discussion forums. *New Media and Society, 9*(5), 849-869.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion: Civic Participation in Contentious Politics

Pondering the state of democracy in the wake of arguably the most severe financial crisis in the post-war period, Donatella della Porta (2013) wrote of the aggrieved citizens who rose in protest at the global governmental response to it:

> 'Critical citizens are not necessarily disaffected citizens. Many of them could become, as seems to have happened in 2011, committed citizens, willing to invest their time, energy and knowledge in the attempt to find solutions to complex problems. Critical citizens do not see reasons for loyalty, but often practice voice rather than exit (Donatella della Porta 2013, p. 188)'.

In retrospect, I see this volume as a reaction to this quote. della Porta (2013, p. 185) painted contemporary democracy as a shifting terrain. Models varying from participatory to procedural and liberal democracy now appear increasingly intertwined. However far 'really existing democracy' (Held 2006) stretches across the world and whether the digital domain is its front line, democracy is fundamentally a disputed terrain, marked by a struggle for the hegemony (Mouffe 2013) effected through political institutions and norms.

As a conduit to social change, contentious politics occupy an area that crosses over into the domain of institutional democracy. The contemporary significance of contentious politics is put in relief by the rising number of people partaking in protest (Dalton 2006, 2008). Reflecting on this trend in civic participation long common to both the USA and Western

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0_8

Europe (Norris 2002), Russell Dalton deemed protest to have 'become so common that it is now the extension of conventional political action by other means' (Dalton 2008, p. 91). His assessment predates the 'post 2010 wave of civic activism' erupting in response to global systemic risks (i.e. environmental, financial) that 'affect all locations and populations' (Biekart and Fowler 2013, pp. 543–544).

In Dalton's account, protest is one key vehicle carrying the politics of the *engaged* citizen. Engaged citizenship is an analytical concept distilled through empirical research that captures an inclination for solidarity, for involvement in civil society groups, for independent political opinions, a desire to tackle social needs and a readiness to rely on direct forms of action to achieve social change (Dalton 2008, pp. 81–88).[1] Engaged citizenship is enacted as an expression—written, verbal or embodied—of *distrust*, 'a democracy of indirect powers disseminated through society' (Rosanvallon and Goldhammer 2008, p. 8). Protest is an attempt at and Goldhammer indirect power into direct citizen action. It is an 'unconventional method of intervening in a government's political decision-making [through]… indirect channels…and indirect persuasion' (della Porta and Diani 2006, pp. 168–169).

The engaged citizen, Dalton posits, is educated, ready to embrace the Internet for political activism and is fundamentally a product of her generation (2008, p. 88). This may mean that we are looking at a fleeting moment of effervescence in contentious politics, which, in the longer term, is of little consequence to civic participation. Drawing this conclusion would likely, however, be misguided as it would not account for the recurrence of impulses for social change that Charles Tilly likened to a current driven by 'continuous onward movements' (1997, p. 55). Similar to this book, Tilly's approach to contentious politics was predicated on a processual and interactional approach to contentious politics (Collins 2010). His illuminating insight alerts us to the regularity with which contention is renewed. He enlisted the term *cycle* to designate situations

> 'when some challengers gain power, then league to fortify their positions against new challengers, a process that eventually splits mobilised actors between regime members and outsiders, demobilises some outsiders, then drives the remainder toward increasingly risky actions until repression, co-option, and fragmentation terminate the cycle. Such cycles recur in both social movements and revolutions' (1997, pp. 58–59).

The same inference pertaining to the tenacity of contentious politics is reinforced by the appreciation that the contemporary struggle for a radical departure from neoliberal hegemony is tantamount to a 'war of position whose objective is not the creation of a society beyond hegemony, but a process of radicalising democracy—the construction of more democratic, more egalitarian institutions' (original emphasis, Mouffe 2013, p. xiv).

Earlier generations of social movement actors have historically been effective at ushering in dramatic systemic changes in liberal democracies (Tarrow 1998)—from the electoral franchise to civil rights, gender equality and sexual liberation. Current generations of engaged citizens face both immense opportunities and tough challenges in a post-industrial social landscape of de-organised solidarity, flash mobilisation and transient collective identity to which established institutions may respond disproportionately with violent clamp-downs (Graeber 2014). The militarisation of law enforcement, the policing and surveillance of protest compound democracy's crisis of legitimacy (Graham 2009). Equally, there have been occasions when social movement cadres were recruited into political institutions. (della Porta and Diani 2006). As already reported, institutionalisation has been queried for its effectiveness as an alternative to continued contention (Doherty 2002).

The juxtaposition of contentious and institutional politics invites further inquiry into more diffuse, agonistic and direct action and learning that can act out a permanent and participatory critique of democratic institutions. Such participatory civism can foster new aspirations and build the momentum necessary to engender responsive political action and policy. One need only take note of the conclusion to the Stop ACTA ratification process for an apposite illustration.

Earlier in the book, I revealed how the articulation of opinions on democratic institutions and organisations in the networked communication that foreshadowed the pan-European Stop ACTA demonstrations betokened civic learning transpiring from contributions that unpicked government and media policy and conduct. Conceiving of it as a prefigurative episode, the networked communication of contention can occasion the enmeshment of expressiveness pertaining to collective action together with dutiful civic information, both acting as an expedient to cognizant engagement with political institutions. More widely, prefigurative protest participation may occasion a process of civic learning involving both action and reflection on the unfulfilled participatory potential of the democratic polity (Whitehead 2002; Jenkins and Carpentier 2013; della Porta 2013).

Together, prefigurative action and reflection add to a mutable repertoire of engaged citizenship transpiring in variable geometries of mediated and embodied contentious politics. For instance, people with no organisational affiliation learn to self-organise in clusters of friends as they prime their participation in a protest event. They may not regard themselves as politically active but may still wish to tell friends and people at large that they support an activist cause. Their example may be testimony to multiplying varieties of individualised civic participation (Micheletti 2003). The ramifications from such participation remain disputed as transient (Rollinger and Bunnage 2015) and eroding of solidarity (Fenton and Barassi 2011; Juris 2012), a keystone of collective action and democracy, more widely.

The networked communication of contentious politics is predicated on expressiveness that is not entirely free of 'noise' detracting from the self-organisation of collective action (Aguilera et al. 2013). The participatory coordination of collective action resources and motivations through networked communication is a possibility that democratises organisation. Participatory coordination is a scalable practice that helps muster instrumental resources for collective action and presents people with an opportunity to display and endorse narratives documenting personal pathways to participation. It is, however, a practice that is not without idiosyncrasies to do with 'rhythms of engagement' (Skeggs and Yuill 2015) that variate not only in a cadence dictated by the proprietary algorithms of social media platforms as the two authors argue or in line with technological affordances and constraints but likely also in sociocultural and time-wise patterns. As such, the expressiveness I reviewed in this volume exemplifies a 'reaction to institutional power', being a source of *redemptive politics* making a pitch to 'cleanse' democratic institutions (Kreiss and Tufekci 2013, p. 165).

All along, my intention has been to place social media in the midst of the *lived* practice and organisation of participation (Kelty 2013) in collective action. Socio-technological activist networks are themselves steeped in values and aspirations tied to social locations—predominately of privilege—which impress on activists' reading of their relationship with technologies (Wolfson 2014). The socio-technological architecture underpinning networked communication, Wolfson warns (2014, p. 673), may itself mistakenly 'become the answer to social ills'. Notwithstanding, one may expect the networked communication of the engaged citizen to fall into a rhythm of relative persistence and renewal as soon as one is able to appreciate the merits and constrictions it poses and the 'adaptive changes' necessary to ensure the appeal and effectiveness of contentious politics endures (Schock 2015, pp. 57–58).

On the other hand, we cannot escape the fact that commercial social media are not selfless intermediators of social interaction and public discourse (Gillespie 2010). The proprietary algorithms on which they turn, regiment the realm of possibility, imprinting on the way users act under the gaze of peers, commercial and state surveillance—what Joss Hands calls *platformativity* (2013); and how public discourse is assembled from myriad contributions (Gillespie 2010, p. 358). In this light, the commercial social media where I observed the networked communication of contentious politics are an epistemological machine that actively sorts data before one is able to observe and interpret them (Rogers 2013). The network trope is a most powerful though ideological instrument whereby the sociocultural patterns rendered by proprietary algorithms are being normalised.

In my turn, I adopted the network metaphor. I regard the social network analysis of interactive dynamics among actors revealing of not just algorithmic but also user ordering of distributed communication associated with instances of collective action (Gonzalez-Bailon et al. 2013). The research I reported in the book was not devised as a critical intervention into the vocabulary of social media connectivity (van Dijck 2013). Instead, without assuming that as power-inscription mechanisms algorithms completely preclude action that may subvert its own hegemony (de Certeau 1984), I have sought to ground and interpret this multifarious communication as a practice (e.g. of pushing and pulling content), a material setting (e.g. for participatory coordination, autonomous organisation and informal civic learning) and a cognitive field (e.g. for exploring and articulating notions of collective identity or solidarity). In this, I have aspired to add to the effort of re-describing the social with a synthesis of *accounts of actions* and their digital traces on social media (Savage and Burrows 2007; Burrows and Savage 2014, p. 3). My methodological repertoire blended methodological individualism foregrounding the user with unobtrusive ethnographic data collection (Kozinets 2010) and textual analysis of meaning formation. Whilst guilty of an all-too-common quantification of user conduct, I have tried to rebalance sweeping inferences with a sensitivity for the *field* of action where networked communication takes place (Tufekci 2013, p. 512), locating it within sociocultural coordinates (e.g. within the civic landscape of post-Communist Romania).

One final caveat I would weave into these conclusions has to do with the normativity incumbent in the conception of the engaged citizen itself. There are at least three levels on which one can detect assumptions valorising the conduct foreshadowing protest that I have surveyed. It is active, informed and civil. First, the contestation of authority is

performed by groups and individuals who although seeking to disrupt it make no recourse to violence, in their bid to gain power over the fate of an issue or of the whole polity (Schock 2015, pp. 2–6). Second, there is an equivalence of active and informed conduct with *good* citizenship. This notion of citizenship hinges on the notion that there is a pathway to citizenship through education, (Biesta 2011, p. 152) thereafter reproduced through the rational pursuit of information germane to political engagement (Schudson 2004, p. 57), however loosely or narrowly defined. Conversely, along with others, I would foreground the experiential dimension—'the 'exposure' to and engagement with the experiment of democracy'(Biesta 2011, p. 152)—as a necessary and positive condition that can strengthen the democratic edifice.

I can see no reason why antagonistic action that objects not only to the current dominance of (neo)liberal democracy but more fundamentally to democratic politics or the 'ensemble of practices and institutions whose aim it is to organise human coexistence' (Mouffe 2013, p. xii) would not be foreshadowed by prefigurative networked communication. The likelihood of this outcome might rise as the opportunity for and recognition paid to engaged citizenship would narrow (Tarrow 1998). This may come to pass not only primarily because of the perceived undutiful character of engaged citizenship but more ominously due to an expanding preoccupation with security in liberal democracies (Lyon 2008; Fuchs 2013), which devalues agonistic contestation as corrosive of a polity already under attack from beyond its moral boundaries. Encouraging the experience of democracy in extra-institutional practices and contexts such as those presented in this book may, on the other hand, help renew trust in democratic politics and further legitimise it.

Notes

A complete dereliction of the duty to vote is nonetheless unlikely due to the significance of the act for democratic politics (Dalton 2008, p. 92).

References

Aguilera, M., Morer, I., Barandiaran, X. E., & Badia, M. G. (2013). Quantifying political self-organization in social media. Fractal patterns in the Spanish 15M movement on Twitter. *ECAL*. doi: 10.7551/978-0-262-31709-2-ch057.

Biekart, K., & Fowler, A. (2013). Transforming activism 2010+: Exploring ways and waves. *Development and Change, 44*(3), 527–546.

Biesta, G. (2011). The ignorant citizen: Mouffe, Ranciere, and the subject of democratic education. *Studies in Philosophy and Education, 30*(2), 141–153.
Burrows, R., & Savage, M. (2014). After the crisis? Big data and the methodological challenges of empirical sociology. *Big Data and Society, 1*(1), 1–6.
Collins, R. (2010). The contentious social interactionism of Charles Tilly. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 73*(1), 5–10.
Dalton, R. J. (2006). *Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced industrial democracies*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
Dalton, R. J. (2008). Citizenship norms and the expansion of political participation. *Political Studies, 56*(1), 76–98.
de Certeau, M. (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkley: University of California Press.
della Porta, D. (2013). *Can democracy be saved? Participation, deliberation and social movements*. Cambridge: Polity.
della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
Doherty, B. (2002). *Ideas and actions in the green movement*. London: Routledge.
Fenton, N., & Barassi, V. (2011). Alternative media and social network sites: The politics of individuation and political participation. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 179–196.
Fuchs, C. (2013). Societal and ideological impacts of deep packet inspection Internet surveillance. *Information, Communication & Society, 16*, 1328–1359.
Gillespie, T. (2010). The politics of 'platforms'. *New Media and Society, 12*(3), 347–364.
Gonzalez-Bailon, S., Borge-Holthoefer, J., & Moreno, Y. (2013). Broadcasters and hidden influential in online protest diffusion. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 943–965.
Graeber, D. (2014). *The democracy project*. London: Penguin.
Graham, S. (2009) The urban 'battlespace'. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 26(7-8), 278-288.
Hands, J. (2013) Introduction: politics, power and platformativity. *Culture Machine*, 14, 1–8.
Held, D. (2006). *Models of democracy* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Polity.
Jenkins, H., Carpentier, N. (2013). Theorizing participatory intensities: A conversation about participation and politics. *Convergence*, 19(3), 265-283.
Juris, J. (2012). Reflections on #occupy everywhere: Social media, public space and emerging logics of aggregation. *American Ethnologist, 39*(2), 259–279.
Kelty, C. M. (2013). From participation to power. In A. Delwiche & J. J. Henderson (Eds.), *The participatory cultures handbook* (pp. 22–32). New York, NY: Routledge.
Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *Netnography: Doing ethnographic research online*. London: Sage.

Kreiss, D., & Tufekci, Z. (2013). Occupying the political: Occupy Wall Street, collective action and the rediscovery of pragmatic politics. *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies, 13*(3), 163–167.

Lyon, D. (2008). *Surveillance studies: An overview*. Cambridge: Polity.

Micheletti, M. (2003). *Political virtue and shopping: Individuals, consumerism, and collective action*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Mouffe, C. (2013). *Agonistics*. London: Verso.

Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic phoenix: Reinventing political activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rogers, R. (2013). *Digital methods*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rollinger, D. A., & Bunnage, L. A. (2015). Connecting people to politics over time? Internet communication technology and retention in Moveon.org and the Florida Tea Party Movement. *Information, Communication and Society, 18*(5), 539–552.

Rosanvallon, P., Goldhammer, A. (2008) *Counter-Democracy. Politics in an Age of Distrust*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Savage, M., & Burrows, R. (2007). The coming crisis of empirical sociology. *Sociology, 41*(5), 885–899.

Schock, K. (2015). *Civil resistance today*. Cambridge: Polity.

Schudson, M. (2004). Click here for democracy: A history and critique of an information-based model of citizenship. In H. Jenkins & D. Thorburn (Eds.), *Democracy and new media*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Skeggs, B., & Yuill, S. (2015). The methodology of a multi-model project examining how values and value are made through Facebook relations. *Information, Communication and Society*. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1091026.

Tarrow, S. (1998) (2nd edn) *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, C. (1997). Contentious politics and social change. *African Studies, 56*(1), 51–65.

Tufekci, Z. (2013). 'Not this one': Social movements, the attention economy and microcelebrity networked activism. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 848–870.

van Dijck, J. (2013). *The culture of connectivity: A critical history of social media*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Whitehead, L. (2002). *Democratization: Theory and experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wolfson, T. (2014). Activist laboratories of the 1990s: The roots of technological determinism in contemporary social movements. *Cultural Studies, 28*(4), 657–675.

Index

D. Mercea, *Civic Participation in Contentious Politics*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-50869-0