RIOT, UNREST AND PROTEST ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

Edited by **DAVID PRITCHARD**
and **FRANCIS PAKES**

Riot, Unrest and Protest on the Global Stage

Riot, Unrest and Protest on the Global Stage

Edited by

David Pritchard and Francis Pakes
University of Portsmouth, UK

For our parents
Malcolm and Jill Pritchard
Cor Pakes and Henny Pakes-Vaandering

Contents

Tables and Figures

Tables

Figures

Contributors

Diana Bretherick is Senior Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Portsmouth, UK. A former barrister, her research interests comprise cultural criminology, representations of crime and criminals in literature, film and television, and semiotics and critical discourse analysis. Her debut novel, *City of Devils*, received much critical acclaim.

David C. Brotherton is Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, USA. His recent publications include *Banished to the Homeland: Dominican Deportees and Their Stories of Exile* (with Luis Barrios, 2011), *Keeping Out the Other: A Critical Introduction to Immigration Control* (edited with P. Kretsedemas, 2009) and *The Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation: Street Politics and the Transformation of a New York City Gang* (with Luis Barrios, 2004). Current projects include a comparative study of the occupied movements in Europe, the development of holistic policing strategies vis-à-vis gangs and organised crime in Sweden, and community responses to the social problems of gangs and deportation in the Caribbean.

Matt Clement is Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Winchester, UK, having previously worked as a community worker, teacher and mentor with Bristol's Youth Offending Team. He has published on knife crime, Bristol's Tesco riots and austerity 'moral panics'. His key influences are Marxism and the sociology of Norbert Elias.

Danny Dorling is the Halford Mackinder Professor of Geography at the University of Oxford, UK. He grew up in Oxford and went to university in Newcastle upon Tyne. He has worked in Newcastle, Bristol, Leeds, Sheffield and New Zealand. His recent publications include *Injustice: Why Social Inequalities Persist* (2010), *So You Think You Know about Britain?* (2011), *The Population of the UK* (2012), *Population Ten Billion* (2013) and *All That Is Solid* (2014).

Nadine El-Enany is Lecturer in Law at Birkbeck, University of London, UK. Her research interests include international, UK and European

Union refugee law, critical human rights law, European Union law, criminal justice and critical legal theory, in particular feminist legal theory, critical race and post-colonial theory. She also writes for *The Guardian*.

Roxane Farmanfarmaian is Affiliated Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge, UK. Her research focuses on the interrelationship between local Middle East interests and global (Western) power, using a range of theoretical and multidisciplinary approaches. Drawing from her years as a professional journalist, she is particularly interested in the use of language and communication as they relate to narrative, political identity, security and conflict. She is the author of *Blood and Oil: A Prince's Memoir of Iran, From the Shah to the Ayatollah* (2005) and Director of the University of Cambridge's Al-Jazeera Media Project.

Steve Hall is Professor of Criminology in the Social Futures Institute at Teesside University, UK. He is an internationally leading criminological researcher and theorist. His recent publications include *New Directions in Criminological Theory* (2012, with Simon Winlow) and *Rethinking Social Exclusion* (2013, with Simon Winlow).

Fabien Jobard is Director of Research at the CNRS and Director of the Centre for Sociological Research on Law and Criminal Justice Institutions at the University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, France. His areas of research are the sociology of the police and judicial decisions. He has published extensively in French and English. His recent publications have appeared in such journals as *Revue Française de Sociologie*, *English Annual Supplement*, *Policing & Society*, *Berliner Journal für Soziologie*, *Swiss Journal of Sociology*, *Compass Sociology* and *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*.

Konstantin Kilibarda is a PhD candidate in political science at York University and a graduate researcher at the York Centre for International and Security Studies, Canada. He lectures in politics, international relations and labour studies at York University and McMaster University. His publications have appeared in the *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* and the *Journal of Critical Globalization Studies*.

Carl Lee is Lecturer in Geography at The Sheffield College, UK. He has collaborated with Danny Dorling on several projects relating to social and spatial inequalities.

Philip McMichael is Professor at Cornell University, USA. His research examines capitalist modernity through the lens of agrarian questions, food regimes, agrarian/food sovereignty movements, and most recently the implications for food systems of agrofuels and land-grabbing. This work focuses on the role of agri-food systems in the making of the modern world, including an examination of the politics of globalisation via the structuring of agri-food relations. His research includes consulting with the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty, La Vía Campesina (the international peasant coalition) and Food First Information and Action Network. Connected to this work was an eight-year project on contemporary social movements with over a dozen fellow investigators (current and former graduate students), culminating in *Contesting Development: Critical Struggles for Social Change* (2010).

Laura Naegler is an Erasmus Mundus Doctoral Fellow in the Doctorate in Cultural and Global Criminology (DCGC) programme at the University of Kent, and the University of Hamburg, Germany. She is currently visiting scholar at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, USA. Her doctoral research is concerned with conceptualisations of resistance and urban space in the autonomous movement in New York City. She is the author of *Gentrification and Resistance: Cultural Criminology, Control and the Commodification of Urban Protest in Hamburg* (2012). This research was conducted in association with the Doctorate in Cultural and Global Criminology (DCGC), an Erasmus Mundus programme of the European Union. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained in this publication.

Francis Pakes is Professor of Criminology at the University of Portsmouth, UK. He has published extensively on comparative criminal justice, crime, justice and social change in the Netherlands, and latterly on issues of globalisation and criminal justice. His latest edited book is *Globalisation and the Challenge to Criminology*.

Raj Patel is an award-winning writer, activist and academic. He currently co-teaches the Edible Education class at UC Berkeley, USA, with Michael Pollan. He has degrees from the University of Oxford, the London School of Economics and Cornell University. He has worked for the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, and has protested

against them around the world. He is a visiting scholar at UC Berkeley's Center for African Studies, an Honorary Research Fellow at the School of Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and a fellow at the Institute for Food and Development Policy, also known as Food First. He has testified about the causes of the global food crisis to the US House Financial Services Committee and is an advisor to the United Nations special rapporteur on the right to food. In addition to numerous scholarly publications in economics, philosophy, politics and public health journals, he regularly writes for *The Guardian*, and has contributed to *The Financial Times*, the *LA Times*, *NYTimes.com*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Mail on Sunday* and *The Observer*. His first book was *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System* and his latest, *The Value of Nothing*, is a *New York Times* bestseller.

David Pritchard is Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Social Policy at the University of Portsmouth, UK. His current research interests are interdisciplinary, spanning criminology, sociology and social policy, with specific reference to social and spatial inequalities, poverty, worklessness, social exclusion, urban unrest and the criminalisation of social policy. In particular, he is currently interested in comparative analysis surrounding contested relationships between social unrest and socio-economic inequalities, the interplay between social policy and criminology, and demands for justice at national and global levels.

Panagiotis Sotiris has a PhD from Panteion University and teaches political theory in the Department of Communication and Media Studies at the University of Athens, Greece. He has published widely on social and political philosophy, and on current social and political developments in Greece, especially after the beginning of the externally imposed austerity programmes.

David Waddington is Professor of Communications and Head of the Communication and Computing Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University, UK, where he has worked since 1983. Waddington's main research interest is the policing of public order, which he has typically addressed from the standpoint of a participant observer.

Simon Winlow is Professor of Criminology at the School of Social Sciences & Law, Teesside University, UK. He is perhaps best known as an ethnographer, but he has also published widely on violence, criminal

markets and cultures, and social, political and economic change. He is the author of *Badfellas*, co-author of *Bouncers*, *Violent Night*, *Criminal Identities and Consumer Culture*, *Rethinking Social Exclusion*, and co-editor of *New Directions in Crime and Deviancy* and *New Directions in Criminological Theory*.

1
Exploring the Global Stage: Globalisation, Riots, Unrest and Protest

Francis Pakes and David Pritchard

Riots accompany major social transformations. In our time, characterised by neoliberalism, globalisation and changing global balances of power, there is no doubt that riots serve as frequent reminders of that state of affairs. It is now a truism to say that riots have gone global or that information and communication technology has changed both the ecology and the meaning of riots. It now feels like cliché to declare that riots, although local in nature, are impacting on a global stage. Yet there are moments when the accuracy of cliché can be acutely felt. One of the editors, resident in the UK, happened to visit the Philippines in August 2011. He then spent many hours watching BBC coverage of the UK riots from his hotel room in Cebu in the central area of the Philippines, the Visayas. Through that medium he was able to follow the events that unfolded virtually in real time, in English, from a British perspective but also tailored to a world audience. Needless to say, the hotel provided (slow) internet access as well so that social media such as Twitter could be trawled for information – some of it correct, some of it incorrect, but much of it immediate.

This example helps to explain the imperative that we felt to produce this book. The UK riots, following the shooting of Mark Duggan, which quickly spread to other areas of London and then to other UK cities, were certainly part of our inspiration. However, the volume is not about the UK riots *per se*. This is a book about riots, civil unrest and protest in a global sense. This goes beyond simply examining riots in a variety of locations as if to further a traditional comparative objective. It is about how aspects of globalisation affect the very nature of riots and how they are understood. More precisely, it looks to explore the continuum

and the transformation of unrest and protest as quintessentially local events (with possible and frequent national implications and occasional international reverberations) to events that take place on a truly global stage.

To use the term 'stage' metaphorically is to put oneself in rather awesome company, including Shakespeare ('All the world's a stage' in *As You Like It*) and Erasmus before him. In this book the term 'stage' is used to encapsulate several meanings. The first refers to the situation one of us found himself in, in August 2011, the fact that riots have acquired global audiences. In that regard we can speak of the global stage. The global village looks on and establishes meaning. In this sense, large-scale protests have ceased to be strictly local or national events. The UK riots, those in the *banlieues* in Paris, or indeed any protest event in any urban context can be observed and interpreted globally.

The second relates to the effect that this has on how exactly such events unfold. In places in this book, such as in Jobard's contribution (Chapter 8), it is argued that certain behaviours may be particular to local or national manifestations of rioting. He uses the example of the tendency to burn cars in rioting in France. A global audience may in fact globalise such local manifestations. We already see this occurring. For instance, riots in the Middle East with placards written in English are targeted at and seek to shape the awareness of a global audience. Naegler (Chapter 9) makes the point that there is fluidity between observing and taking part, with handheld devices enabling individuals to shift effortlessly from observer to reporter to perpetrator. To be part of a riot can now mean a multitude of things.

The third reference to 'stage' is in relation to interplays between local and global mobilisations. This was particularly visible and potent in the Arab Spring, as Farmanfarmaian observes (Chapter 15). Use of social media facilitated the choreography of riots and the mobilisation of crowds at a local level. This too was the case in London where Blackberry devices were famously used for local communications. Riots are more easily organised and movements more easily communicated, perhaps even orchestrated, through social media. At the risk of overextending the metaphor, perhaps we could say that rioters, in some way, utilise modern media to become something like stage directors. At the same time, the global spread of protest is much facilitated by information and communication technologies (Baker, 2012). Unrest spreads quickly and easily, transcending borders and specific local contexts.

Finally, globalisation is intimately connected to phenomena such as global marketing and global branding (Klein, 2000). We see this

most particularly in global protests that brand themselves, such as in #Occupy (see Kilibarda's contribution in Chapter 16, while Brotherton in Chapter 12 also makes extensive reference to it) and also Slutwalk. Slutwalk came about in Toronto in response to comments made by a Canadian police officer who suggested that women could avoid rape by not dressing like sluts. It led to protest marches, initially in Toronto in April 2011. The phenomenon soon spread to other cities in North America, but also far beyond – to South America, Europe and Asia. Slutwalk caught on. It has in fact served as a forum under which many other grievances involving sexism have been aired and debated. Several years on the movement is still there, now with websites, blogs, Twitter feeds and the opportunity to donate funds through e-commerce business services, such as PayPal. The case of branding is obvious when you see that quite disparate issues and groups of people come together to march and draw attention to issues of inequality, sexism and oppression under the Slutwalk banner. We could also observe the mediagenic nature of Slutwalk to aid its global visibility, as it tends to involve women dressed in what some deem as provocative clothing. Despite criticisms from a good number of circles, Slutwalk demonstrates the mobilising power of 'branded' protests and the undeniable role of globalisation within that.

Through these entwined sets of meanings, the 'stage' of unrest has profoundly changed and with that the internal dynamics, interpretation and global potency of unrest. The book considers various aspects of this newly emerging landscape. The early chapters set the stage for further analysis of the phenomenon in the remainder of the book. The focus initially remains relatively close to the UK. In these chapters, in particular Clement's (Chapter 3) and El-Enany's (Chapter 5), historical approaches form part of their analyses. In the latter stages the perspective turns away from the UK to Europe and from there to the global stage. The book's perspective is also wide in terms of discipline and approach, from mainstream criminology to critical and cultural criminology. Indeed, it is cross-disciplinary when looking at the Arab Spring, food riots and protest in relation to land-grabbing, in the sense that we must consider the international political economy. Together the chapters will challenge criminology to avoid overly narrow and localistic explanations of public unrest.

Our story, also in part, has a rather large 'elephant in the room'. The global financial crisis of 2007–2008 is widely considered to be the worst economic crisis since the 1930s. Financial and banking institutions were in freefall, stock markets plunged, and national governments

sought to nationalise losses and bail out the financial and banking sectors. Eminent economists foretold the crisis as early as 2006, warning that homeowners would default on mortgages, trillions of dollars of mortgage-backed securities would unravel worldwide (particularly the sub-prime type) and the global financial system would grind to a halt (Roubini, 2008). In North America and parts of Western Europe, the housing bubble which had grown from the early 2000s came to an abrupt end. In constant prices, the world's gross domestic product (GDP) fell back by 0.5% between 2008 and 2009. The advanced economies fell back by 3.5% of output and unemployment rose on average from 5.8% to over 8% across their respective labour forces. The Eurozone was particularly hard hit, with output declining by over 4% and unemployment rising to over 10% by 2009 (IMF, 2012). The USA and the UK, synonymous with Anglo-Saxon capitalism and the hubs of global finance, were also hit hard by the crisis. Cumulatively from 2007 to 2009, output fell by nearly 5% with unemployment rising to 7.5% in the UK, while in real terms US GDP fell by over 3% and unemployment rose to over 9% of the labour force in the USA (IMF, 2012).

However, the second act of the crisis was waiting to take the global stage. In late 2009, concern was growing about rising levels of private and government debt. Attention turned from global financial institutions and deregulated capital to the apparent indebtedness of sovereign states, particularly within the Eurozone and more recently in the USA. In part, private debt, particularly that accumulated by the financial and banking sectors, was transferred to the sovereign state via bailouts, nationalisations and government guarantees.

Economics takes place in a social and political setting. Externally imposed austerity measures in European countries such as Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Spain and the UK (albeit internally imposed under the auspices of doom-laden comparisons with the Hellenic state) have led to greater indebtedness, higher unemployment, weak growth or continued recession (Holland and Portes, 2012). At the time of writing, self-inflicted pain suppresses demand and economic output across Europe, with unemployment standing at nearly 26 million (Eurostat, 2013), ratcheting up the social and economic costs that worklessness and poverty bring. No wonder the political movements of the Far Right and Hard Left begin to flourish as millions of citizens feel left behind by dysfunctional social, economic, cultural and political systems. Rescue packages from the international troika of the European Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have come with demands to re-engineer those societies. Neoliberal

policies, such as the reduction of the state and the public realm, privatisations, the rejection of redistributive taxation and the curtailment of social spending, are demanded. It can be argued that crises and external shocks such as the financial crash and the sovereign debt crisis are being used to reshape those economies in the interests of business and the corporate sector. Klein's (2008) thesis of disaster capitalism abounds.

The necessity of austerity measures is, as Streeck (2011) has noted, a dominant political discourse. This represents the interests of global markets being put in pole position against the interests of voters and polities. In essence, sovereign states are being used as debt-collectors for international capital. Yet resistance to such measures has been growing. In September 2011 the Occupy Wall Street protests emerged. By mid-October of that year there were widespread Occupy demonstrations against austerity and inequality in 900 cities across the world. The slogan 'We are the 99%' is often used. Global protest movements, such as the Greek demonstrations, the Spanish *los indignados*, and the Occupy and UK Uncut movements in the USA and the UK are often criticised for articulating what they are against but not what they propose as an alternative. What these disparate groups have in common is disappointment and frustration with the economic system. The promise of economic reward, employment, stable and rising living conditions, or a better tomorrow look like distant or unrealistic prospects. Jobs and prosperity have been replaced with anxiety and insecurity for many millions of citizens. Despite criticisms of being apolitical, global protest movements are deeply political. They are imbued (however rudimentarily) with demands for fairness, equality and justice. They are expressions of frustration with the economic and political systems. In the aftermath of the financial crash, there was hope that conventional politics would hold those responsible to account, that governments would repair the broken economic system. Yet over half a decade after the financial crash, that has become an unfulfilled expectation. Stiglitz (2013, Preface) recognises that the failures of economic and political systems are interrelated. The economic system benefits the top 1% of society with political institutions captured by those same special interests. The political system has been unsuccessful in correcting the economic system's failures and instead has led to their perpetuation. It was only through the growing realisation that the political system had failed to restore growth and prosperity for all, as well as failing 'to prevent the crisis, to check the growing inequality, to protect those at the bottom, to prevent the corporate abuses' (Stiglitz, 2013, Preface), that protestors turned to the streets.

To be fair, we are well aware of the risk of hyperbole in relation to the roles of neoliberalism and globalisation in shaping unrest and protest. In one respect, riots are, and remain, rooted in the local. Stones only get thrown so far. In standoffs between police and rioters, there is little utility in musings on the apparent depoliticisation or despatialisation of protest. However, this is not to deny that their impact, visibility and meaning are given shape on a global stage. It is therefore in rioting in particular that some of these contradictions come to the fore.

The chapters in this book are albeit loosely ordered thematically. We start, more or less, locally and in or close to the UK. From there onwards the chapters increasingly demonstrate a transnational and subsequently a global orientation. This is reflective of the fact that our thoughts towards this book were shaped by local events initially and soon turned to global processes as ways of experiencing and interpreting these events. With that said, few contributions are truly or exclusively either local or global. However, there are differences in perspective as we move through the book, with more local/national orientations sooner and global and transnational perspectives further on.

First up is David Waddington (Chapter 2). He takes us to the city of Sheffield in Northern England where he examines 30 years of, for the most part quite effectively contained, protest. He looks at local features in protesting and policing that may account for that. He makes the case for the liaison-based policing of protest. Such strategies can bring about sincere and 'facilitating' relationship with protesters, and enhance the prospects of protest remaining peaceful.

Matt Clement (Chapter 3) brings us to the Stokes Croft area of Bristol in the West of England. Unlike Sheffield, Bristol has a colourful history of rioting as a form of social protest. He sketches various tumultuous episodes in Bristol's history going back a few hundred years. He then goes on to look at present-day rioting in the city and, in doing so, makes a case for the argument that riots are much rooted in history. He contends that anti-corporate motivations that drove 'the mob' in the eighteenth century can again be seen at work in contemporary forms of protest and resistance in Bristol in the twenty-first century.

Diana Bretherick (Chapter 4) considers dramatic representations of the 2011 UK riots. In doing so she looks at the role and potency of a cultural prism through which riots can be interpreted and reinterpreted. Her analysis of cultural artefacts (such as stage plays) suggests that drama represents an alternative search for an elusive underlying truth. This art form is perhaps better able to convey subtlety and nuance than other forms of reporting. It demonstrates the fact that cultural artefacts offer

insight over and beyond the wealth of video footage and newspaper coverage that structure our understanding of riots.

Nadine El-Enany (Chapter 5) adopts a historical perspective to examine the criminalisation of protest over time. She charts these developments over the last 200 years, from the Peterloo Massacre in the early nineteenth century to the student protests in 2010. Crucial in her development is the deeper entrenchment of public protest into illegality, away from a public right to protest and into something inevitably insidious and anti-democratic. Her work highlights a trend that is now easily taken for granted and fitting with other criminalisation trends, such as in the governance of immigration. It also strengthens the case of historical, as well as legal, analysis of official responses to unrest and protest.

Steve Hall and Simon Winlow (Chapter 6) also take a historical approach to rioting in the UK. They accuse the social sciences of an inability to engage with current manifestations of rioting and, for that matter, with other major transformations that are currently taking place. Instead, the social sciences carry on with obsolete terminology and conceptual apparatus, a canon of which they say forms an 'undead presence'. They argue that a sense of urgency and renewal is needed in criminology and related disciplines in order to avert sleepwalking ever deeper into a 'society of enemies'.

Danny Dorling and Carl Lee (Chapter 7) look at riots from the perspective of inequality. In particular they consider data that demonstrate the runaway riches of the top 1% of earners in the UK and in the USA, and particularly the top 0.1% – those termed 'the happy few'. In the UK, a couple in the best off one-thousandth today has the income of eight such couples a generation ago. Needless to say, this situation is not nearly as rosy for the other 99.9%. This unequal situation is even starker in the USA. It is clear that this is not just about a gap between rich and poor but in particular how fast that gap is widening. Dorling and Lee argue that it is probably true that such statistics are not in the mind of protestors the moment they throw a stone at the police. Nevertheless, inequality does exert an influence in the sense that it can convincingly be cast as a deeper cause of social unrest.

Fabien Jobard (Chapter 8) considers rioting in France from the 1980s onwards and analyses these incidents from a political perspective. Are these events in essence political, or rather anti-political, in nature? He concludes that the former applies. In that sense, a refusal to be part of 'the political game' can in fact be construed as a veritable political statement. In doing so, Jobard pulls riots into the political sphere, instead of them being, as so often happens, situated outside.

Laura Naegler's contribution (Chapter 9) is the result of ethnographic research during riots in the Sternschanze area of Hamburg's inner city in northern Germany. Her critical and cultural criminological lens allows her to analyse the motivations of rioters in depth and, like Jobard, she rejects simplistic explanations such as 'senselessness' and 'thrill-seeking' as the motivations behind rioting. Instead, rioting is conceptualised as 'transgressive edgework'. Cultural criminology is arguably uniquely placed to make sense of such spectacles. This is a mode of analysis very much in correspondence with our 'stage' metaphor. For instance, it shows a sliding scale between observing and participating, between recording and performing. Needless to say, Naegler's piece can be read as a celebration of ethnography, a quintessential method in uncovering and deconstructing 'the language of the unheard' – a statement that is frequently referred to in this book and is usually attributed to Martin Luther King.

Panagiotis Sotiris (Chapter 10) examines social unrest in Greece as a response to neoliberal restructuring and programmes of austerity. He contends that recent political and social unrest should be interpreted as forms of resistance to the externally imposed austerity measures from the troika of the EU, the IMF and the ECB. He suggests that protest events in Greece since 2010 should be viewed as the last rites of the Greek developmental paradigm. Furthermore, it is argued that unrest in the country should be seen as an important form of resistance in modern Europe, in the sense that it represents rejection of the prevailing neoliberal hegemony. Sotiris also refutes the argument that unrest is an expression of anomie, and instead focuses upon its positive consequences in bringing about solidarity, collective organisation and direct democracy.

David Pritchard (Chapter 11) examines the relationship between social unrest and socio-economic inequalities. He draws upon the disciplines of social policy and criminology to assess statistical relationships between protest events and sociological and economic dimensions of inequality. He undertakes a comparative analysis of the advanced industrialised group of nations which make up the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Dimensions such as income inequality, unemployment, poverty and levels of trust are examined using comparative data. In addition, he explores the relationship between protest events and levels of decommodification – the extent to which welfare protection was provided by non-market actors – in European countries. Using longitudinal data across the period from 1980 to 1995, Pritchard considers whether different welfare economies – otherwise

known as 'welfare state regimes' in comparative social policy and political economy – engender social order or bring about a descent into social unrest.

David Brotherton (Chapter 12) takes Naegler's reasoning one step further to argue that it is in fact the corporate warfare state of cruelty, and the bureaucratic, corporate, market-driven dimensions of the modern social order, that engender unrest and protest. Understanding rioting therefore requires an appreciation of the deep-seated inequalities and the dark machineries of coercion and control that operate in modern societies. He applies these arguments to protest events in New York City, such as the #Occupy Wall Street movement, and then transposes it to the UK riots of 2011. 'Riot' is interpreted as resistance – 'surely we cannot settle for what we have now?'

Raj Patel and Philip McMichael (Chapter 13) kindly agreed for their seminal work, 'A political economy of the food riot', to be reproduced in this volume. This takes a truly global perspective in setting out global volatilities and insecurities as drivers for unrest, in particular urban unrest, driven by food insecurity. This is partly caused by fluctuating food prices, due as much to speculation as to poor harvests. It is in particular the global urban poor who suffer the brunt of such volatility, which is a stark reminder of what may be to come.

Francis Pakes (Chapter 14) takes inspiration from Patel and McMichael's work to draw attention to a nascent form of rioting – that of the so-called 'land-grab riot'. Whereas food riots are a predominantly urban phenomenon, he tries to locate land-grab riots in rural environments and discusses protest against the large-scale appropriation of land in developing countries to satisfy the energy or food needs of resource-poor but finance-rich countries. Land grabs often literally and figuratively bulldoze over local communities and concerns, leaving peasant communities in its wake. Pakes argues for such happenings, often away from the public eye, to become a concern for social scientists and for such forgotten victims of globalisation to be brought onto its radar.

Roxane Farmanfarmaian (Chapter 15) turns her attention to the Arab Spring and considers the variable response of 'the West' to events in different countries. Western powers cautiously supported the uprising in Tunisia, intervened militarily in Libya, but kept rather silent on events in Yemen and Bahrain. Farmanfarmaian juxtaposes the high rhetoric emanating from the West that focuses on democracy, freedom and self-determination with the cold-blooded *realpolitik* that was in fact in

operation, and this accounts for the different interventions or lack of them in the various Middle Eastern states affected.

Finally, Konstantin Kilibarda (Chapter 16) considers the wider implications of the #Occupy movement that sprung up further to the global financial crisis, initially known as #Occupy Wall Street. He discusses issues involving the very nature of 'occupy' in North America and its relation to neoliberalism and post-colonisation, thereby drawing attention to the 'occupied' nature of North America itself. He then links this to the emergence of an indigenously-led #Idle No More movement that addresses issues perhaps ignored by #Occupy. It has succeeded in placing Canada's colonial relationship with indigenous peoples at the centre of national and international media attention, and serves as an example of how, through dialectic and symbiotic forms, protests evolve to address issues that have been left untouched by previous incarnations.

To summarise, let us not forget about the often visceral nature of protest. Riots invoke anger. Yet there is disagreement surrounding what that anger is directed at. There is plenty of anger directed at the manifestations of unrest. This is easy to find in the media and the unfettered social discourses surrounding unrest and protest that often assume a hegemonic position. Anger at deeper causes is provided in good measure in this volume. One of us previously argued for criminology to be more engaged (Pakes, 2012). When it comes to understanding riots and their causes, however, that is possibly an understatement. Do we need to shift through the gears of passion to find an emotion that stirs us into action more? 'Anger is an energy', was famously shouted by John Lydon's alter ego, Johnny Rotten. That could be as fair as any turn of phrase to introduce this volume.

References

Baker, A.S. (2012). From the criminal crowd to the 'mediated crowd': The impact of social media on the 2011 English riots. *Safer Communities*, 11, 40–49.

Eurostat (2013). *Eurostat Yearbook 2013*. Retrieved from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Europe_in_figures_-_Eurostat_yearbook.

Holland, D. and Portes, J. (2012). Self-defeating austerity? *National Institute Economic Review*, 222(1), F4–F10.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2012). *The World Economic Outlook: October 2012 Edition*. Retrieved from http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2012/02/weodata/index.aspx.

Klein, N. (2000). *No Logo*. London: HarperCollins.

Klein, N. (2008). *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. London: Penguin.

Pakes, F. (2012) Globalisation and criminology: An agenda of engagement. In F. Pakes (Ed.), *Globalisation and the Challenge to Criminology*. London: Routledge.

Roubini, N. (2008). *2006 and 2007 IMF Speeches by Roubini Predicting the Recession and the Financial Crisis . . . And the Five Stages of Grief*. Retrieved from http://www.economonitor.com/nouriel/2008/08/28/2006-and-2007-imf-speeches-by-roubini-predicting-the-recession-and-the-financial-crisisand-the-five-stages-of-grief/.

Stiglitz, J. (2013). *The Price of Inequality*. London: Penguin.

Streeck, W. (2011). The crisis of democratic capitalism. *New Left Review*, 71(September/October), 5–29.

2
Policing Political Protest: Lessons of Best Practice from a Major English City

David Waddington

Introduction

This chapter focuses on a 30-year period of political protest occurring in Western democracies from 1983 to 2013. It draws upon a related body of research, based on demonstrations in the major UK city of Sheffield, South Yorkshire, to highlight those policing strategies and tactics which help to ensure that events of this nature remain predominantly trouble-free and devoid of major confrontation.

As part of this analysis, the chapter will show how the dominant styles of protest policing associated with particular 'eras' across the period in question are closely linked to corresponding national and global political trends, which may sometimes predispose relevant police forces towards more repressive and uncompromising modes of crowd control. It will further be argued, however, that even in such relatively intolerant political climates, an emphasis on more permissive and 'facilitating' police methods is more likely to result in relatively peaceful and non-violent forms of protest.

This general point will be illustrated with regard to prominent demonstrations occurring in Sheffield in the highly contentious political eras of the 'Thatcherite' 1980s and the 'neoliberal' age of the new millennium. Later in the chapter we shall focus on the policing of city-centre demonstrations involving striking miners in 1984, anti-G8 (Group of Eight) protesters in 2005 and opponents of the Liberal Democrat Party in 2011. The initial focus of discussion, though, is a controversial visit to Sheffield on 28 April 1983 by the then Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher.

Steel city, Iron Lady

The case study in question (Waddington and Critcher, 2000; Waddington *et al.*, 1987, 1989) concerns the occasion when Thatcher was guest of honour at the city's most prestigious social event, the annual Cutlers' Feast. Principal guests of this nature are traditionally invited as an expression of gratitude for favours extended to local industry and commerce, or in anticipation of such forthcoming benevolence. However, the Prime Minister's appearance in Sheffield was always bound to provoke a hostile local reaction.

The self-proclaimed 'Iron Lady' was already presiding over a repertoire of monetarist fiscal policies which had resulted, among other things, in the decimation of the internationally renowned Sheffield steel and engineering industries and the escalation of local unemployment. Her Conservative government was also embarked on a strategy of curtailing the decision-making autonomy of large, Labour-dominated city councils – notably the especially powerful Greater London Council and the local Sheffield City Council. On top of this, the government was firmly committed to a Cold-War strategy of nuclear arms proliferation in opposition to the Soviet Union and its allies. Given the strong trade union and anti-war traditions prevailing in the self-styled 'Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire', it seemed virtually inevitable that Thatcher would be greeted with a display of great political vehemence.

Collective opposition was initially organised by a Thatcher Reception Committee, chiefly comprising activists from the main steel union, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, and the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP). It soon emerged, however, that protest was also being co-ordinated by an Unwelcoming Committee, led by senior members of the more influential Trades Council and District Labour Party. An attempted alliance quickly proved too uncomfortable to maintain. Members of the Unwelcoming Committee were disdainful of the Thatcher Reception Committee's publically stated desire to 'bring the city to a standstill', while the latter felt that the less radical strategy favoured by the 'rival' committee was due to its cynical reluctance to court controversy in the build-up to local elections. In the event, it was the more powerful Unwelcoming Committee that held sway – to the extent that its 'greater formal links with local political and trade union organizations, their status as the publicly acknowledged organizers of the demonstration and their better access to the media enabled them to place their emphasis on an orderly expression of views at the head of the agenda' (Waddington *et al.*, 1987, p. 164).

Thus, on the night when the Cutlers' Feast took place, some 5,000 protesters gathered directly opposite the Cutlers' Hall on the concourse in front of Sheffield Cathedral. Though noisy and extremely boisterous at times, the demonstration was generally marked by a carnival atmosphere, in which a crowd made up of trade unionists, anti-war protesters, pensioners' and tenants' action groups, students, anti-racist organisations and formal political parties (mostly Labour) were treated to a variety of music, entertainment and speeches, all delivered from a specially erected platform. The climax of the proceedings was a 'one-minute silence' in honour of South Yorkshire's 94,000 registered unemployed, which was immediately followed by a collective rendition of John Lennon's 'Give Peace a Chance'. Once the singing was over, hundreds of the demonstrators made their way to nearby Sheffield City Hall for a well-publicised 'Alternative Feast of Fun'.

The event was overwhelmingly peaceful. Aside from the occasional eggs, flour and fruit that were aimed at coaches delivering the Master Cutler's guests, the only notable incident was when a police horse suddenly reared, unseated its rider and temporarily bolted out of control, only for it to be just as quickly recaptured. Such minor mayhem was sufficient to distract the crowd from Thatcher's arrival, the upshot being that she was able to stride into the Cutlers' Hall virtually unnoticed.

There is no doubt that the perceived legitimacy of the demonstration from a senior police perspective was fundamental to determining what proved to be a very accommodating approach to controlling the demonstration on the part of South Yorkshire Police (SYP). Insofar as they could tell, 'This was a routine political protest organized by and on behalf of democratically elected local politicians and members of other local organizations who could not be regarded as "subversive" or threatening to the existing social order, and whose relationships with the local police were by and large good' (Waddington *et al.*, 1987, p. 166). Correspondingly, few of those protesting disputed the legitimacy of the police role in protecting the democratically elected head of state. These mutually benign perceptions help to explain the readiness of both sides to enter into extensive pre-event liaison, which ensured that, among other things, specially erected crush barriers would serve to provide sufficient space for the coaches delivering the Master Cutler's guests to arrive unobstructed, and an ambulance route to remain open, without undermining the protest's effectiveness. A commitment was also given by both sides to having members of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers act as stewards on the night.

The police remained wary of the possible threat posed by potentially recalcitrant members of the erstwhile Reception Committee (especially the more publically prominent members of the SWP), who seemed set, as we have already seen, on a more disruptive strategy. Thus while the pre-event briefing encouraged officers to engage in good-natured banter and exhorted them to 'jolly the crowd along', various steps were taken – such as positioning police 'spotters' on surrounding rooftops and having pairs of hand-picked officers mingle with the crowd – to offset any sudden move by miscreants. Such preparations resulted in a small number of arrests, principally related to the throwing of objects at coaches as they arrived. Significantly, though,

> The arrests did not provoke retaliation by the crowd or draw in other participants. This was partly because miscreants were able to be pinpointed exactly by rooftop surveillance, and their position conveyed to officers on the ground. [The police] were able to deal with incidents promptly, and did not have to chase through the crowd with the danger of arresting the wrong person and provoking a violent reaction. Interestingly, in at least two of the arrests we observed, demonstrators actually assisted the police in pointing out the offenders. This is an index of the strength of the cultural and situational norm of non-violence shared by the demonstrators, and the legitimacy accorded to the police role.
>
> (ibid., p. 170)

The relationship between the prevailing political climate and the police choice of strategy and tactics that is so well highlighted in the above case study is even more starkly emphasised by events occurring a year later, in the same city centre, during a pair of rallies staged by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in the context of the year-long UK miners' strike. By the time the first rally took place on 12 April 1984, the strike was already six weeks old and had been strongly characterised by well-publicised picket-line confrontations between miners in the predominantly pro-strike Yorkshire coalfield and scores of police officers charged with ensuring the safe passage into the pits of miners in neighbouring coalfields, such as Nottinghamshire, who had chosen to carry on working. Such police action, combined with the legally dubious practice of using roadblocks to prevent striking Yorkshire miners from reaching picket-line destinations (McCabe and Wallington, 1988), reinforced strike supporters' views that the police were being politically

partisan in helping the government to 'smash the NUM'. Meanwhile, insofar as the police were concerned,

> The strike's legitimacy was challenged by the miners' refusal to hold a ballot as required by the government's trade union legislation. The dispute was further undermined by being presented as a politically motivated action, resulting from the deliberate machinations of the union's left-wing leadership.
>
> (Waddington *et al.*, 1987, pp. 175–176)

The first of the two rallies in question occurred on 12 April 1984 in the forecourt of the symbolically significant NUM national headquarters in St James's Square, within the city centre. There, some 7,000 miners had gathered from various UK coalfields to exhort the members of the NUM's national executive to resist political and journalistic pressure to call a national strike ballot. The uncompromising police attitude was exemplified by their decision to employ 2,000 officers from ten different forces, who stood in rows ten-deep to restrict the demonstrators to a distance of 30 feet from their own headquarters. This was ostensibly designed to guarantee the safety of executive members from 'non-striking' areas, such as Nottinghamshire. However, greatly incensed by what they clearly regarded as gross political interference by the police, the strike supporters repeatedly charged into the awaiting ranks of officers:

> From the beginning of the rally, the lack of political or physical room for manoeuvre between police and miners was obvious. Even initially humorous exchanges were barbed. Thus what might have been merely ritualized bouts of pushing and shoving in a more routine industrial conflict soon escalated into fighting; each charge by the miners became a flashpoint for renewed bouts of violence.
>
> (ibid., p. 179)

No sooner had the executive meeting concluded than the NUM President, Arthur Scargill, appeared at an upper-storey window to announce via megaphone that a motion on behalf of Nottinghamshire and other 'non-striking areas' for a strike ballot had been ruled 'out of order'. He further explained that an NUM rule requiring there to be a 55% vote of members 'in favour' for strike action to be sanctioned by the union would be referred to a Special Delegates' Conference in one week's time,

with a view to making such action conditional on a simple majority. Following this announcement and the jubilant roar that followed, miners launched one final, defiant charge into the police line and the fighting recommenced.

Events occurring at the second rally, exactly a week later, illustrate most emphatically how an especially judicious form of police tactics can help to avert violence in even the most politically charged of situations. In the seven days elapsing since the previous confrontation, the negative publicity attracted by the police and the NUM had predisposed them towards greater conciliation. Both parties were therefore responsive to offers by Sheffield City Council and the South Yorkshire Police Committee to broker a more accommodating approach to the second rally. As part of the agreement reached, this second demonstration was staged in the less restrictive, more 'neutral' confines of the area to the rear of Sheffield City Hall. A platform was erected and a succession of speakers arranged along the lines of the 'Thatcher Unwelcoming' demonstration of the previous year. On this latest occasion, NUM stewards were appointed to 'self-police' the arrival of special delegates and, in acting as master of ceremonies for the day, the charismatic Kent Area NUM President, Malcolm Pitt, urged miners to refrain from any violence which 'could be used against them' by a generally unsympathetic mass media.

Throughout all of this the police presence was kept deliberately 'low key' and non-provocative, with officers walking around in pairs, in stark contrast to the forbidding ranks that had confronted the miners a week earlier. As one BBC Two *Newsnight* television reporter described it on the morning of the rally,

> It's 9.30, with 7,000 miners now in the square, and the delegates begin to arrive, pushing through a noisy, if good-tempered, line of NUM marshals. The police are spotted approaching, and there is instant chanting. An inspector rushes in to send them away. It's still low-key.
>
> (quoted in Waddington *et al*., 1989, p. 44)

The fact that there was no confrontation whatsoever between strike supporters and police officers was a testament to the fact that 'even the most conflict-ridden situation can be kept orderly, given accommodation between the two parties involved' (Waddington *et al*., 1987, p. 182).

Iron fists and velvet gloves

The increasingly 'paramilitarised' style of policing synonymous with the 'Thatcherite' era of Conservative rule in the 1980s (Jefferson, 1990) was even more nakedly emphasised later in the miners' strike during the vicious 'set-piece' confrontations between police and pickets outside the Orgreave coking plant on the outskirts of Sheffield (Waddington, 1992). This patently repressive orientation was further demonstrated against other culturally and politically dissenting groups, ranging from the print unions to new age travellers (ibid.). However, a key turning point was reached following widespread condemnation of the allegedly excessive and heavy-handed policing of the 1990 anti-poll tax riot, and more genteel 'middle-class' forms of protest (e.g. relating to ecological issues or animal rights) which threatened to severely damage police legitimacy (Waddington, 1996, 1998). This major shift in the prevailing political consensus saw UK police forces eschewing the highly restrictive public order legislation recently made available to them in favour of a 'iron fist in a velvet glove' approach (King and Brearley, 1996), which saw negotiation as a first resort, with the paramilitary option held back in reserve just in case 'the wheel comes off' (P.A.J. Waddington, 1994).

This significant change of emphasis corresponded (albeit relatively belatedly) to ongoing patterns of change in the dominant forms of policing in the USA and Western Europe, which McPhail *et al.* (1998) characterised as a transition from 'escalated force' to 'negotiated management'. Under the former mode of public order policing (most synonymous in the 1960s and early 1970s), senior officers had tended to sanction the overwhelming and indiscriminate use of police force as a way of imposing law and order, regardless of any negative impact on the supposed 'right to protest'. However, a growing concern over the physical costs of such methods (in terms of risk of injury and the potential destruction of property), allied to widespread public and political criticism, encouraged the adoption of alternative approaches predicated on liaison, negotiation and compromise, and involving only the minimum use of force.

Confidence in the negotiated management approach to policing political protest was greatly undermined during the 1990s by the activities of the emerging global justice movement, whose leaderless, non-hierarchical structures, direct and often illegal repertoires of action, and general unwillingness to enter into liaison were an anathema to the police. These problems were compounded by legal and political obligations on the police to secure the safety of the 'Internationally Protected

Persons' attending the seemingly incessant rounds of global summit meetings (King and Waddington, 2005; Waddington, 2007a). All of this was exemplified by the pivotal developments at the 1999 World Trade Organization summit meeting in Seattle which was greatly disrupted, and where the police were embarrassingly overwhelmed by thousands of protesters who were well beyond their control. The shockwaves from Seattle reverberated throughout major Western democracies, encouraging newer, more repressive forms of public order policing with which to tackle the global justice protesters (Waddington, 2007b).

The American academics Patrick Gillham and John Noakes have coined the term 'strategic incapacitation' to characterise the novel range of police strategies and tactics for dealing with the more problematic groups of protesters that they are liable to encounter in the global justice era (Gillham, 2011; Gillham *et al.*, 2013; Noakes and Gillham, 2006; Noakes *et al.*, 2005). According to these authors, the police approach has increasingly become predicated on a 'new penology philosophy' of social control, based on identifying likely groups of 'offenders' and employing pre-emptive ways of incapacitating them. This has become all the more apparent in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attack on New York's World Trade Centre:

> The primary goals for police in this new era are to preserve security and to neutralize those most likely to pose a security threat. To reach these ends strategic incapacitation emphasizes the application of selectivity whereby police distinguish between two categories of protesters – contained and transgressive – in order to target those perceived most likely to engage in disruptive activities. Contained protesters, often referred to by police as 'good protesters' are generally known by police, use conventional and legal tactics, negotiate with police, make self-interested demands, and are generally older. By contrast protesters considered 'bad' or transgressive articulate more abstract demands, use unpredictable and often illegal tactics, do not negotiate with police, and are generally younger.
>
> (Gillham, 2011, p. 640)

Prominent among the repertoire of tactics now used by a range of Western democratic police forces are such measures as:

- insisting that only those groups that are prepared to engage in pre-event negotiations will be accorded the 'rights' to free speech and peaceful assembly;

- predetermining the locations at and times when the protest will be allowed to take place, establishing designated protest zones (saying who will be allowed to stand where) and stipulating those kinds of behaviours that will be tolerated and those that will not;
- communicating such stipulations to 'contained' protesters but invariably refusing to communicate with 'transgressives', other than by issuing direct commands once the protest is under way;
- selectively using arrests to neutralise known or suspected transgressives, during and even before protests;
- employing a range of 'less-lethal' weapons (e.g. tear-gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets, tasers, bean-bag rounds) to temporarily incapacitate or repel collective threats;
- engaging in the extensive surveillance of protesters, both before (e.g. by using covert intelligence and infiltration) and during protest events (e.g. by employing CCTV, police videography on rooftops and Forward Intelligence Teams);
- using information strategically (e.g. by sharing it extensively between different law-enforcement agencies, proactively manipulating media definitions of protesters and events, raising fears and justifying police aggression).

Martin (2011) maintains that further momentum has been given to this emphasis on strategic incapacitation by the growth of neoliberalist global policy and what he refers to as the 'concomitant neoliberalisation of cities'. By way of illustration, he refers to the September 2007 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit meeting in Sydney, which was attended by the US President, George W. Bush, and 21 other major foreign dignitaries. Some 3,500 New South Wales police officers were present along with 450 Australian Federal Police and 1,500 defence personnel (Baker, 2014). Although the New South Wales police ostensibly engaged in dialogue with the Stop Bush Coalition, the latter doubted the sincerity of the authorities, objecting to the way in which police officers put forward proposed arrangements on a 'take-it-or-leave-it' basis. Neither did such dialogue sit too easily alongside ongoing preparatory police-military exercises, the public unveiling of water cannons, snipers on rooftops, the presence of undercover surveillance and the creation of extensive exclusion zones (ibid.). According to Martin (2011, p. 31),

> Policing and securitisation in the case of the Sydney APEC meeting signalled, both symbolically and concretely, the Australian Government's determination, under pressure of global competition, to

'market' or 'advertise' Sydney as a safe and unproblematic (i.e. protest-free) place for nomadic capital to invest. Hence the need to showcase security, which, I suggest, has become even more vital since the Battle of Seattle in 1999 and the terror attacks in 2001.

Advance police strategic incapacitation measures for contentious summit meetings often take extreme forms, as in the case of the massive surveillance operation carried out by the New York Police Department (NYPD) in anticipation of the 2004 Republican National Convention. In this instance the NYPD deployed undercover officers to infiltrate potential protest groups in the USA, Canada and Europe up to a year before the convention took place (Earl, 2009). Monaghan and Walby (2012, p. 658) point to the associated risk that a process of 'threat amplification' may be activated, such that

> A sense of threat is made up through broad-spectrum intelligence analyses, which often draw from multiple agencies and areas of expertise. Police then use the categories developed by intelligence analysts in their training and operations to prepare officers involved in protest policing. On the ground, suspicion is applied to anyone seemingly displaying the indicators of threat stated in the intelligence report and police training.

This process was witnessed most dramatically at the 2001 Genoa G8 summit where 1,000 civilians were wounded as they found themselves on the receiving end of some 6,200 tear-gas grenades and 20 live ammunition rounds discharged by the Italian police and Carabinieri (della Porta and Reiter, 2006). Warnings by the Italian civil secret service of the likelihood of demonstrators wielding pistols and ball-bearings smeared with acid, and bombarding police lines with blazing car tyres, were amplified via the mass media and fed into the pre-event briefings of junior officers. It therefore scarcely mattered that the actual threat was limited to a 'tiny but vigorous violent fringe'. As one police officer subsequently revealed in interview, 'They taught us only to repress, not to prevent; the no-global movement was presented to us as the enemy, there was no training about the various components of the movement, no distinction between violent and peaceful groups' (ibid., p. 31).

Without wishing to dispute any of the above analyses of the onset and implications of strategic incapacitation, I have called for a more nuanced appreciation of the moderating effects of distinguishing local factors on protest policing operations. Evidence of the importance of such factors

appears in a further case study of public order policing in Sheffield, this time in relation to the 2005 G8 Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial meetings which, as we shall see, involved 'a strong commitment to facilitating political opposition, albeit within strictly defined geographical and behavioural limits' (Waddington and King, 2007, p. 418). A preceding G8 summit meeting (of environment and development ministers) held three months earlier in the city of Derby had been conducted well out of the reach of protesters. Although a demonstration coinciding with the summit was actually permitted to take place in Derby town centre, such protest was strictly limited under Section 14 of the Public Order Act 1986 to a confined area of the central marketplace. Meanwhile, summit delegates were in the process of meeting some two miles to the north-east of the town at a location encircled by steel barricades. SYP opted for a far more accommodating approach to the protest occurring on their doorstep.

Key to understanding the nature of this approach is the fact that SYP had clearly learned from some painful 'lessons from their past' (King and Brearley, 1996). Following Mawby (2002), I have identified the development in the county of a softer-edged, more permissive approach to the policing of public order, which he sees as a conscious reaction to the loss of police legitimacy (and undermining of force morale) arising both from the picket-line and community-based confrontations during the miners' strike (Waddington *et al.*, 1989), and SYP's discredited attempt to conceal the operational blunders which saw over 90 football supporters crushed to death during the Hillsborough stadium tragedy of April 1989 (Waddington, 2011).

There can be no denying that strong elements of the strategic incapacitation approach were evident in SYP's strategy and tactics for dealing with the G8 summit. For example, following pre-event liaison with protest organisers, restrictions were placed on the numbers of protesters allowed to assemble (albeit only within specified time limits) in pre-designated protest compounds in close proximity to where summit delegates were arriving. Also, in one incident in which a small group of black-clad anarchists suddenly set off from a 'Rice for Dinner' protest (staged half a mile away from the G8 meeting on nearby Devonshire Street), with the apparent intention of bearing down on the main summit, both they and dozens of unwitting passers-by found themselves suddenly corralled on all sides and detained (i.e. 'incapacitated') for over two hours down a sidestreet.

Against this, the force steadfastly resisted a call by Sheffield City Council for it to adopt a 'zero tolerance' (or 'no protest') approach:

The latter was not only nervous about ensuring the safety and security of the visiting dignitaries (including the future French President, Nicolas Sarkozy) and their entourages, but was also very eager to project Sheffield as tourism and conference centre of potential world renown. Ultimately, a compromise was achieved whereby demonstrators were allowed to congregate in special protest compounds that were close enough to the summit venues to enable them to let their feelings be heard but not close enough to enable any acts of violence to occur. The Chief Constable of SYP emphasized in interview that his Gold strategy for the event involved giving equal priority to 'facilitating the lawful business of the summit' and 'facilitating lawful protest'.

(Waddington, 2011, p. 320)

Further impetus to this relatively progressive, facilitating approach to public order policing in South Yorkshire would be provided by political developments occurring at the national level four years later.

Towards strategic facilitation?

Such developments were closely linked to public criticism and indignation at the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS's) mishandling of the anti-G20 demonstration in April 2009. Mass media coverage of the event emphasised how police officers had reacted to protesters in a sometimes violent and allegedly indiscriminate manner, and had resorted to the now familiar and controversial tactic of 'kettling' demonstrators into a confined space and detaining them for several hours (Rosie and Gorringe, 2009). Related media reports had initially echoed police briefings in attributing the death of a male passer-by, unintentionally caught up in the event, to natural causes, but an amateur video of the incident revealed soon afterwards that the fatality had resulted from an unprovoked attack by a police officer (Greer and McLaughlin, 2010). An official inquiry undertaken by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCIC) subsequently called on the police to adopt a more permissive approach to managing political protest, predicated on a commitment to facilitating the right to protest (HMCIC, 2009a and b). These recommendations were soon converted into official nationwide directives appearing in the ACPO/ACPOS/NPIA (2010) *Manual of Guidance on Keeping the Peace*.

Underpinning these reports was a common justificatory rationale combining social psychological theory and police practices already

being implemented in Sweden. Particular significance was placed on the Elaborated Social Identity Model (Reicher, 1996; Stott and Drury, 2000), which is based on the simple notion that police interventions regarded by protesters as indiscriminate or unjustified are liable to have the unintended effect of unifying the entire crowd against them. It logically follows that police strategy and tactics should be predicated on adequate education (understanding the values, objectives and 'identities' of those present), effective communication (involving meaningful contact and information exchange prior to and during any demonstration), highly accurate and appropriately differentiating interventions, and a sincere determination to facilitate relevant protest objectives (Reicher *et al.*, 2004, 2007).

These principles closely accord to those of the Swedish Dialogue Policing approach, whereby appropriately trained officers engage in pre-event liaison with protest groups with a view to explaining the police approach, discussing the protesters' objectives and deciding how best to facilitate them in light of possible restrictions. On the day of the protest proper, the same officers then immerse themselves in the crowd, acting as a conduit between civilians and police. The aims here are to continue to help to facilitate the protesters' objectives while feeding ongoing risk assessments to remotely positioned commanders (Holgersson and Knutsson, 2011).

A variation on this approach was mounted by SYP in response to protests accompanying the March 2011 Liberal Democrat spring conference in Sheffield. During the previous November, the MPS had suffered the embarrassment of having been bamboozled by thousands of student protesters who were opposed to planned cuts in education funding, who used various forms of social media to catch them unawares by taking to the streets of London. With little idea of what sort of numbers to expect, the police assigned inadequate numbers of officers to contain the 50,000 or so protesters descending on the capital (Stott *et al.*, 2010). A small breakaway group then occupied the Conservative Party headquarters at Millbank House and proceeded to inflict substantial damage. Police attempts to use Twitter to communicate with the occupants were later criticised as naïvely ineffectual (ibid.). Heeding the lessons of the Millbank debacle, a subsequent official report (HMCIC, 2011) challenged the police to make better use of social media in the management of public order. This challenge was duly accepted by SYP, which employed social media and dialogue policing methods in the handling of the 'Anti-Lib Dem' protest.

The demonstration in question was organised by a group calling itself the Sheffield Anti-Cuts Alliance (SACA). The protest focused on the fact that, following the formation of a coalition government with the Conservative Party in 2010, the Liberal Democrats had attracted controversy by presiding over a programme of public spending cuts and raised university education fees, the type of which they had stridently opposed in their pre-election campaign. An especially acute sense of political betrayal prevailed in Sheffield, which has two universities and is greatly reliant on public sector employment, and where the Liberal Democrat leader and Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, was MP for Sheffield Hallam.

As in the anti-G8 protest of six years earlier, SYP's Gold Commander stressed in interview the perceived importance of enhancing the city's commercial and tourism potential. However, he also placed correspondingly significant emphasis on facilitating the right to protest. Steps would clearly need to be taken to balance this right against what seemed like a strong likelihood of violence. In the event, the 5,000-strong protest passed off with only one arrest, largely due to the permissive approach adopted by SYP (McSeveny and Waddington, 2011; Waddington, 2013; Waddington and McSeveny, 2012).

There is no doubt that the police operation owed some of its success to SYP's decision to erect a part-concrete, part-metal fence which encircled the City Hall in such a way as to limit possible contact between protesters and uniformed officers, while keeping the former well within view and earshot of the arriving Liberal Democrat delegates. Arguably more important, though, was the force's decision to deploy a 15-person Police Liaison Team (PLT), which not only entered into pre-event discussions with organisers, to agree on a mutually satisfactory route, and how best to satisfy each other's objectives, but also mingled among the crowd during the demonstration with the objectives of explaining police actions (thus ensuring a 'no surprises' approach) and helping to facilitate the protest's goals. In consequence,

> The exceptionally clear lines of communication linking PLT officers and the Silver Command suite provided an unerringly accurate basis of ongoing risk assessment which was crucial to the avoidance of any indiscriminate and seemingly unjustifiable police intervention. Indeed, police responses of this nature were generally undertaken by members of the PLT, whose positive standing with the crowd meant that there was little chance of inducing the type of hostility

and opposition that would have greeted their more conventionally deployed colleagues.

(Waddington, 2013, p. 63)

PLT feedback to Silver Command often proved a vital corrective to the misleading images otherwise being created by CCTV. On one occasion, for example, a Liberal Democrat delegate who entered the crowd with the intention of presenting his political views was suddenly encircled by a seemingly hostile group of protesters. The Silver Commander was thus on the point of sending in a police support unit (PSU) to rescue him. However, a PLT inspector immediately radioed in to reassure his superior officer that it was perfectly obvious at ground level that 'the crowd was policing itself' and that the delegate was in no imminent danger. In a second instance, a group of determined-looking youths began to cause concern by aggressively and repeatedly beating the perimeter fence with staves, with the apparent intention of eventually trying to breach it. Having been initially inclined to send in a PSU, the Silver Commander backtracked on the basis of a reassurance provided by a PLT officer that these were 'harmless adolescents' engaging in mere bravado.

The PLT was extensively supported in such tasks by a four-person Social Media Team (SMT), operating in the Silver Command suite. Part of the SMT's function was to circulate 'useful information' relating to such issues as the accredited protest routes, and the likelihood of any transport hold-ups and delays. However, the team also served the equally valuable purpose of scotching the pernicious and potentially inflammatory rumours that occasionally went sweeping through the crowd, such as the allegation that one police spotter positioned high up on the roof of an overlooking department store was actually a sniper, or that gates being deployed at the bottom of Barker's Pool were being used with the intention of 'kettling' demonstrators. The SMT responded to this latter rumour by tweeting a message to explain that the gates were merely being employed as a safety measure to avoid the risk of overcrowding in such a confined area. As an added precaution, police officers on gate duty were immediately removed and the mechanism continued to be operated by SACA's own designated stewards.

Despite the PLT's best efforts, it had not been able to engage in pre-event liaison with members of the UK Uncut protest group, whose repertoires of action included occupying, and in some cases vandalising, selected retail outlets and financial institutions. SYP took the decision not to place any undue restrictions on the movements of protesters and ordinary shoppers throughout the town during the protest. The related

risk of targeted premises being entered into and, possibly, subjected to nuisance or destruction was realised when it became necessary to eject 30–40 members of the group in question from Boots and Topshop stores on the busy Fargate shopping precinct and the High Street branch of the NatWest bank. These incidents were shrugged off afterwards by the Silver Commander as an unavoidable, though acceptable, consequence of their determination to facilitate, rather than restrict, effective protest. It was nonetheless evident that, even at this stage of the proceedings, the PLT had still had an immensely vital role to play:

> By the time the UK Uncut protesters had entered the relevant stores, things had already gone too far for the PLT to exert any meaningful influence. Portable containment barriers were therefore used to temporarily contain the group and prevent the spread of disorder. Not only was this tactic suitably discriminating, it also afforded Silver an opportunity to direct the PLT: 'Right, go back in the main group and say, "This group we've corralled, we've contained them because they're doing this." And we didn't get the backlash that we'd have had by corralling everyone'.
>
> (ibid., p. 62)

Related research by other academics indicates that there has been some variability in the nature and effectiveness of police dialogue or liaison strategies and tactics implemented since the publication of the HMCIC reports. Acting in the role of academic consultants, Stott *et al.* (2013) were able to evaluate the range and effectiveness of police liaison methods introduced by both the MPS and the Sussex Constabulary. These authors observed how the success of such methods tended to vary according to whether a prior history of familiarity and trust had been established between the police and protesters involved. The sudden introduction of PLTs at demonstrations and rallies merely enhanced perceptions that officers were there for the primary purpose of information-gathering. The potential effectiveness of such teams was further eroded in cases where the simultaneous and often premature deployment of 'conventional' PSUs served to undermine their authority and credibility. This problem was most prevalent in those instances where senior public order commanders regarded the PLTs as merely serving to communicate police directives more clearly. Nevertheless, the study concluded that the accent on police liaison had generally proved successful in terms of opening up more effective communication channels between the police and protesters, bringing greater clarity and accuracy into

police decision-making, and making it easier (and safer) for public order commanders to tackle emergent problems. Among the most tangible benefits accruing for the police was a dramatic decline in instances of disorder and destruction of property.

Conclusion

The featured case studies forming the bookends of this chapter are a resounding testament to the capacity of communication or liaison-based protest policing strategies and tactics to promote the maintenance of public order. The examples provided from the 'Thatcherite' era of the 1980s and the 'neoliberal' or 'global' period more synonymous with the new millennium all occurred in circumstances of great economic austerity and political contention. However, they each emphatically underline that, in situations where the police are able to engage in a sincere and 'facilitating' relationship with protesters, the prospects of protest remaining peaceful will be considerably enhanced.

Baker (2014) is justified in asking whether the process of engaging in police–protester dialogue actually represents little more than a 'ritualistic sham' in which both sides probe and forage away for relevant intelligence and subtle ways of gaining advantage and compliance. It would certainly be naïve to suggest that the police are no longer primarily concerned with ensuring that protest events take place largely on the terms of their own particular choosing (P.A.J. Waddington, 1998). However, the work carried out by Stott *et al*. (2013) suggests that liaison methods will invariably prove ineffectual in those instances where the police are perceived as nothing more than intelligence-gatherers and their commitment to facilitating protest appears to be correspondingly bogus.

Where police liaison methods are palpably imbued with an appropriately tolerant, open and concessionary attitude, there will be an enhanced likelihood of police operations being granted more legitimacy and gaining greater public co-operation, even among more transgressive sections of demonstrators. Correspondingly, PLTs embedded within the crowd will find themselves more capable of acting as useful conduits between the protesters and their own higher command. It will be well within their capacity to correct misperceptions on all sides, bring clarity to police decision-making and reduce the possibility of provocative or unpleasant surprises. Moreover, in those cases where police interventions are deemed absolutely necessary, members of PLTs will be ideally placed to ensure that police actions are suitably differentiating and therefore not greeted with an attitude of collective opposition.

SYP's handling of the UK Uncut protesters during the Anti-Lib Dem protest emphasises the wider value of the police liaison approach even in those circumstances where transgressive protesters look upon negotiation as anathema. The suspicion may exist among police adherents to more orthodox protest policing methods that the liaison approach represents a potentially dangerous luxury (Wahlström, 2007). 'But,' as Stott *et al.* (2013, p. 14), point out,

> policing operations are dynamic and liaison based approaches do not rule out a shift towards escalated force or strategic incapacitation if police perceive the levels of threat, potential for criminality and disruption warrant this. What our research suggests is that such shifts are less likely when liaison officers are deployed, precisely because their engagement with protestors, ability to manage crowd dynamics, and awareness of the nature of the situation enables the police to remain at the level of negotiated management.

Conflict is endemic both to the iniquitous economic and power structures, and discrepant moral and political values existing in our society. However, as this chapter has shown, the extent to which such conflict becomes manifest during instances of public protest will very much depend on the degree to which the police commit themselves to overtly respecting and facilitating the right to political expression.

References

Association of Chief Police Officers, Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland, and National Police Improvement Agency (ACPO, ACPOS, NPIA) (2010). *Manual of Guidance on Keeping the Peace*. Wyboston: National Policing Improvement Agency.

Baker, D. (2014). Police and protester dialog: Safeguarding the peace or ritualistic sham? *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice*, 38(1), 83–104.

della Porta, D. and Reiter, H. (2006). The policing of global protest: The G8 at Genoa and its aftermath. In D. della Porta, A. Peterson, and H. Reiter (Eds.), *The Policing of Transnational Protest*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Earl, J. (2009). Information access and protest policing, post 9/11: Studying the policing of the 2004 Republican National Convention. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(1), 44–60.

Gillham, P.F. (2011). Securitizing America: Strategic incapacitation and the policing of protest since the 11 September 2011 terrorist attacks. *Sociology Compass*, 5(7), 636–652.

Gillham, P.F., Edwards, B., and Noakes, J.A. (2013). Strategic incapacitation and the policing of occupy wall street protests in New York City. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 23(1), 81–102.

Greer, C. and McLaughlin, E. (2010). We predict a riot? Public order policing, new media environments and the rise of the citizen journalist. *British Journal of Criminology*, 50(6), 1041–1059.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspectorate of Constabulary (2009a). *Adapting to Protest.* London: HMIC.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspectorate of Constabulary (2009b). *Adapting to Protest: Nurturing the British Model of Policing.* London: HMIC.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2011). *Policing Public Order: An Overview and Review of Progress against the Recommendations of Adapting to Protest and Nurturing the British Model of Policing.* London: HMIC.

Holgersson, S. and Knutsson, J. (2011). Dialogue policing: A means for less crowd violence. In T.D. Madensen and J. Knutsson (Eds.), *Preventing Crowd Violence*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Jefferson, T. (1990). *The Case against Paramilitary Policing.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

King, M. and Brearley, N. (1996). *Public Order Policing: Contemporary Perspectives on Strategy and Tactics*. Leicester: Perpetuity Press.

King, M. and Waddington, D. (2005). Flashpoints revisited: A critical application to the policing of anti-globalisation protest. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 15(3), 255–282.

Martin, G. (2011). Showcasing security: The politics of policing space at the 2007 Sydney APEC meeting. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 21(1), 27–48.

Mawby, R.C. (2002). *Policing Images: Policing, Communication and Legitimacy*. Cullompton: Willan.

McCabe, S. and Wallington, P. (1988). *The Police, Public Order and Civil Liberties*. London: Routledge.

McPhail, C., Schweingruber, D., and McCarthy, J. (1998). Policing protest in the United States: 1960–1995. In D. della Porta and H. Reiter (Eds.), *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

McSeveny, K. and Waddington, D. (2011). Up close and personal: The interplay between information technology and human agency in the policing of the 2011 Sheffield anti-Lib Dem protest. In B. Akghar and S. Yates (Eds.), *Intelligence Management (Knowledge Driven Frameworks for Combating Terrorism and Organised Crime)*. New York: Springer.

Monaghan, J. and Walby, K. (2012). 'They attacked the city': Security intelligence, the sociology of protest policing and the anarchist threat to the 2010 Toronto G20 summit. *Current Sociology*, 60(5), 653–667.

Noakes, J.A. and Gillham, P.F. (2006). Aspects of the 'new penology' in the police response to major political protest in the United States, 1999–2000. In D. della Porta, A. Peterson and H. Reiter (Eds.), *The Policing of Transnational Protest*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Noakes, J.A., Klocke, B., and Gillham, P.F. (2005) 'Whose streets?' Police and protester struggles over space in Washington DC, September 2001. *Policing and Society*: *An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 15(3), 235–254.

Reicher, S.D. (1996). 'The Battle of Westminster': Developing the social identity model of crowd behaviour in order to explain the initiation and development of collective conflict. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 26, 115–134.

Reicher, S.D., Stott, C., Cronin, P., and Adang, O. (2004). An integrated approach to crowd psychology and public order policing. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 17(4), 558–572.

Reicher, S., Stott, C., Drury, J., Adang, O., Cronin, P., and Livingstone, A. (2007). Knowledge-based public order policing: Principles and practice. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 1(4), 403–415.

Rosie, M. and Gorringe, H. (2009). What a difference a death makes: Protest, policing and the press at the G20. *Sociological Research Online*, 14(5). Retrieved from http://www.socresonline.org.uk/14/5/4.html.

Stott, C. and Drury, J. (2000). Crowds, context and identity: Dynamic categorization processes in the 'poll tax riot'. *Human Relations*, 53(2), 247–273.

Stott, C., Gorringe, H., and Rosie, M. (2010). HMIC goes to Millbank. *Police Professional*, 25 November 2010, 232, 14–17.

Stott, C., Scothern, M., and Gorringe, H. (2013). Advances in Liaison based public order policing in England: Human rights and negotiating the management of protest. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 7(10), 210–224.

Waddington, D. (1992). *Contemporary Issues in Public Disorder: A Comparative and Historical Approach*. London: Routledge.

Waddington, D. (1996). Key issues and controversies. In C. Critcher and D. Waddington (Eds.), *Public Order Policing: Practical and Theoretical Issues*. Aldershot: Avebury.

Waddington, D. (1998). 'Waddington versus Waddington': Public order theory goes on trial. *Theoretical Criminology*, 2(3), 373–394.

Waddington, D. (2007a). *Policing Public Disorder: Theory and Practice*. Cullompton: Willan.

Waddington, D. (2007b). Seattle and its aftershock: Some implications for theory and practice. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 1(4), 380–389.

Waddington, D. (2011). Public order policing in South Yorkshire, 1984–2011: The case for a permissive approach to crowd control. *Contemporary Social Science*, 6(3), 309–324.

Waddington, D. (2013). 'A kinder blue': Analysing the police management of the Sheffield anti-'Lib Dem' protest of March 2011. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 23(1), 46–64.

Waddington, P.A.J. (1994). *Liberty and Order: Public Order Policing in a Capital City*. London: UCL Press.

Waddington, P.A.J. (1998). Controlling protest in contemporary historical and comparative perspective. In D. della Porta and H. Reiter (Eds.), *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*. Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Waddington, D. and Critcher, C. (2000). Policing pit closures, 1984–1992. In R. Bessel and C. Emsley (Eds.), *Patterns of Provocation: Police and Public Disorder*. Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Waddington, D. and King, M. (2007). The impact of the local: Police public order strategies during the justice and home affairs ministerial meetings. *Mobilization: An International Journal*, 12(4), 417–430.

Waddington, D. and McSeveny, K. (2012). A tweet in time. *Policing Today*, February, 18–20.

Waddington, D., Jones, K., and Critcher, C. (1987). Flashpoints of public disorder. In G. Gaskell and R. Benewick (Eds.), *The Crowd in Contemporary Britain*. London: Sage.

Waddington, D., Jones, K., and Critcher, C. (1989). *Flashpoints: Studies in Public Disorder*. London: Routledge.

Wahlström, M. (2007). Forestalling violence: Police knowledge of interaction with political activists. *Mobilization: An International Journal*, 12(4), 389–402.

3
Mobs versus Markets: Bristol's Tesco Riot

Matt Clement

Introduction

> If the legislature don't speedily use some method effectually to suppress the present spirit of rioting which is becoming general among the lower sort of people ... there will be no protection from the plundering mob: The Mob must be conquered.
>
> (letter to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1757)

Ruling elites, along with the classes whose attachment to property rights is paramount, have always hated 'the mob'. This was true in eighteenth-century Britain as the above quote implies: and the hatred and fear of the existing order is just as genuine in the 21st, as epitomised by this selection of headlines on Tuesday 9 August 2011:

FLAMING MORONS – thugs & thieves terrorise Britain's streets
   (*Daily Express*)
THE ANARCHY SPREADS – to blame the cuts is immoral and cynical.
This is criminality pure & simple (*Daily Mail*)
RULE OF THE MOB (*Daily Telegraph*)
MOB RULE (*Independent*)
ANARCHY IN THE UK (*Daily Star*)
YOB RULE (*Daily Mirror*)

(Molyneux, 2011, p. 2)

'Mob' is actually shorthand for the 'mobile population', sometimes called the 'mobile proletariat'. People are mobile if they don't own property, a characteristic which tends to encourage attachment to the existing order. Today, this includes potentially the mass of the population

who don't own their flats or houses outright and suffer from a relative scarcity of other assets, or capital. Of course, only a small minority of these numbers have become involved in riot and protest over the six years of the economic crisis. Yet as austerity bites into living standards and job insecurity intensifies, we are seeing a return of the mob to the global stage. The riots that erupted during the UK's 'summer of discontent' (Briggs, 2012) revived the 'mob' label in a number of ways, which are the subject of the concluding section of this chapter. My focus will be on events in Bristol in April 2011, the scene of the country's first two riots that year, which allegedly targeted a multinational corporation which led to these protests being labelled the 'Tesco Riots'. In order to ask if this action was really motivated by 'rage against the market' (Clement, 2012a), I will initially look back at some past examples of when the city has been subject to riot and protest – to highlight the circumstances and motivations that frame these actions. One common thread woven through a variety of events appears to be popular reaction against the actions of corporations, both public and private.

Corporations came into existence when wealthy individuals wished to create an entity that would limit their liability to repay debts that they had run up. They gave a legal identity to these non-human bodies. In Hanoverian England the East India Company's trading success led to the notorious South Sea Bubble, where all of those with money to invest purchased shares on a rising market with predictable results. As with all financial bubbles, belief in its success became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some 75% of the politicians in the Lords and the Commons had invested and the rise appeared unstoppable – until the collapse. The existence of corporations – bodies with a legal existence separate from the individuals who had established them – prevented the enormous legal and financial consequences of their business failure falling on their owners. Laws banning corporations 'tending to the common grievance, prejudice and inconvenience of His Majesty's subjects' were passed but rarely used (Bennett, 2010, p. 8). They often monopolised their trade, which meant regulating its practice and preventing other traders. Bristol's soap-makers had fallen foul of the London monopoly granted by Charles I in the 1630s, despite their innovative advertising: 'a tavern maid and laundress lathered away in public at some soiled linen napkins...they demonstrated that in Bristol soap washed whiter and more economically than the projector's soap. In spite of this the King ordered the closing down of seven out of Bristol's eleven soap boiling workshops' (Wedgwood, 1983, p. 160). The royal monopoly collapsed in this case as London and Bristol soap-boilers refused to

pay fines and were jailed. The behaviour of the King and his corpo-rations – monopolies granted to his favourites aimed to raise funds without having to call Parliament – crucially gave respectable tradespeo-ple reasons to oppose the monarch for keeping them out of the market. In doing so, Charles I risked revolution. Northumberland warned that 'the people of England are generally so discontented, by reason of the multitude of projects daily imposed upon them, as I think there is rea-son to fear that a great part of them will be readier to join with the Scots than to draw their swords in the King's service' (Wedgwood, 1983, p. 226).

Too much favouritism in allocating access to trade risked uniting the rising merchant classes with the poor against the dominant oligarchy, as in the 1640s. Hill (1969a, p. 99) noted that 'the personal govern-ment of Charles I broke down ... because it lost the confidence of the propertied classes. There were no safe investments in the English ancien regime.' The authorities in the City of London generally favoured Parlia-ment in the civil war. Their corporations grew with Charles' defeat; not only there but also in trading cities such as Bristol and Norwich. During the Restoration their power continued to grow. Now, rather than being allied to the merchant classes, the poor sometimes came up against the consequences of the merchants' monopolies of trade and prices, pro-ducing the regular food riots of the likes of Bristol's Kingswood miners, when the price of bread rose too far for their meagre livelihoods. Addi-tionally, in the 1700s, sometimes the country gentry – in their capacity as magistrates – would favour the cause of the poor by allowing riots to occur without repression,

In food riots we see a mob pursuing a conscious political strategy, of demanding reform through riot. Magistrates often colluded for political reasons and because many of the propertied nation retained a resid-ual attachment to the moral economy. Part of their attachment was because they were much closer to an era when paternalism, rather than the operation of the market, was a guide to action. The factors and the middlemen were their new colleagues in the ruling class, but this bred envy and resentment alongside the growth in shared interests which was establishing the era of 'mercantilism' (Gilmour, 1992, p. 238).

Turnpikes were erected in 1727 on the roads into Bristol, and road users were to be charged a fee towards their upkeep. The colliers of neighbouring Kingswood demanded to be exempt – 'a delegation of col-liers protested to the mayor, raucously but not violently'. He declared them 'a set of ungovernable people violent in their ways and regardless of the consequences' (Mills, 2009, p. 8). They rather proved his point

by attacking four turnpikes. Troops arrested and jailed some rioters, after which they destroyed several more. The authorities abandoned their efforts for a while. Each time they passed a new act and erected turnpikes, destruction and riots followed. In 1738, faced with wage cuts and rising prices, a mob of colliers and their supporters harried local officials. When local justices of the peace gathered at the Lamb Inn to examine the damage, a 'large crowd attacked the pub forcing the justices to flee and abandon the proceedings. The crowd, buoyed by their further success, made it to the Bridewell in an attempt to free their comrade' (Mills, 2009, p. 13), before troops beat them back and managed to clear the streets.

For the poor, with no vote, rioting evolved as a legitimate weapon of protest in this period. This does not mean that rioters in the past had an overt political agenda. Rather, as one study of the 'Swing' riots of the 1830s explained, 'They were asking for no more than even their traditional rulers had always conceded in theory' (Hobsbawm and Rude, 1973, p. xiv). This is what is meant by 'the moral economy'. Those people rioting always believe that their actions are a civilised reaction against worsening conditions that endanger sustainable and legitimate means of making a living. The explanations and justifications of the 2011 London rioters below show a similar concern about rising living costs and shrinking welfare:

> They should put back on E.M.A. Help all those single mothers that are struggling. Uni. Cuts, everythin' we're not doin' this for the fun of it. We're doing it for money – to survive in this WORLD. But until we get that, or a little bit of support from the government, then it's not gonna stop. That's what I think innit.
>
> (*Looters*, Sky TV, 12 August 2011)

Their expectations of equal and empowering opportunities have been dashed upon the rocks of allegedly necessary austerity measures.

The anti-social nature of persecuting the poor was more clearly recognised and sermonised about by the intellectuals of eighteenth-century Britain than can be said of their contemporary equivalents. David Hume pointed out: 'That policy is violent which aggrandises the public by the poverty of individuals' (Gilmour, 1992, p. 248). It was clearly recognised because, as Bristol's story shows, the likelihood of mobs assembling was becoming a clear and present danger, and a particular concern for those granted the authority to keep the peace: the City Corporation. As Defoe put it, 'The reason for which all government was at first appointed

was...to prevent mobs and rabbles in the world.' Over the previous century the process of urbanisation without democracy had led to this:

> The word 'mob' first appears in this period...The nonconformist congregations had abandoned politics...1688 brought no widening of the franchise...There was thus no political outlet for the passions and resentments of those whom their betters expected to work hard for low wages in deplorable conditions.
>
> (Hill, 1969a, p. 255)

So if government policy was tending to create rather than dissipate groups of people mobbing together, it was clearly understood as worse than useless. As the case of the Kingswood colliers illustrated, the mob was no longer exclusively an unemployed or peasant rabble but rather a working class in the making, with all of the collective ways of living that made their repression more problematic for the authorities:

> Their work bred militancy, they were a ready-made crowd with feelings of communal solidarity, they were vulnerable to a sudden rise in prices especially when it coincided with unemployment and they were better placed than more scattered workers to resist it. Hence the prominent part in eighteenth-century food riots played by colliers, tin miners, dockyard workers, keelmen, potters and cloth workers.
>
> (Gilmour, 1992, p. 232)

All of the fears of these commentators were more than confirmed in 1780 when a series of events known as the Gordon Riots swept across London. They demonstrated graphically that the scale of urbanisation in the late eighteenth century was such that collective action by the mob could mount a serious challenge to the social order. It certainly evoked a violent reaction from the government, as it authorised troops to fire upon crowds burning down London's prisons, assaulting the Bank of England and destroying the tollhouses on Blackfriars Bridge. Describing events in their immediate aftermath, Lord Wraxall declared the slaughter of civilians to be in the hundreds, 'the corpses fell like rats into the river' (Hibbert, 2004, p. 115). The descriptions of the battles between rioters and troops over the Bank of England are dramatic. They were led by a brewery drayman, who 'rode a cart horse decorated with the chains and fetters stolen from Newgate the previous night...Wave after wave of rioters rushed towards the bank to be met by the fire of Colonel Holroyd's hard-pressed militiamen...At each volley a few fell but the

others re-formed and came on again' (Hibbert, 2004, p. 113). In a later attack, the fourth in 24 hours, the Horse Guards 'lashed out so furiously with their bayonets that twenty of the rioters fell dead almost at the point of impact' (Hibbert, 2004, p. 128).

These events were a tumultuous explosion, likened by many commentators to a volcano, which exposed how perilous was the grip of the new moneyed classes on the levers bringing so much wealth to the city. The mob had gathered in massive numbers, and wrought destruction on leading politicians and industrialists as they fired their houses. Although ostensibly anti-Catholic riots, class resentment was certainly also present, as in the case of a barge-builder who protested at his trial that 'no gentleman should be possessed of more than £1 000 a year' (Rude, 1971, p. 98). It seems – as with the Occupy protestors who tried to set up their camp outside the Bank of England in October 2011, before settling outside St Paul's Cathedral – that the rioters represented the '99%' of their day. Justice demanded action to share out society's wealth. 'The mob attacked the bank because there was gold in it and because the rich both Catholic and protestant had stored their valuables there' (Hibbert, 2004, p. 139).

The Gordon Riots were testament to the power of the mob and their ability to challenge authority. Less than a decade later, the French Revolution reinforced this message and left Britain's rulers in no doubt about the threat that the mob posed. Yet questions began to arise about how best to deal with these new challenges: with reform or repression? Many believed that Britain's own history, which had given Parliament a major voice in government and vanquished absolute monarchy, was sufficient guarantee against the 'rule of the mob' on the French model. But did the mob themselves realise this? Bristol provided another chapter in this history of conflict between money-grabbing corporations determined to maintain their rule and hard-pressed citizens who felt that they had no choice but to resist – the case of the Bristol Bridge Massacre of 1793.

Industrialisation had advanced still further by this time. One contemporary described the Bristol of his day as 'a dark satanic landscape of smoking glass houses, iron foundries, distilleries, breweries and sugar houses' (Manson, 1997, p. 18). Once again it was the issue of unwanted tolls that started the problem. A new bridge had been built 30 years earlier on the basis of an eighteenth-century equivalent of a Private Finance Initiative scheme. The public consensus was that by 1792 the fares collected should have been sufficient to pay for its construction and so the tolls should cease, but the decision rested with the notorious Bristol Corporation. This collection of merchants and aldermen was unelected

and self-serving, known for its extravagance with public money for its own aggrandisement. Local printer John Rose contrasted the Corporation of London, elected annually by citizens, with Bristol's, elected by its own members. London's accounts were printed annually, while Bristol's remained a closely guarded secret:

> The offices of Mayor, Alderman and Common Council of the City of Bristol are what ought not to exist in this country. They are a local tyranny: a partial oppression: an arbitrary government within a limited one: a self creative, self existing-evil.
>
> (Manson, 1997, p. 33)

This contempt for the corporation was widespread among Bristolians, and they were convinced that they should not pay the toll. On Saturday 28 September 1793, a bonfire was made of the new gates over the bridge, the militia was called, the Riot Act was read and they fired over the crowd, but one man was killed. The next day the mayor pronounced to a delegation of citizens that this was 'justifiable homicide, for the Riot Act had been read' (Manson, 1997, p. 56). As a result, a controversial death created an atmosphere of outrage and indignation, just as Mark Duggan's shooting was initially justified in Tottenham in 2011, with similar results. A crowd gathered with Duggan's friends and family a few days later, then rioting followed after further police provocation. In the Bristol case, the crowd's anger at the tolls had been inflamed by the authorities' inept brutality and callous indifference to the fate of John Abbott, the man killed, and 'the size of the crowd began to grow to alarming proportions' (Manson, 1997, p. 62). The tollgates were burnt again and the challenge to the authority of the corporation was renewed:

> In an age when the biggest crowd-puller was an execution, the unfolding of events on the bridge were, without doubt, riveting entertainment . . . As Monday's work finished . . . spectators assembled at all the best viewing points.
>
> (Manson, 1997, p. 63)

When the soldiers first arrived, they could not act without magistrates to give the order and so retreated as 'stones, brickbats and clods of mud rained down on them' (Manson, 1997, p. 64). A larger detachment arrived, led by the mayor and five aldermen, and assumed firing position. Muskets cracked; people fled. Eleven were killed outright, and

four more died of their wounds in the next few days. More people were killed than at Peterloo in 1819 in an act of bloody murder by the reviled City Corporation. It is the scale of this brutality by the authorities that goes a long way to explain how the mood against the corporation grew darker, before prompting the widespread rioting and destruction in Bristol in 1831.

Some felt that the shadow of the Bastille and the French revolutionary mob had inspired this riot, but a better description would be that fear of the rioting mob had spooked a trigger-happy local government body to authorise a massacre. The growth of cities and industry were transforming relations between the common people and their rulers. This demonstrates the products of the long-term trend of marginalising and excluding the urban poor, which is consistent with trends in European cities for 500 years (De Swaan, 1988). It appeared that the same thirst for civil rights and a more meritocratic regime that relegated the power of French aristocratic privilege also existed in England, represented by artisans' 'corresponding societies', and was part of the new wave of social movements involved in the 'making of the English working class' at the turn of the century (Thompson, 1968).

Bristol Corporation was by now a byword for corruption and nepotism, brilliantly satirised by the city's greatest poet, Thomas Chatterton, who made money by fabricating family trees for prominent families that displayed their ancient roots to justify their civic 'distinction' (Ackroyd, 1987). City charters regulated trade in such a restricted fashion that Bristol's future industrial prosperity was being held back by 'that corporation tyranny', while unchartered boroughs such as Birmingham boomed (Hill, 1969b, p. 242). Many richer citizens outside the charmed circle were exasperated by this local conservatism and nepotism, and they campaigned for more representative government. This all came to a head in 1831 with the infamous Bristol riot.

It is instructive to look in more detail at the circumstances in Bristol at the time as the pace of industrialisation spread such human misery in its wake that the clamour for reform, both nationally and locally, to offer some social security to a population whose living conditions were becoming increasingly precarious was growing. A century earlier it had been England's second city in wealth and prospects, but it had now been declining since around 1780. Some of the industries of the future which originated in Bristol, such as Darby's brass foundries, now relocated to Ironbridge in the Midlands, and its status as the leading western port was truly eclipsed by Liverpool. Many of the middle classes blamed the local corporation for the way its corrupt and restricted oligarchy resisted

innovation. Once again on this issue they found themselves on the same side as the poor:

> Corporations are too apt to tread people under, and it is time for them to be interfered with.

This sentiment was expressed at a public meeting of the newly formed Bristol Reform Committee by T.J. Manchee. He was later to be the author of *The Origin of the Riots in Bristol* and, in the months before they broke out in late October 1831, he appealed to the Prime Minister. Manchee wrote to Lord Melbourne, 'advising him of the need for a stipendiary Magistracy, an elected system of Corporate officials, and an annual audit of municipal accounts' (Thomas, 1999, p. 15). The corporation – whose actions had encouraged a tide of opposition not only from the wealthy merchants and businessmen on the Reform Committee but also the more radical Political Union – was the city's local authority and its actions were widely resented. Political Union founder J.G. Powell declared 'that our principal efforts ought to be against Corporation abuses...that the Corporation received annually £40,000 although only £20,000 was given in as the amount to the Commissioners'. Not only public money was unaccounted for, so the Political Union should 'enquire into the appropriation of the funds of the respective charities, with a view to prevent their perversion to corrupt and party purposes' (Thomas, 1999, p. 16).

Events tipped over from resentment and political opposition into riot due to the spark kindled by the recorder of Bristol's Corporation, Charles Wetherell. He was also a Yorkshire MP – for a seat that was due to be abolished in the upcoming Reform Bill that aimed to spread parliamentary representation more evenly across the country. Perhaps that was why he had lied, declaring in the House of Commons that Bristol no longer favoured reform and dishonestly asserting that a 'reaction' against reform had taken place there, much to the fury of local citizens. One city MP, Edward Protheroe, insisted: 'the people of Bristol...might all be insured against the insidious conduct of the Tories who, if the people are quiet, would say there is a reaction against the Bill' (Thomas, 1999, pp. 19–20). As is evident here, Bristol did not suffer the complete absence of popular representation in Parliament of the northern cities, but the atmosphere in October 1831 was certainly riotous and Tory politicians and bishops were their target. Thomas (1999, p. 21) explains that those 'events in the city had led them to believe that it was their unpopular local government which most urgently needed

to be "Reformed" '. The local corporation, rather than national voting reform, was the true cause of popular anger, a reality understood by Lord Melbourne as he explained to Parliament a few years later:

> I have felt much less fear from Birmingham or Manchester, than I have from any town where there was a corporation . . . Great excitement has prevailed in Birmingham and Manchester, but there was no local odium, no local hatred, no local irritation, which are all far more violent than the hatred and irritation arising from public and political cause.
>
> (Thomas, 1999, p. 26)

Before the violent uprising there was the threat of violence from authority. As we have seen, the reformers had demanded that no troops should be employed. This was only 12 years after the infamous Peterloo Massacre, where 11 died and hundreds were injured when mounted soldiers charged the crowd. Bristolians had even more reason to fear such military excess as their tollbridge riots of 1793 had been a bloody dress rehearsal for Peterloo. Hardly surprising then that 'when, on the Saturday morning, the mob discovered that troops were stationed in the Cattle market, it certainly appeared to many as though the authorities had planned a confrontation' (Thomas, 1999, p. 4).

Events in Bristol were certainly violent. Three days of rioting started with mass demonstrations against Peverell's ill-advised visit to the city. Crowds burnt down several properties in central Queen's Square, including the Custom House and the Bishop's Palace, as the city-wide clamour for political reform spilt over into drunken revelry and destruction of property (Amey, 1979). The riot was eventually repressed, and 12 men were hung, but the controversy that had surrounded the British government 12 years earlier – when it had sanctioned Manchester's massacre of citizens at Peterloo – had led the military to hold back from a brutal military action. Many important civic buildings, such as the Mansion House and the Customs House, were destroyed. Three local jails were attacked and set ablaze, with prisoners being liberated, and the Bishop's Palace burnt so brightly that the glow was reportedly seen 30 miles away at Newport.

Virtually all of the buildings which were destroyed belonged to the corporation, and rioters were heard to shout, 'Oh! It's only Corporation property!', as they ravaged Queen Square. The Established Church also qualified for popular abuse: rioters chanted 'Down with the churches and mend the roads with them' and 'the Bishop and

the Corporation!' The reformers' onslaught against the corporation had made it a vulnerable target for an excited crowd (Thomas, 1999, p. 21).

Engrossing corporations

Fast-forwarding 180 years to 2011, Bristol was the scene of another riot directed, in part, against the monopolistic practices of a reviled corporation – it targeted a newly built Tesco supermarket. Tesco is a huge multinational corporation. As the UK's biggest retail chain, it leads the actions of that cluster of corporations exploiting their overwhelmingly dominant monopoly of the commissioning and distribution of commodities. The corporations' reach and wealth are often resented in a situation where, increasingly, public austerity sits alongside growing mountains of corporate wealth. Britain's banks and supermarkets are mirrors of one another, controlling each of their respective so-called free markets, demonstrating how a few huge institutions monopolise business and exploit their customers.

The supermarkets are a form of partner corporation to the banks. Even more concentrated than the 'big four' banks, the profits of market leader Tesco rank with the oil corporations in size and scale. The density of their market penetration means that a significant proportion of the wages of the whole population flows directly into their coffers – again, processed by the banks via debit cards, so the worker/consumer doesn't even get to handle the fruits of their labour, just to exchange it for so much food, clothing, electricity and petrol. No wonder so many feel like the 'squeezed middle' or members of a marginalised 'underclass'. As this process illustrates, the twenty-first century has seen a dramatic expansion in the power and reach – in depth as well as breadth – of those corporations that manage so many aspects of everyday life.

> Corporations now affect – or more appropriately, infect – every area of our lives, shaping our lives, quite literally, from cradle to grave, from womb to dust.
>
> (Coleman *et al*., 2009, p. 105)

Corporations control the supply of food, energy, wholesale retail in the form of Amazon *et al*., communications and indeed the media as a whole. Since the 2008 financial crash, the switch from credit provision to debt recovery has meant a clamour from 'the market' – that is, the voice of corporate interests – for more and more of our wages to be claimed as payment for goods and services, undermining sustainable

living and breeding increasing resentment at inequality and increasing economic marginalisation as incomes stagnate for the vast majority. The actions of the energy corporations are one example of surges in prices driven by the pressure to cash in on the advantages of monopolising supply. Corporate 'business as usual' is increasingly being seen as morally indefensible – a form of white-collar crime that sprawls across areas such as money-laundering, food adulteration, rigged market speculation and, above all, tax avoidance. In the process, governments and corporations are forfeiting the consent of a contented majority cushioned by their ability to indulge in conformist consumption, the bubble they blew up to fuel the Blairite boom of 2000–2007.

This American dream is receding in the bonfire of illusions brought about by the current crisis (Callinicos, 2010). People still aspire towards what Merton codified as the goal of 'money/success' but they no longer believe that it can be achieved legitimately. He termed the result "anomie" – a Greek word, appropriately enough – describing the alienation from mainstream capitalist values that we are now seeing (Clement 2012b). While it would be wrong to say that everyone who took part in the Tesco riot was consciously opposing the power of the capitalist corporation, there were many political and social motivations mixed up in the mindsets of those who took part in this theatrical battle with the police for symbolic control of this section of Bristol's inner city.

Tesco is Britain's biggest supermarket chain, and in 2011 the Stokes Croft outlet brought its total number of stores in Bristol to 31. When you add in the proliferation of Sainsbury's and other rivals, there are over 60 supermarkets in the city. The number of outlets has more than doubled in the last decade, in line with national trends. The room for other local retailers is thus squeezed, and the urban life-world becomes increasingly homogenised. In 2012 and 2013, this process accelerated further as giant US-based corporate supermarkets such as Amazon, specialising in non-food retail, and Starbucks, in coffee, gobbled up market share, controversially aided by legally avoiding tax bills of hundreds of millions. Having begun by attracting consumers away from their local shops in the 1980s and 1990s through price-cutting at out-of-town stores, UK supermarkets have gone on to reconquer the high streets and suburbs, as they return and undercut independent rivals. By loss-leading on core convenience items, the vitality of local custom is sucked into the coffers of the multinationals, which become ever more bloated and monopolistic. This corporate model of 'serving the consumer' reaps such large rewards that other chains, such as Boots, which have operated profitably for long periods on high streets, paying UK tax, have been

driven to behave in the same way, as when Boots relocated its head office to Switzerland. Tesco's profits shrank in 2012, leading it to consider other methods of expanding while avoiding the unpopularity of being associated with its own corporate label. How else can we explain its opening a chain of coffee stores under the Harris and Hoole banner (Neate, 2013). In June 2013, Sainsbury's announced a rise in its profit levels. It appears that it is eating into Tesco's market share by the type of ruthless expansion that its rival pioneered.

It was because Tesco epitomises the overmighty power of corporations in twenty-first century communities that it found itself opposed by local residents in Stokes Croft, a strip of inner city road (the A38) heading north from Bristol's city centre. The campaign against the store began with a lobby of the council's planning meeting by over 300 people, mostly young, in the summer of 2010. As the footprint of this inner-city square mile – of St Paul's, with Stokes Croft on its western edge – becomes more densely populated, it places greater stress upon those relatively poor and increasingly marginalised residents needing more space for themselves and their families, even as rising property values result in the incoming population often outranking them in terms of employment, status and spending power. The new social housing units in St Paul's don't come anywhere near to meeting the real level of housing need. The insistence on property as a vehicle for investment and profit by Bristol's partnerships between business and local government has bred an anti-social disequilibrium in the housing market. The evolution of regeneration partnerships into corporate missions to build high-price property and minimise the provision of so-called affordable housing has been pronounced since 2000, and Bristol's story of gentrified flats, office blocks and student halls reflects national trends (Clement, 2010).

This lack of affordable housing availability is especially marked in Stokes Croft itself, and matched by illegally available housing in the form of potential squats. The result has been a predictable explosion of informally occupied property. This has developed alongside a number of shopfronts being leased by enterprises with a cultural/artistic feel, breeding a 'creative' ambience in the area's galleries and cafés, pubs and nightclubs. Graffiti by Bristol's cultural icon Banksy first appeared in Stokes Croft over a decade ago, when the area was still rundown and no superstore was even contemplating locating there. As his fame has grown, this style of graffiti art has blossomed over a range of urban spaces, becoming an artistic signature for the reviving area. With the arrival of more squatters and artists, the area has become fashionable. The art of Banksy has become commodified as Stokes Croft has become

more popular with students and young workers who live, work or travel through there.

Because of its countercultural 'scene', the presence of Tesco and its multinational ilk was certainly not welcome among a range of local citizens and traders. Squats had since grown over the previous winter, adding to the mood of autonomy and anti-authoritarianism. The 'do it yourself' regeneration process has bred the turnaround from a semiderelict area to a thriving 'alternative' zone. No wonder so many saw Tesco's insistence on planting itself there as an unwelcome incursion by those commercial forces that had left the area to run down for so long. The attitude of many inner-city residents in Stokes Croft was seeing the arrival of Tesco as an unwelcome corporate incursion upon the developing 'alternative' street scene. Tesco already has another store built into the new student halls that sit at the base of the downtown roundabout linking the A38 and the incoming M32 motorway. Alongside them, old council offices have been converted into hotels and another residential 'buy to let' property development.

In the early 2000s, Bristol City Council had created a 'one-stop-shop' for housing, called the Hub, in Stokes Croft, where the homeless could drop in to access its services. By 2009 the council had decided that this approach was sucking in too much demand and planned to close it down, locating it to another area with an appointment-only system. Once the Hub had closed in autumn 2010, it was promptly squatted, a skull and crossbones was flown from its roof, and enthusiastic activists dispensed alternative 'housing advice', promoting self-help in the form of direct action. The squatters were dislodged by a military-style police raid, despite some resistance, in January 2011 – a harbinger of events to come. The squats have become both a necessary and a countercultural action that challenges the right of corporations and landlords to control increasing aspects of city living. The People's Republic of Stokes Croft has been declared on mock roadsigns on its borders, while the forest of cafés, bars, art spaces and meeting places demonstrates that another less commercial and more sustainable inner city is possible – only possible, however, by avoiding the attentions of vested interests intent on what Harvey (1994) terms 'flexible accumulation through urbanization'.

By the time Tesco opened its doors in April 2011, campaigners had spent several months conducting low-level resistance. Leaflets were distributed, signatures were collected and several supporters gathered in 'Telepathic Heights', a garishly graffitied squat just across the road from the site, which acted as a visible and audible testament to their ongoing opposition. Activists believe that Tesco's management were infuriated by

this continuing dissent and disruption, and may well have encouraged the police to take action. This was the scene, then, on Thursday 21 April 2011. A whole range of factors were coming together to energise a lively campaign against the right of the UK's largest retailer to monopolise trade, a corporation that had just announced a profit of £3.2 billion for the first three months of 2011 alone. Yet, in all likelihood, these factors would not have been sufficient to provoke the direct action that exploded onto the streets that night. They would not have led to the 'Tesco riot' without the vital ingredient of a seriously disproportionate and provocative police action. Some 160 officers from the Avon and Somerset, Wiltshire and South Wales forces cordoned off the upper half of Stokes Croft, closing off access to this major trunk road for several hours and drawing many bystanders and commuters into the situation. Having 'secured the area', the police then moved in to clear the squat, but they had failed to anticipate the response of residents. Dozens of bystanders began to resist by using street furniture and anything to hand to hurl at the police and block off their advance. Rather than using their recent practice of 'kettling' (encircling) people, the police tactics meant that they themselves became kettled and were unable to resist the incursions of protesters at either end of the A38 cordon. Police charged back and forth, and protesters resisted and reoccupied the squat over several hours.

The mood was certainly riotous at this point. A serious bout of disorder had been shaken into being by provocative policing on behalf of a giant corporation against the local community. Tesco was thoroughly looted. Symbolic anti-capitalist protesters were joined by local youth keen to join the resistance (and make some gains in the process – all the store's cigarettes disappeared). This action was repeated a week later, the night before the royal wedding. This time the police were massed to make a series of arrests related to the events of the week before. The effectiveness of the first riot had sparked a lot more interest from local youth, who were keen to participate in a powerful expression of their 'right to the streets'. The focus had moved beyond merely Tesco by this point, with marchers setting off to find a suitable multinational target in the nearby city centre, thus keeping the police occupied in tracking them. The composition of the group of several hundred people had now become more multicultural, more representative of St Paul's in general, where there are fewer squats and, instead, a well-established multicultural community experiencing rising unemployment and insecurity. This was also the composition of the Bristol rioters in August 2011, where Stokes Croft and the nearby city centre both witnessed street

action. These were not consciously anti-capitalist actions but rather an opportunity for demonstration and looting in the midst of a nationwide explosion, detonated – by the police – in Tottenham (Bridges, 2012; Briggs, 2012). Neither, however, were the English riots 'post-political' (Treadwell *et al.*, 2013), nor merely criminal – the acts of 'shoplifters' (Zizek, 2011). As Gary Younge commented,

> They were looting, not shop-lifting, and challenging the police for control of the streets, not stealing coppers' hubcaps. When a group of people join forces to flout both law and social convention, they are acting politically.
>
> (Younge, 2011)

The Bristol Tesco riot is an example of how those most fearful for their future can find themselves confronting the plans of the rich and their corporations as they ratchet up their exploitative practices. In the 'new poverty' of the twenty-first century's second decade, many people's 'consumer consciousness' – their methodological individualism – is in the process of being modified. As prices rise and credit withers, it is pared back by the spectre of debt, poverty and insecurity. Collective action can become a force for change, and riots can be the start of a process that needs to go further if it is to mount a serious challenge to corporate power. The 2011 Stokes Croft riots, two in April and again in August 2011, were a small-scale evocation of the power of social movements to create a social explosion.

Conclusion

At the time of writing, the visitor to Stokes Croft will not encounter a riot-torn inner-city landscape – rather a rapidly gentrifying 'bohemian' zone of coffee bars, pubs, clubs, galleries and other local stores catering for the needs of local residents, workers and visitors. Unlike neighbouring St Paul's, whose black-owned businesses struggle to survive, it is a largely white-owned zone whose entrepreneurs maintain the 'people's republic' label and choose not to see themselves as promoting or benefiting from the gentrification of the area. However, a recent documentary highlighted initiatives like farmers markets and 'fake' shopfronts designed to airbrush over signs of urban poverty – not a single non-white person featured in this description of 'the battle of Stokes Croft'. There was no footage of the riots and the battle against Tesco was recast as a question of planning permission and stifling local enterprise (BBC,

2011). The Banksy-inspired graffiti is still omnipresent – indeed, it has spread into Bristol's city centre itself with one rundown street becoming the site for a range of approved artworks – but the political content of this art has disappeared. This gentrification of graffiti was summed up by the removal of one of Banksy's most famous murals – the rioter bear throwing petrol bombs at the police christened 'the mild, mild west' was replaced in 2012's Jubilee year by a graphic of the monarch with David Bowie-style facepaint. It seems that many people are anxious to forget about what the riots really represented – replace politics with pop culture – and concentrate on what Joe Strummer called 'turning rebellion into money'. However, the economic crisis, with its accompanying 'necessary austerity' (Clement, 2013), continues to stigmatise and spread the 'advanced marginality' of those whom Wacquant (2008) terms 'urban outcasts' across the globe. Riots and mass protests, including strikes, are likely to disrupt city life again in the future. Mediterranean countries have seen this most strongly in 2011–2012, and in 2013, Bangladesh, Turkey and Brazil saw urban uprisings.

This account reveals an impression of some of the motivations which have inspired 'mobbery' (Hibbert, 2004) over the centuries in one British city – namely, large crowds gathering to protest and riot in streets and squares. Mobs are not always progressive in their motivations. Bristol had Church and King riots just two years before the Bridge Massacre, for example, and frequent riots targeting the city's Irish minority (Poole, 1996). Chicago's workers rioted against the bosses in 1885, earning notorious repression from authority, but 34 years later in 1919, theirs was a riot of white workers against black in a bloody pogrom. I have drawn these strands together to highlight some of the common features of protests against different forms of corporations in Bristol over the last 300 years. Over 50 years before the Tesco riot, Eric Hobsbawm took the long view of those 'primitive rebels' in his chapter on 'the city mob':

> The mob may be defined as the movement of all classes of the urban poor for the achievement of economic or political changes by direct action – that is by riot or rebellion – but as a movement which was as yet inspired by no specific ideology … Indeed it often rioted 'without ideas', that is to say, normally against unemployment and for a cheap cost of living.
>
> (Hobsbawm, 1959, p. 110)

The actions of corporations, asserting their right to govern in a way that makes profits from tolls on communities, or uses its market monopoly

to favour its interests over other traders and over citizens' rights as consumers, have often been instrumental in leading to riot – an act which is necessarily a protest against existing conditions. The radical orator Henry Hunt, famous as the reform speaker at Peterloo when the yeomanry charged, was earlier campaigning in Bristol and declared:

> the merchants and the gentry, as they are called, the most corrupt, the most vulgar; the most ignorant, the most illiberal and the most timeserving race that are to be found in Europe . . . The Corporation is the richest in the world, perhaps, except London; while the freemen; whose property goes to enrich the said Corporation, are the very poorest freemen in the world.
>
> (Poole, 1996, pp. 92–93)

Such a statement is, of course, rooted in electoral exaggeration, especially the part about Bristol citizens' global impoverishment, but it is testament to an anti-corporation sentiment that fuelled Bristol's eighteenth-century riots, 'the apocalypse of 1831' (Poole, 1996, p. 90), and sparked off a small but significant revolt in April 2011, reprised in August of that year alongside the many other cities that rioted that summer.

References

Ackroyd, P. (1987). *Chatterton*. London: Penguin.

Amey, G. (1979). *City Under Fire: The Bristol Riots and Aftermath*. Guildford: Lutterworth.

BBC (2011). The Battle for Stokes Croft. *Inside Out West*. December 2011.

Bennett, D. (2010). *A Brief History of Corporations*. Bristol: Bristol Radical Pamphleteer.

Bridges, L. (2012). Four days in August: The UK riots. *Race & Class*, 54(1), 1–12.

Briggs, D. (Ed.) (2012). *The English Riots of 2011: A Summer of Discontent*. Hampshire: Waterside Press.

Callinicos, A. (2010). *Bonfire of Illusions: The Twin Crises of the Neoliberal World*. Cambridge: Polity.

Clement, M. (2010). Local notables and the city council revisited: The use of partnerships in the regeneration of Bristol. *Social & Public Policy Review*, 4(1), 34–49.

Clement, M. (2012a). Rage against the Market: Bristol's Tesco Riot. *Race & Class*, 53(3), 81–90.

Clement, M. (2012b). The urban outcasts of the British City. In W. Atkinson, S. Roberts, and M. Savage (Eds.), *Class Inequality in Austerity Britain: Power, Difference and Suffering*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clement, M. (2013). Manufacturing austerity in the Eurozone. *Human Figurations*, 2, 1.

Coleman, R., Sim, J., Tombs, S., and Whyte, D. (2009). *State, Power, Crime*. London: Sage.

De Swaan, A. (1988). *In Care of the State*. Cambridge: Polity.

Gilmour, I. (1992). *Riot, Risings and Revolution*. London: Pimlico.

Harvey, D. (1994). Flexible accumulation through urbanization. In A. Amin (Ed.), *Post-Fordism: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hibbert, C. (2004). *King Mob*. Stroud: Sutton.

Hill, C. (1969a). *The Century of Revolution*. London: Sphere.

Hill, C. (1969b). *From Reformation to Industrial Revolution*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Hobsbawm, E. (1959). *Primitive Rebels*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hobsbawm, E. and Rude, G. (1973). *Captain Swing*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Manson, M. (1997). *Riot! The Bristol Bridge Massacre of 1793*. Bristol: Past and Present Press.

Mills, S. (2009). *A Barbarous and Ungovernable People: A Short History of the Miners of Kingswood Forest*. Bristol: Bristol Radical Pamphleteer.

Molyneux, J. (2011). *Will the Revolution Be Televised?* London: Bookmarks.

Neate, R. (5 February 2013). Tesco to open Harris and Hoole 'artisan' coffee shop in flagship store. *The Guardian*.

Poole, S. (1996). To be a Bristolian. In M. Dresser and P. Ollerenshaw (Eds.), *The Making of Modern Bristol*. Bristol: Redcliffe Press.

Rude, G. (1971). *Hanoverian London 1714–1808*. London: Secker and Warburg.

Sky TV News (2011). *Looters*. Broadcast 12 August 2011.

Thomas, S. (1999). *The Bristol Riots*. Bristol: The Historical Society.

Thompson, E. (1968). *The Making of the English Working Class*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Treadwell, J., Briggs, D., Winlow, S., and Hall, S. (2012). Shopocalypse now: Consumer culture and the English riots of 2011. *British Journal of Criminology*, 53(1), 1–17.

Wacquant, L. (2008). *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Cambridge: Polity.

Wedgwood, C. (1983). *The King's Peace*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Younge, G. (14 August 2011). These riots were political: They were looting, not shoplifting. *The Guardian*.

Zizek, S. (2011). Shoplifters of the world unite. *London Review of Books,* 19 August.

4
Language of the Unheard: Riots in Popular Culture

Diana Bretherick

Introduction

The UK riots of 2011 have been represented in the news media variously as a cry of pain by the young in the light of the growing injustices produced by the effects of the recession; mere opportunistic criminality, motivated by greed in an increasingly consumerist society; a protest against the police triggered by the shooting of Mark Duggan; and some combination of the three. Despite the possibility that 'no over-arching explanation will suffice because the facts do not support one' (Silverman BSC Newsletter No. 69, Winter 2011), politicians have done their best to provide the media with sound bites to provide one. Prime Minister David Cameron famously characterised the riots as an 'outbreak of mindless criminality', thus providing a convenient excuse not to call anything resembling a public inquiry, and Ken Clarke, the Secretary of State for Justice at the time, laid the blame at the door of a 'feral underclass'.

As Bell, Porter and Tiusanen point out (2008, pp. x–xi), all riots become mediated and interpreted, translated and transformed through various media, including paintings, songs, newspaper reports, films and, of course, in the most immediate format available, YouTube. This, they say, is the only way that such events are able to achieve a measure of permanence, and central to this process is the question of who is doing the actual speaking.

Brown and Rafter argue, in their discussion of cinema and criminological theory (2011, p. 3), that it would be folly to ignore cultural representations of crime as they form the largest public domain in which thought on the subject occurs. Arguably the press and other media have similar goals in their portrayals in that they want to reach

as wide an audience as possible. Both Chibnall (1977) and Jewkes (2011) have established that the selection of news stories and their construction is done through the concept of newsworthiness, which is dictated by a number of professional imperatives. However, 'the mission to entertain', as Jewkes puts it, is an important factor in both crime news and drama (2011, pp. 40–41). It could certainly be argued that the portrayal of events such as those of August 2011 has a dual purpose – to inform and entertain. The question that this chapter seeks to answer is how drama differs in its portrayal from that of the news media. In particular, to what extent can drama offer an alternative view of the riots and the reasons behind them? Are these portrayals more subtle? Do they provide a more nuanced and thoughtful representation or are they as polarised, political and, some might say, distorted as their factual counterparts?

Bell *et al.* (2008, pp. x–xi) argue that the motivations of the participants in riots can differ quite widely, and that there is a tendency to assemble scattered and disorderly incidents into a narrative of centrally directed insurrection. In the analyses that follow, this possibility, as well as the questions posed above, will be examined by looking at three dramatic representations of the UK riots over two mediums – theatre and television – with a particular focus on the words and pictures produced by those involved. If riots are, as Martin Luther King claimed, truly the language of the unheard, what part do cultural representations play in disseminating this language?

Selection of artefacts

I have analysed three examples of dramatic representations of the 2011 riots in order to give some insight into the meanings that underpin the portrayal of these events. All purport to be based on eyewitness accounts of those involved.

The first chronologically was *The Riots from Spoken Evidence*, a stage play written by Gillian Slovo and performed at the Tricycle Theatre, a space with experience of staging plays that reflect current events, such as *The Colour of Justice*, about the Macpherson Inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence; *Justifying War*, based on the 2003 Hutton Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of David Kelly, a biological warfare expert and former United Nations weapons inspector in Iraq; and *Bloody Sunday*, a two-hour precis of the four-year Saville Inquiry into the events of Sunday 30 January 1972 in Derry, Northern Ireland, when soldiers fired on civil rights demonstrators, killing 13

people. Gillian Slovo had worked with the theatre's artistic director, Nicolas Kent, before, using interviews that she had collated for a piece on and about Guantanamo in 2004. According to interviews, Kent first came up with the idea for such a play when the riots were still ongoing. He could hear the sirens and see the shops putting up their shutters in Kilburn High Road in North West London in anticipation of trouble ahead. He called up Slovo and together they agreed that she would interview as many people involved as possible in order to create a piece of verbatim theatre – mixing journalism with drama (Addley, 2011).

At first glance a more traditional dramatic method seemed to have been used for *London's Burning*, a Channel 4 one-hour drama broadcast on 22 December 2011. This, however, was also written using the 'painstakingly gathered eye witness testimonies and interviews' (*London's Burning*, 2011). The writer, Mark Hayhurst, chose to depict one night of rioting in Clapham and did so from the viewpoint of the police, and the residents and shopkeepers in the area, rather than the rioters.

The final artefact analysed is the two-part docudrama *The Riots in Their Own Words* (2012), written and co-directed (with Fatima Salaria) by Alecky Blythe. This is another piece of verbatim theatre. The programme used a performance style called 'recorded delivery', requiring actors to wear earphones throughout the performance. They don't learn any lines. Instead they listen to the recording and talk a few seconds behind, mimicking the tone and pace of delivery so that they capture the essence of the person and the intention of the words as they were first spoken. This series was originally scheduled to be shown in July 2012, but was postponed after a judge who was overseeing a riot-related trial in Birmingham issued a court order preventing it from being broadcast. The trial ended and the film was shown in August 2012.

The first part focuses on the rioters and was spoken by actors. The second part looks at events from the point of view of the police and is delivered in more conventional documentary format with the police officers speaking for themselves rather than through actors.

Analysis

The method used is semiotics. It was chosen because it allows qualitative depth and because of its attention to identifying and interpreting layers of meaning (Bignell, 2002, p. 1). The background to this method is

that of the structuralist thinkers who produced the semiotic approach to textual analysis (Bignell, 2002, p. 5), particularly Ferdinand de Saussure (1974). French critic Roland Barthes (1972/1993) built on their work and made an important contribution with his discussion of the concept of myths, or how signs take on the values of the dominant values system or ideology of a particular society and make these values seem natural (Lacey, 1998, p. 67). The analyses that follow are built largely on Barthes' ideas. In order to understand them fully, however, it is necessary to explore, briefly, their origins.

Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure rejected the traditional view that the world consists of independently existing objects, capable of precise objective observation and classification, and the resulting notion that language is an aggregate of separate units, called words, each of which somehow has a separate meaning attached to it, the whole existing within a diachronic or historical dimension which makes it subject to observable and recordable laws of change (Hawkes, 1977, p. 19). In *Cours de Linguistique Generale*, Saussure put forward his argument that language should be studied not only in terms of its individual parts but also in terms of the relationship between those parts. It should also be looked at synchronically or in terms of its current adequacy (Hawkes, 1977, p. 20).

Essentially, he believed that the production of meaning depends on language which is in turn a system of signs. The sign is made up of two elements: the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the form or actual word, image, sentence, photograph or similar, and the signified is the idea in one's head with which the form is associated. For example, one might see an iPod, the signifier, and this correlates with the signified, which is the concept of a portable music player, and together these create the sign as fixed by our cultural and linguistic codes. Signs do not possess a fixed or essential meaning but are arbitrary. What signifies is not 'red' or the essence of 'redness', but the difference between red and green. This is the denotative level of meaning (Hawkes, 1977, p. 20).

Barthes developed these ideas and added a further level of meaning – that of connotation, in which interpretation of the signs takes place in terms of the wider realms of social ideology or general beliefs, conceptual frameworks and value systems of society (Hall, 1997, pp. 38–39). He demonstrates this with the example of a bunch of roses, which is a signifier that can signify passion. Barthes states:

> Do we have here, then only a signifier and a signified, the roses and my passion? Not even that: to put it accurately, there are only

'passionified' roses. But on the plane of analysis, we do have three terms; for these roses weighted with passion perfectly and correctly allow themselves to be decomposed into roses and passion: the former and the latter existed before uniting and forming this third object which is the sign.

(1972/1993, p. 113)

The second or connotative level begins with the denotative sign from the first level, which becomes the signifier of the second level of signification. This bunch of 'passionified' roses can signify Valentine's Day and together produce the myth: romance. This appears to be a denotation, as understanding a bunch of roses on Valentine's Day is almost the only way of seeing it. It is, however, connotative and a myth. Barthes gives an example of an image on the front cover of *Paris Match*. This shows 'a young Negro in a French military uniform saluting, with his eyes uplifted, probably fixed on a fold of the tricolour' (Barthes, 1972/1993, p. 116). The signifier of the second level is the black man giving the French salute, which signifies ideas of French imperiality connected to a wider view of the history of France. The final view according to Barthes is 'that France is a great Empire, and that all her sons, without any colour discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal shown by this Negro in serving his so-called oppressors' (Barthes, 1972/1993, p. 116). This then, according to Barthes, is the underlying message or myth.

Through the concept . . . a whole new history . . . is implanted in the myth . . . the concept of French imperiality . . . is again tied to the totality of the world: to the general history of France, to its colonial adventures, to its present difficulties.

(1972/1993, p. 119)

Each artefact will therefore be analysed using these ideas in order to reveal the various levels of meaning, culminating in that of its preferred meaning or myth. The overall aim is to establish the nature of the representations and the extent to which they are polarised and/or distorted as their fact-based counterparts appear to be. To what extent have the portrayals assembled the scattered and disorderly incidents into a narrative of centrally directed insurrection (Bell *et al.*, 2008, pp. x–xi)?

**Artefact One – *The Riots from Spoken Evidence*,
by Gillian Slovo**

The beginning of the play, which sets the scene, is dark and dramatic. There is a backdrop of photographs and moving footage showing the riots in progress – looting, and shopkeepers defending themselves and their property. The noises of the riot surround the audience. These include shouting, helicopters and sirens. Then this fades into silence, leaving the theatre and the audience completely in the dark. After a brief pause, two loud gunshots are heard. A longer silence follows. Then two men come onto the stage but are lit in such a way that they cannot be seen clearly. The stage directions describe them as 'a world apart from the audience' and 'separated from the rest of the characters'. They are the rioters, unnamed and merely referred to as Man 1 and Man 2. This separation and namelessness implies a kind of 'otherness' perhaps.

The lights go up although, as the scene goes on, they begin to dim, signifying the move from afternoon to dusk. The two men talk about the shooting of Mark Duggan in matter-of-fact tones. The actual event, on 4th August 2011, has been widely acknowledged as a trigger for the riots that followed. Duggan was a passenger in a taxi which was stopped by the police. When he got out he was shot and killed. It was claimed that Duggan was armed, although this was the subject of later dispute.

Then two named characters also discuss the shooting. The theme here is police misinformation and/or lies about the shooting, followed by anger from Duggan's friends and family initially and then the community as a whole.

The next section represents a building of tension as we hear from police officers and a local pastor who is supporting the Duggan family. The police refuse to discuss the shooting with the family, who feel anger and annoyance at being ignored, kept waiting and disrespected. Added to this is a sense of the police mishandling of the event with a combination of complacency and incompetence – for example, in relation to the organisation of the traffic. Warnings are also given by Stafford Scott, a friend of Mark Duggan and his family: 'It's quarter to eight now. It's going to be dusk soon. We want to be out of here before nightfall comes, and if we're not out of here before nightfall comes on your head be it' (Slovo, 2011, p. 12).

As night falls the police do nothing, while violence builds and youths test them by setting fire to cars. The family leaves as the crowd grows, escorted by the pastor, who remarks on the lack of police: 'people have

felt quite frustrated that Tottenham was left to burn'. He notes how the police claim that they are under-resourced but asks if they could have acted earlier to 'nip things in the bud' (p. 16).

A police officer sits with a cup of tea, implying further complacency as he describes how they had to plead to be allowed access to the police station because they were dressed for a surveillance operation and thus mistaken for rioters.

At this point the division of motivations is signified, with some people wanting the riots and others not. These are polarised further as a sense of carnival emerges, which provided a strange contrast to the surrounding violence and destruction. An onlooker comments: 'It felt like a carnival . . . without the aggression' (p. 22).

The polarisation of reactions continues as we hear from both looters and a victim who lived in a flat above a store – Carpetright – which was set alight. The looters are merely taking advantage of an opportunity, whereas the victim, Mohamed Hammoudan, was forced to leave his home with his children. 'It felt like our building was like a trophy' (p. 26).

The police were outnumbered and several officers make references to PC Keith Blakelock, who lost his life in a previous Tottenham riot on the Broadwater Farm estate in 1985. Blakelock was killed when he was attacked by an armed mob.

The implication is that the officers in the 2011 riots were frightened by the intensity of the hostility, as well as frustrated by their inability to act due to a lack of resources: 'It's heartbreaking having to watch people's homes and livelihoods being burnt' (Inspector Winter, p. 24).

Twitter messages are being shown on a screen at the back of the stage to indicate the role played by social media. A different division arises as we hear about people coming from outside Tottenham to loot and cause damage, while others consider themselves to have legitimate grievances

> So, um, it's a mix. Because you've got the legitimate, you've got the legitimate anger. And then you've got obviously people that jump on that anger.
>
> (Martin Sylvester Brown, p. 28)

The final section before the interval has a degree of farce mixed up with an increasing sense of menace. The pastor describes 'two things I saw that were a bit crazy'. He tells of a mother trying looted shoes on her child to see if they fitted, and rioters who started to make their own food in McDonald's. Inspector Winter tells of police officers deployed

from elsewhere who had no local knowledge and were ill-equipped with old vans, hoping for them to be destroyed, and some even in rental vans from Europcar with stuck-on police logos and blue lights.

The lack of police (200 youths v. 24 police officers) and growing menace is highlighted by Sergeant Paul Evans: 'It's a mob mentality, and the mob mentality is that they will descend on one person and kill them if they can, and that's no doubt what they would have done if they'd surrounded a cop, that's what they did to Keith Blakelock' (p. 33).

Following the interval throughout the entire second half, Mohamed Hammoudan, who has lost his home after the rioters burnt down his flat above Carpetright, sits apart at the side of the stage and watches. As the stage directions say,

> *Throughout this second half Mohammed Hammoudan sits and watches. He is listening to these thinkers, these politicians, community activists and rioters, who are all on stage trying to explain what happened.*

(p. 35)

We hear the words, spoken by actors, of the MPs Diane Abbott, Simon Hughes, Michael Gove, John McDonnell and Iain Duncan Smith; assorted police officers, including Superintendent Leroy Logan, who is a member of the Black Police Association Executive; Jacob Sakil, who is a former young mayor of Lewisham in London; Greg Powell, a solicitor; John Azah, Director of Kingston Race and Equality Council; the founder of Kid's Company, Camila Batmanghelidjh; two of the sentencing judges; and a variety of rioters.

The first aspect that emerges is the differing motivations of those involved, implying that there were some elements of a classic race riot but that this was also to some extent an opportunity to get something for nothing. The heavy handed use of stop-and-search powers are discussed, creating, as the solicitor Greg Powell says, 'a deep reservoir of ill-will and a huge antipathy' (p. 38). Diane Abbott, however, talks about a kind of 'hyper-materialism . . . me-tooism' encouraged by the 24-hour media coverage, although she also notes that the looters were made up of a mix of people (p. 39), a view also endorsed by Simon Hughes (p. 40).

The criminal justice response is represented by the sentences of various riot-related offences, passed by the judges with remarks condemning the offenders' actions. Camilla Batmanghelidjh talks about how she foresaw the riots, given the way the government was misrepresenting the inner city and their inhabitants by demonising them as lazy, amoral benefit scroungers and by cutting welfare and the Education

Maintenance Allowance at a time when youth unemployment is high. This viewpoint is supported by a number of speakers, who highlight the feeling of injustice and inequality experienced by the inhabitants of the affected areas with comparisons made to suicide bombers: 'borne out of the same frustration, that same sense of being dispossessed and marginalised' (Stafford Scott, p. 46).

The harshness and indiscriminate nature of the criminal justice response is critiqued, and this is illustrated by input from some who received sentences of imprisonment. The fact that each offender was sentenced as a riot case rather than individually is a particular criticism, as is the political pressure to impose swift justice. The alternative view – that exemplary sentences were expected by the public – is also put forward. The irony that some of the MPs who called for tough sentences had themselves 'pillaged public finances' in order to purchase the same luxury goods looted by rioters is pointed out by journalist Owen Jones (p. 49). The underlying theme of this section is clearly that of a sense of injustice – one rule for us and another for them. This continues in the final part of the play, where the motivations of the rioters are considered. Inequality of opportunity is a constant theme, but so is the nature of society as a whole, with looters at every level, according to John McDonnell, including bankers, MPs and tax-evading corporations. Students lose their Education Maintenance Allowance and feel that 'a ladder has been kicked from underneath' (pp. 55–56). This refers to a small sum of money paid weekly to young people aged 16–19 who were in full-time education. It was scrapped in 2010 as part of the overall budget cuts brought in by the coalition government.

This is countered by the views of Michael Gove, who wonders why the young can't join the scouts or the cadet force, putting it down to cultural or other barriers. Most seem to think that the riots are likely to happen again, so there is a feeling of futility and inevitability in the final few moments of the play. There is also, however, a suggestion from some that the riots did bring some positive things in that they raised the issues and gave an opportunity for change by listening to the young, investing in public works and ring-fencing youth services, such as Sure Start, which supports the very young. But the play finishes on a sombre note, with Stafford Scott reminding us that the rioters were born here and that this was 'a quintessentially English riot'. The last word is left to the man who has observed all of these voices, Mohamed Hammoudan, talking about how the system broke down and failed everyone. The riot left him with nothing, forcing him to recreate his own history. His three words to describe the rioters are 'Just angry people' (p. 61).

Artefact Two – *London's Burning*, 2011, by Mark Hayhurst

The beginning

This drama drew on witness testimonies and interviews, weaving a number of narratives together with real news coverage. Right at the beginning the stance taken by the narratives is clear. First a map of the UK can be seen with hotspots of violence marked in a vivid red. Print appears on the screen with rioting in the background. 'In the Summer of 2011 full scale riots erupted all over England. For the first few days London was worst hit.' This is followed by an unanswered phone tone – perhaps to signify the authorities ignoring those in need. 'The week-end of the 6th and 7th August saw outbreaks scattered across the city. Clapham Junction and South London came under attack the next day. For some shopkeepers and residents living and working in the heart of that district, the rule of law broke down.'

The drama begins with a senior police officer, played by David Morrisey, being driven to his station by a taxi, with the BBC *Today* programme discussing the riots in the background. Again reality and drama are combined. There are more onscreen messages. 'This drama is based on their first hand testimony.' Two people cross the Thames on a motorbike. 'This is the story of a community that was abandoned. The police did not cooperate with the making of this drama. Their story is drawn from publicly available reports and accounts.' These messages appear occasionally throughout, telling us, for example, that 'There are eight riot-trained officers in Wandsworth; 290,000 people live in the borough.'

Police

Throughout, the police are shown as being understaffed and completely taken by surprise by the level of violence and the sheer number of riot-ers involved. The senior officer, Borough Commander Gerry Campbell, is represented as initially complacent, dismissing the views of his second in command (a female Superintendent), who declares right at the begin-ning that they are 'short of bodies', and describing the Twitter 'intel' indicating that trouble is on the way as 'scrappy and unreliable'. He tells the Superintendent that they are losing all but eight riot-trained officers because, he says tersely, 'they are needed elsewhere'. The Superinten-dent seems to be aware of the potential ramifications of this, whereas he does not seem to grasp the reality of the situation.

The only other police character with a speaking role is a community police officer who is represented in a largely sympathetic light. He is seen warning the manager of the party shop that is later burnt down to

close early. He chats amiably with a black woman, telling her sardon-ically why they can't use tear-gas as she suggests, in case the rioters have asthma. Later he recites 'the rioter's prayer', which begins: 'Our Father who art in prison. Mother knows not his name . . . ' This is finished by the Superintendent with a wry 'innit'.

There is a meeting of the various concerned agencies in the multi-agency Gold Meeting. Here the rumour that the riots are approaching the area is again dismissed by Campbell. An argument between two of the members about whether or not a term used – the 'usual crowd' of troublemakers – refers to a stereotypical and racist assumption is diffused by both police officers. This signifies that such views are still widely held – an extremely uncomfortable conclusion, given the context, as the agencies represented will dictate the response to events.

At the end as reinforcements arrive, Campbell boasts on the phone that they were on the street by 10.30pm as the Superintendent views the destruction in despair. Throughout, the police making the decisions are separated from reality by screens, social networking analyses by oth-ers and telephones. There is a contrast between the man, Campbell, and the woman, the Superintendent. He sees only figures and protocol. She sees the human side and understands the extent to which the police have failed to protect the area. This is underlined by a message appear-ing onscreen telling us that 'A total of 450 rioters attacked Clapham Junction that night. Wandsworth police arrested nine people between 5pm and 8am the next day.' The community police officer is also pow-erless as he too stares disconsolately at the damage done to the area that he was supposed to be protecting. This is emphasised as he fails to appre-hend a rioter/looter and can only look on as he taunts him triumphantly holding up a stolen laptop.

Shopkeepers

Dub vendor

The proprietors of this music shop are two amiable middle-aged men, one black and one white (John), who reminisce to the mixed race son of the latter, Alex, a streetwise drama-school student watching events unfold on his computer, about riots gone by and how much better they were. Later they are all watching the screen and becoming increasingly concerned. The student tells his father and the hairdressers that 'it's not wheels that makes them (the rioters) mobile. It's BlackBerrys.' They decide to shut up shop early, and father and son are seen later in the pub watching events on another screen – this time the television. This

signifies their initial separation from the riots, but then they too are pulled into the events as they see their street under attack on the television. They go to the scene, although the son tries to prevent the father from doing so. He resists, claiming that he saw most of these kids grow up. His son informs him that the rioters have come from elsewhere. At the shop they meet the co-owner and there are some futile attempts to prevent damage. Much of this is fuelled by the white man's anger, despite his son warning him not to look the rioters in the eye. 'How can I? He's wearing a burkah,' he taunts in response to a young man with his face shielded by a scarf.

The situation escalates when the party shop is set alight by the same rioter and the son goes in to try to put it out. He is largely unsuccessful but when he escapes he is immediately set upon by two officers in riot gear who, mistaking him for a rioter, perhaps because of the colour of his skin and the fact that he is wearing a 'hoodie', beat him to the ground. Finally the situation calms down and he lies in the street as the shop burns. We are told later that Dub Vendor is now run as an online venture.

The themes here then concern old and new, past and present. Old racial stereotypes, still held by some police officers, can no longer be trusted. Not all young people are rioters. A young black man is not inevitably a troublemaker. The difference between riots of the past and those of 2011 is also emphasised. John calls the 2011 version 'retail rioting' at one point, noting that 'people got to have their flat screens, son'. They compare terminology – police were called the 'fuzz' and 'pigs', but now it's all Americanisms – 'the Feds'. Eventually the present beats the past and the record shop is replaced by an online venture.

Ocean hairdressers

We see the hairdressers, Enzo and Onelia, travel to work, and then at work they discuss the rioters with their clients. One talks about how they might have a case in Tottenham but elsewhere they are just copying. She also points out how some young people have been let down as they are paying for the activities of the bankers. Later Onelia exchanges glances with a girl on her mobile outside. She is aggressive and calls her friends to come down. Later they attack the shop and try to pull Enzo and Onelia off their motorbike as they try to escape, in a direct parallel with some real footage viewed earlier by Enzo on a laptop. Reportage becomes reality again.

'I used to love this city,' Onelia says. 'You still do,' her husband, Enzo, replies as he comforts her.

Party superstore

The store's manageress, Rixi, is portrayed very sympathetically. We first meet her as she talks playfully to a child and jokes with his mother. Later she banters with the community police officer who warns her that the riots might be coming their way. She speaks to the owner, Duncan, and tells him: 'I'm not going to let them ruin your lovely shop.' She carefully puts the money away in the safe and then the camera pans out to two large helium-filled gas canisters. Once the riots begin, we see Rixi return with the shop owner and warn the community police officer about the canisters. At the end we learn that the shop moved into the premises vacated by Dub Vendor – a signification of resilience. On the wood used to board up the windows is written: 'So sorry. Keep Smiling', which underlines this point.

Residents

A middle-class family – a couple, Jan and Nick, and their teenage son, Julius – residing in the area make an interesting contrast to those whose livelihoods are under threat. They can leave to go home whereas the residents cannot without risking the loss of their home. The theme here is one of contrast between classes and outlooks. We see Jan painting a landscape in her quiet urban garden, listening to the riots on the radio, a more middle-class medium than a laptop. Then her husband comes home early and she tells him of her outrage when someone in Waitrose, that bastion of middle-class values, called the riots 'a rebellion'. He laughs at her fondly and gets her a glass of wine. Later we meet their son briefly as Jan warns him to take care because he is just the type that rioters would pick on. She proves to be right as we see him rushing through a group of them, desperately avoiding eye contact as they taunt him.

Before long, Jan and Nick worry as youths gather outside their house. Jan describes the rioters as she notes down licence plate numbers and remarks how many times a van has been filled with goods and then emptied. She sees a woman take items away, dressed as if she is 'in her Sunday best'. Then the tension builds as they begin to hear noises around them, on the fire escape and the roof. Nick goes out to investigate armed with a cricket bat. He shouts and roars at two young black men but then is stunned into silence as they introduce themselves. They are security men from Debenhams, chased out by the rioters and seeking

refuge. Another racist assumption is successfully challenged. Two classes meet and the atmosphere is full of social awkwardness as Jan entertains her grateful guests with artichoke hearts and white wine. They leave to investigate a fire but remember to thank her politely for her hospitality. Gradually it becomes clear that the police are nowhere to be seen, despite several attempts to contact them. Terrified and desperate, Jan begins to fling belongings into a suitcase, intending to leave. Nick tries to reassure her but she tells him: 'It's not going to be alright. Don't you get it? No-one is coming!'

At the end, police reinforcements finally arrive, including Jankels – German-built armoured vehicles. They drive comically into an empty Clapham Junction. Jan leans out of the window and shouts: 'Look you're too late. Oi gladiator! You're too fucking late!' At the end we are told that they joined other residents in the 'broom army' to clean up Clapham.

Rioters

The rioters are represented entirely negatively and it is very clear what we are supposed to think of them. Most have their faces covered. Early on we see them gather at Clapham railway station, a sinister, anonymous group, plotting and whispering as they check their BlackBerrys for the latest information. There is a racial mix, confounding the stereotypical views held by various characters throughout the drama. We rarely hear any speak but when they do it is to threaten, taunt or abuse. The youths taunt and mock Julius as he struggles through them, hoping to avoid trouble. The girl outside the hairdressing salon makes aggressive comments, accusing Onelia of 'giving me the evils'. They stare at one another through the glass. Then the girl is heard summoning her friends to attack them. The final rioter asks the community police officer for directions and abuses him when he cannot help.

The end

We are introduced to the real shopkeepers and residents and told how their story ended. The drama finally becomes real as we understand that these were not characters and the events were not fictionalised. This really happened. Lawlessness overtook Clapham that night and the police appeared to be completely powerless. As a result, it is implied, livelihoods were lost or damaged and attitudes changed forever. Here there is little attempt to end on a positive note as far as policing is concerned. However, the resilience of the residents and shop owners gives a final reason for hope and optimism as it suggests that, even if this were to happen again, the rioters would not win.

Artefact Three – *The Riots in Their Own Words*

Essentially this is a selection of some of the interviews conducted for a study done by the London School of Economics and *The Guardian* newspaper, a national daily paper whose readership is generally on the mainstream left of British political opinion. The roles of both inter-viewer and interviewee are taken by actors in the first part. The second has the views of the police as its focus and is in the more traditional documentary format with the participants actually appearing on screen. This analysis will focus on the first part.

The rioters

The programme begins with shots of London, an underground train, a skyscraper in the financial centre known as 'The Gherkin' and so on to the sound of David Cameron talking about the aftermath and asking: 'How could this happen on our streets and in our country?'

As we see some footage of the riots, the narrator then explains that these are dramatic first-hand accounts of those who were there. The use of the word 'dramatic' is interesting. Here is an admission perhaps that, on one level at least, the riots could be seen as a piece of theatre, a series of spectacles.

There are some snapshots picking out clips of interviews that we will see in full later. Examining what snapshots were chosen reveals the main themes. The first talks about 'easy money' as an explanation for the spreading of the riots and tells us that 'That day, we had the power.' We hear another man talk of getting the police, a young girl speaks about the rush, a middle-aged woman says how enjoyable it was, and another young man describes it as an opportunity that had to be grabbed.

Then we go back to the beginning with the shooting of Mark Duggan and the protest outside Tottenham police station. We begin then with the cause. From the scenes filmed at the time, we cut to a car park where a car full of hooded black youths slowly pulls up. Suddenly we are in the car and the two young men turn from their seats in the front to tell a young black girl who is interviewing them about the demonstration and why they were there. This is set up like a TV drama but draws on the viewers' prejudices with a build-up of tension as we wonder what the young men are about to do. They tell us about the tension, frustration and anger in the air at the protest. One of them knew Mark Duggan and speaks of mistreatment by the police and how little attention his killing got in comparison to others. They deny being in a gang but instead are

just a group of friends, 'family orientated by blood'. They tell us that everyone had their own reasons for rioting that day.

The anti-police view is expressed by an aggressive woman who describes her part in the protest preventing traffic from passing. She thought the police should get a bloody good hiding because that was what Bernie Grant said. (He was a Labour politician and the MP for Tottenham from 1987 to 2000. Prior to that he was a Labour councillor and trade union official.)

She describes with approval men who came from other areas to help, as soldiers on a frontline, pelting the police. This is the first reference to war and related symbols. A young man on a park bench also describes the events in this way – as 'going to war'. He is aggressive in his tone and uses terms such as 'combat zone'.

A middle-class white woman introduces the interviewer to her teenage daughter, evidently proud of the fact that she is of interest because she was at the riot. She tells us that when she was alerted to the riots by her daughter showing her a photograph of a burning car, she immediately asked her if she wanted to go down there to see what was going on. They cycled there and she lost her daughter in the crowd. The girl phoned her mother and berated her for being a bad mother. She describes the enjoyable aspect of the riots – as if they were a social gathering. Later, rioters talked of a 'party atmosphere' and warring gangs suspending hostilities, so there are two apparently contradictory themes emerging. The first of these is war where the participants in the riots are essentially seen as soldiers fighting on the frontline. The second is of a carnival, which implies a disorganised, possibly spontaneous event or entertainment with an element of spectacle where people gather to meet their friends and socialise.

The riots escalated and the reasons for this are explored. The use of handheld devices for social networking is mentioned but it seems clear that there was no big plan, merely a group of people telling each other to come down and join the party. It is described as a chance to cause mayhem, to 'fuck up the feds – we were on a leash for years and it felt like we had come off that leash and we just responded in that way'.

The rioters were from all kinds of backgrounds and many went merely to spectate, although they got caught up in it as it developed. The party atmosphere is emphasised: 'At one stage it was like a street party. There was alcohol everywhere.' Apparently, hostilities between individuals and gangs were temporarily suspended and, in a contradiction to some of the language expressed by older participants, 'there was no war that day'.

There is some discussion about the police being absent or ineffective. When it 'kicked off' they did nothing. 'Everyone was looting and enjoying themselves. Everyone had the power. Everyone had the strength. The police wasn't in control. We had the power.'

Interposed into the words of the rioters are the disjointed voices of people who have been touched by the riots, losing their homes or businesses, or witnessing the violence, theft and damage. This has the effect of making the rioters seem feckless and thoughtless when they talk about an adrenaline rush or looting. A man finds an iPod on the street. He gives away cigarettes to the crowd, to an old lady. Does this make him any better than others involved? A young girl tells us that it just felt fine – as if you were naturally shopping. Everyone was doing it so she did it too.

The police seemed incapable of doing anything about looting or arson and were outnumbered. There was a lot of hostility towards them and comments were made about stop-and-search being abused. However, the narrator points out that this may be explained by the number of rioters who were already criminals when they took part. However, there is some genuine hostility displayed, mostly by older interviewees. A woman describes how she laughed when she saw police suffering from injuries. A man talks of 'the filth displaying their strength . . . Suited and booted waiting to tear your fucking arse off. So we got ready to tear their arses off. This is war.'

The civilian casualties of this 'war' are highlighted – many were attacked and five people died. We are shown footage of a man pulled off his scooter (also used in *London's Burning*). A boy is beaten up and then robbed by someone pretending to help. This is another theme – the weak targeted by the strong, whether innocent victims of crime or rioters robbed by other rioters. A young girl describes having their looted goods taken from them with a resigned attitude. A man who took such items was completely without remorse. Neither could see any irony in their situation.

The riots ended because, we are told simply, 'the shops ran out of stuff'. The rioters and looters seemed to think that it was all over, and they were taken by surprise when CCTV revealed many of the culprits and enabled their arrest. 'I thought nothing would happen', says one. 'We were in control . . . but it flipped.'

There is little remorse. One expresses sorrow for the businesses that were ruined and another says that he is ashamed (although this is countered by his view that it is a story to tell his children when he is older, hinting that he sees it as something to take pride in). Others are

unrepentant. 'You don't think twice when you go and kill an enemy,' says one. 'If it happens again I'd happily join in,' says another.

The programme ends by outlining that although there was no government inquiry into the riots, those that have been carried out identify a number of causes – opportunism, social deprivation, discontent with the police, unemployment and lack of morality. We see the group of young black men in their car, as we did at the outset. They give us no reason for optimism because, in their view, nothing will change and the riots will almost certainly happen again.

Conclusions

These analyses have examined dramatic representations of the 2011 UK riots with a view to establishing the extent to which drama differs in its portrayal from the news media. Can it offer an alternative view of the riots and the reasons behind them? Are these portrayals more subtle? Do they provide a more nuanced and thoughtful representation or are they as polarised and, some might say, distorted as their factual counterparts? Is there, as Bell *et al.* argue, a tendency to assemble scattered and disorderly incidents into a narrative of centrally directed insurrection (2008, pp. x–xi)?

All three artefacts claimed to be based upon the words of those involved in the riots. This obviously has the effect of lending them more authority than if they were the product of a writer's imagination alone. In some ways these are perhaps modern versions of the historical chronicles of events such as Gregory of Tours (sixth-century Gaul) (1974), Jean Froissart (fourteenth-century England and France) (1978) and Samuel Pepys (seventeenth-century England) (2003). One might even argue that we are all potential historical chroniclers these days through online activities such as social networking, blogging and tweeting, all of which had a part to play in the riots and their representations. In *The Riots from Spoken Evidence*, Slovo uses tweets to cover a screen behind the actors as they perform, which emphasises the role played by the internet. Social networking is mentioned on a number of occasions in both the television drama *London's Burning* and the docudrama *Riots in Their Own Words*.

The artefacts offer varying reasons for the riots. Slovo's play gave a variety of people a voice: the rioters themselves, whether protestors or looters; and politicians, the police, those involved in the delivery of justice from the defence and prosecution viewpoints as well as others on the periphery, such as the pastor or the youth mayor of Peckham.

This gave a rich and nuanced representation which was indicative of the motivation of the play's writer. Theatre of this type is unlikely to make anyone wealthy, so it is more likely to have been a genuine attempt to inform through entertainment with the emphasis on the first.

Hayward's television drama was more one-sided in its viewpoint. It did, however, give a voice to the victims of the riots, who deserve to be heard just as much as the willing participants. Their story was told in a more traditional manner and perhaps was more remote in its portrayal of events because of it. Theatre, of course, is a more intimate medium which might also be a factor. It seemed that there was more evidence of potential distortion and polarisation, although this was tempered by the use of factual information throughout, and the opportunity to meet the real people on whom the drama was based and to hear what happened to them. In addition, some alternative views were put forward through the words of various characters, which gave a slightly more balanced result.

The docudrama *Riots in Their Own Words* talked to people who were involved in the riots, whether as protestors or looters. We also heard accounts from people who just got caught up in the events. Some took advantage and helped themselves to things, whereas others were just bystanders. Most people who were interviewed did not seem to understand why their actions might be judged as wrong. It is worth noting, though, that there was a second part that was not analysed which focused on the police and their experiences, which would have redressed this balance.

All kinds of reasons for rioting were discussed throughout the artefacts and there was little attempt to 'assemble scattered and disorderly incidents into a narrative of centrally-directed insurrection' (Bell *et al.*, 2008, pp. x–xi). The closest was probably Hayward's drama because it was centred on one small area – Clapham – which might have unwittingly given a distorted view. But even here the 'insurrection' was more about helping oneself to various consumer goods or pursuing personal vendettas rather than anything more politically motivated.

In conclusion, then, I would argue that drama certainly has the capacity to offer alternative views in a more nuanced and subtle way, but this really depends on the nature of the medium and its underlying motivations. If the representation is driven by market forces then the natural focus is more likely to be on entertainment, which is where the temptation to sensationalise and therefore to distort and polarise can come in. All three of the artefacts analysed seemed, to some extent at least, to be motivated by the portrayal of the truth rather than anything else.

Rioting may indeed be the 'language of the unheard', as Martin Luther King claimed, but it is only effective if the message that underlies it is communicated. Drama, it would seem, has the potential to be a good way to achieve this.

References

Addley, E. (22 November 2011). Burn Britain burn: Gillian Slovo's The Riots. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2011/nov/22/gillian-slovo-the-riots-play.

Barthes, Roland. (1972/1993). *Mythologies*. London: Vintage.

Bell, D., Porter, G., and Tiusanen, J. (2008). Introduction. In D. Bell and G. Porter (Eds.), *Riots in Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. x–xi.

Bignell, J. (2002). *Media Semiotics: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Brown, M. and Rafter, N. (2011). *Criminology Goes to the Movies: Crime Theory and Popular Culture*. New York: New York University Press.

Chibnall, S. (1977). *Law-and-Order News: An Analysis of Crime Reporting in the British Press*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Froissart, J. and Brereton, G. (Trans.) (1978). *Chronicles*. London: Penguin.

Hall, Stuart. (ed.) (1997). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage Publications.

Hawkes, Terence. (1977). *Structuralism and Semiotics*. London: Routledge.

Jewkes, Y. (2011). *Media and Crime*, 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Lacey, N. (1998). *Image and Representation: Key Concepts in Media Studies*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd.

London's Burning, City on Fire. (2011).Retrieved from http://www.channel4.com/info/press/programme-information/city-on-fire 29/11/11.

Pepys, S. (2003). *The Diary of Samuel Pepys: A Selection*. London: Penguin.

Prynn, P. (Producer) and Hardy, J. (Director). (22 December 2011). *London's Burning* [Television broadcast]. London: Channel 4.

Salaria, F. (Producer and Director). (13 August 2012). *The Riots in Their Own Words*, [Television broadcast]. London: BBC.

Saussure, F. de (1974). *Course in General Linguistics*, Eds. C. Bally, A. Sechehaye and A. Riedlinger, trans. W. Baskin. London: Fontana.

Silverman, J. (Winter 2011). Reflections on the Riots. *British Society of Criminology Newsletter*, 69, 15–16.

Slovo, G. (2011). *The Riots (from Spoken Evidence)*. London: Oberon Books.

The Riots in Their Own Words. (2012). Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01l3y0v.

Tours, G. and Thorpe, L. (Translator) (1974). *The History of the Franks*. London: Penguin Books.

5

'Innocence Charged with Guilt': The Criminalisation of Protest from Peterloo to Millbank

Nadine El-Enany

Introduction

The British state has a long history of attempting to control what can be said and done by way of political protest. Until the late 1700s and early 1800s, its method of limiting free speech, in particular that against the state or Church, entailed prosecutions under libel law, in particular the law of seditious libel. By the late eighteenth century it was becoming increasingly unacceptable to limit what could be said in the form of political dissent, and yet the state needed to find a way of retaining its hold on power in the face of political opposition, particularly the sort which manifested itself in the congregation of large crowds of people at rallies or on marches, which caused great apprehension to the local authorities (Lobban, 1990). Prosecutions for expressions of political opinion were becoming increasingly difficult by the early nineteenth century, which was nevertheless a time of political upheaval. The content of what people published and what they said at public meetings and rallies frequently fell outside the scope of libel laws and thus the state had to find another way to deal with dissent, which it believed remained a threat to the authorities and the apportionment of power in society. It was the Peterloo Massacre of 16 August 1819, and in particular the trials which followed, which paved the way for the use of public order offences against protesters. The elaboration of such offences and their use against protesters became the way in which the state and the courts dealt with those who were deemed to pose a threat to the status quo. This chapter will draw out the continuity in the development of public order offences, showing how the elements of the law on

unlawful assembly elaborated following the Peterloo trials in the early 1800s have to a significant extent been retained in existing legal provisions on public order. This chapter will draw attention to the largely unacknowledged connection between current public order offences and the laws of a state and age that are widely regarded as repressive. It is argued that the origins of the public order offences of today lie in this process of criminalisation of political activity through the use of public order offences, and that these offences are used to target political activity and expression in very much the same way today. This chapter examines the way in which the Public Order Act 1986 (POA), along with other modes of criminalisation, including police control methods, have been used against protesters in recent years, in particular against those who took part in the anti-fees student protests of 2010, which began with the demonstration which culminated in the Millbank occupation in November of that year. Criminal law is in this way being used to label politically undesirable activity as 'crime', thereby expelling that activity from the field of politics and relegating it to the sphere of morality and individual responsibility. This chapter demonstrates that, throughout the ages, in times of political upheaval, recession and repression-induced protest and riot, those in government and other state institutions, desirous to maintain the status quo, have resorted to the powerful ideology of criminal justice as a means of depoliticising resistance, presenting it in terms of individual wrongdoing and disorder rather than as political contestation. It is argued that the depoliticising effects of the criminalisation of protest threaten protest activity.

Criminalisation of protest through history

Despite the fact that the Peterloo Massacre of 1819 is now widely regarded as one of the most abhorrent stains on the history of the British state, today's law continues to reflect in its content and operation the legal legacies of the trials which followed the meeting at St Peter's Fields in Manchester on 16 August 1819. The 60,000 or so gathered had come to listen to the renowned orator and reformer Henry Hunt address the meeting on the subject of parliamentary reform and the extension of suffrage to all men. Despite the entirely peaceful demeanour of the meeting, the Riot Act 1714 was read and the participants forcibly dispersed by military officers[1] on horseback wielding sabres (Marlow, 1971). After the Riot Act was read, 'justices and their servants engaged in efforts to "disperse, seize, or apprehend" rioters', they 'were "free, discharged and indemnified" for the "killing, maiming or hurting of such Person

or Persons" who resisted . . . The Riot Act was, in many senses, a law to abolish law; a kind of modified martial law against rioters' (Vogler, 1991, p. 2). In total, eleven were killed at Peterloo and in excess of 500 were injured (Thompson, 1963). Vogler (1991, p. 3) notes that 'The right to "read the Riot Act", to exercise the ultimate authority of the state in the last instance of disorder . . . is a crucial aspect of state power.' State power changes and evolves as a result of the exercise of this 'enormous author-ity' (Vogler, 1991, p. 3). Therefore what the state presents as 'disorder' matters for the maintenance, and indeed expansion, of its own power.

It was in the course of the trials of a number of individuals involved in the Peterloo meeting that a doctrine of unlawful assembly was elab-orated in the courts (Lobban, 1990). This doctrine was to operate to allow government prosecutors to focus on the behaviour – in particu-lar whether violence was used – of individuals and groups engaged in political protest rather than solely the content of what was said in the course of protest, the targeting of which was becoming an increasingly unacceptable practice. Lobban (1990, p. 308) notes that following the Peterloo Massacre, 'by taking a new set of facts – the collective behaviour of political crowds – and putting them into different technical forms, the courts were able to consider new questions, and thereby determine new types of political crime'. This was a significant development in the use of criminal offences in the charging of protesters. Rather than overtly clamping down on political activity, the government could focus pri-marily on the 'disorderly' way in which an individual or group went about expressing political opinion, thereby diverting attention away from the political nature of the charge. Thus, while prior to the Peterloo trials those who engaged in unwanted political activity had been prose-cuted under seditious libel and high treason, 'by the time of the next major outbreak of radical protest, in the Chartist decade, the main charges used against activists were those of unlawful assembly and sedi-tious conspiracy' (Lobban, 1990, p. 310). What became important for these offences was that 'defendants were not on trial merely for what they said, but for where they said it, why they said it, and to whom they said it' (Lobban, 1990, p. 324). As Mr Justice Rooke noted in the case of *R v. Yorke*,[2] 'the question will only be, whether those notions have been improperly and unreasonably uttered, not whether the notions themselves are improper'. 'A perfect constitution', he went on,

cannot be expected in the present state of human nature; and, there-fore, honest men may employ means whereby that constitution may be ameliorated: but the question is, whether they have kept within

the line; if they have made use of improper occasions or language that is intemperate, they are answerable to the laws of their country.

(Lobban, 1990, p. 323)

Numbers also became relevant. Large crowds were assumed to be violent and treacherous simply by virtue of the number of people present. After Peterloo, the Lord Chancellor told the Lords 'that numbers constituted force, and force terror, and terror illegality' (Lobban, 1990, p. 329). The assumption that crowds are an inherent danger underlies public order offences currently in force. For the offences of riot, violent disorder and affray in the POA, a certain number of individuals have to be 'present together' – twelve for riot, three for violent disorder and two for affray – for the offence to be triggered.

It is significant that the Home Office was becoming decreasingly successful in its prosecutions of political activists on charges of seditious libel in the late 1700s and early 1800s. As E.P. Thompson (1963, p. 736) wrote, 'The Government met in a hostile London, where juries refused to convict . . . where grotesque prints and lampoons were displayed in windows, and where publications which were, in the eyes of the authorities, seditious atrocities, were disseminated with impunity.' Faced with political upheaval, the government felt the absence of sufficient offences with which to prosecute those vocalising their opposition to the way in which they were governed at protests and rallies, but whose words did not meet the threshold of seriousness required for a charge of seditious libel. What was the government to do with these activists whose behaviour fell within the law, but whose activity appeared to pose a threat to the distribution of power in society? It is notable that those in government recognised that the greatest obstacle to prosecutions was in the peaceful nature of the rallies. 'The gentry', wrote E.P. Thompson (1963, p. 747), 'who had decried the reformers as a rabble, were appalled and some were even panic-stricken when they found out that they were *not*.' Henry Hobhouse, Permanent Under Secretary of State for the Home Department at the time, told the Halifax magistrate Thomas Horton that 'It is much easier to cope with Malcontents who do, than with those who do not openly avow what their Objects are' (Lobban, 1990, p. 337). Thus E.P. Thompson (1963, p. 748) describes the 'profounder fear evoked by the evidence of the translation of the rabble into a disciplined *class*'.

Lawyers were on hand to help the state by articulating and elaborating an offence which would capture the activity of the protesters. In the aftermath of Peterloo, they began to devise more specific notions of a law of unlawful assembly which was to aid the government in dealing

with those who participated in large rallies. Lobban (1990, p. 339) describes the lawyers as 'forging a doctrine out of confusion' in order to justify the brutal attack by the military on the people who gathered at St Peter's Fields. It was in the course of the Peterloo trials, which criminalised political activists and sought to exonerate the military and those who ordered the attack on the peaceful rally, that the offence of unlawful assembly was elaborated and was to shape vital precedents.

The doctrine of unlawful assembly was elaborated in three main trials which emerged from Peterloo: *R v. Hunt* and *Redford v. Birley* related to the meeting at St Peter's Fields and will be discussed later in this chapter.[3] According to Lambard's *Eirenarcha*, the definition of unlawful assembly was as follows:

> An unlawful assembly is of the company of three or more persons, disorderly coming together, forcibly to commit an unlawful act, as to beat a man, or to enter upon possession or the like ... And thus (upon the whole reckoning) an unlawful assembly is the first degree or the beginning.
>
> (Lobban, 1990, p. 341)

In the course of the Peterloo trials, the offence of unlawful assembly was not only significantly elaborated but this expansion of the offence took place in the context of trials against political protesters participating in peaceful gatherings. The element of sedition and seditious intention thus came to play a key role in the articulation and elaboration of the offence in the course of those trials. Following Peterloo, the doctrine of unlawful assembly was to become an offence which focused most clearly on the seditious nature of assemblies, making it a covertly political charge, one framed in terms of public order.

Mr Justice Bayley held that while hearsay evidence of the slogans and banners which were held by those who gathered at St. Peter's Fields was admissible, evidence of the alleged attack on those assembled was not admissible.[4] Sir James Scarlett, Henry Hunt's prosecutor, quickly did away with the argument that those who had gathered at Peterloo had a right to free assembly, invoking the inherent danger and unpredictability of such a large gathering of people.[5] The unlawfulness of the behaviour of the defendants ultimately turned on the question of whether fear was caused to the public, and both defence and prosecution called witnesses and questioned them as to whether they had been afraid. While many witnesses for the prosecution denied being afraid, 'Of those who claimed fear, some did on tenuous grounds.

James Duncroft told the court that he did not think it safe to have that number of people on the streets of Manchester, particularly since they were "persons belonging to the labouring classes".'[6]

Ultimately the judgement 'hinged on an idea of sedition hidden behind the question of public order' (Lobban, 1990, p. 345). In a questionable ruling, Mr Justice Bayley held that the peaceful assembly at St Peter's Fields was unlawful. The unlawfulness of the meeting stemmed from its being seditious and therefore creating fear among the public. However, since it had not actually begun before it was attacked by the military and thus could not be shown to have caused fear, it was unlawful 'because the seditious words intended to have been spoken would have occasioned fear' (Lobban, 1990, p. 345). The rationale was unconvincing in its reliance 'not on actual fear, but on the likelihood of fear should the conspiracy be fulfilled'. The hypothetical fear upon which Hunt's conviction was based plays a key role in the offence of violent disorder, of which unlawful assembly was the precursor. Section 2 of the POA provides that a person is guilty of violent disorder where that person uses or threatens violence that 'would cause a person of reasonable firmness present at the scene to fear for his personal safety', although 'No person of reasonable firmness need actually be, or be likely to be, present at the scene.'

Crucially, it appeared as though Mr Justice Bayley was cloaking a charge of seditious conspiracy, one not likely to result in conviction, in terms of the offence of unlawful assembly, 'which focused on the vague public order fears so dominant at the time of Peterloo'. Lobban (1990, p. 349) has argued that the Peterloo trials and their entailing the elaboration of an offence of unlawful assembly are crucial in having 'made the link between sedition and public order'. He writes that the effect of this was to make

> the key question in sedition less one of the libellous nature of the simple words, less one of the likely effect of words on stirring people to discontented action, and more their effect in creating public order apprehensions in the neighbourhood. By that device, assemblies like the Peterloo meeting that would not in themselves have justified a conviction for seditious conspiracy or seditious words, could become the objects of successful prosecutions.

Following the Peterloo trials, Parliament introduced the 'Six Acts' after debate which lasted less than a month. These were aimed at preventing meetings of the sort that took place at St Peter's Fields, bestowing

search-and-seizure powers to the authorities and requiring prior permission from a magistrate for public meetings of more than fifty persons concerning matters of the Church or state.[7] According to Thompson (1963, p. 751), 'The Six Acts sealed what August 16 initiated. If the Peterloo decision [to attack the crowds] was unpremeditated, it would appear to have been the signal for which the Government was waiting.'

With the passing of the Reform Act of 1832, which introduced constitutional change and a measure of political liberty, the expression of ideas alone could no longer be punished (Lobban, 1990, p. 350). It became untenable for unlawful assembly to be used 'in a blanket fashion against those propounding undesirable ideas' (Lobban, 1990, p. 350). The key element in proving the offence became fear connected with physical force or the threat of force. In spite of these developments, the offence had been taking shape in the courts for several years and some judges continued to consider unlawful assembly applicable to peaceful situations. Lord Abinger, addressing the Lancaster grand jury of 1842, claimed that gatherings of several thousand could never be in a position to engage in serious discussion and thus 'must lead, as everyone will see, to alarm and terror and to the disturbance of the peace' (Lobban, 1990, p. 351).

It has been argued here that the transition from the use of offences of libel and sedition to target protesters to the use of public order offences demonstrates a genealogical link between the offence of unlawful assembly which took shape in a period of state suppression of political dissidence and the new offence of violent disorder, which claims not to be political. After the Peterloo trials, the offence of unlawful assembly was firmly established, in a way to give the authorities a lever with which to control dissent that they had been in danger of losing twenty years before. This elaboration of the use of public order offences against political activity paved the way for the case law of the nineteenth century which developed the concepts of breach of the peace, obstruction and nuisance (Lobban, 1990, p. 352). Thus Richard Carlile, who had previously been prosecuted multiple times under seditious and blasphemous libel laws, found himself charged with nuisance in 1834 after he displayed blasphemous effigies in his Fleet Street shopfront. His conviction depended not on whether the effigies themselves were scandalous but on whether the crowds gathering on the pavements to survey them caused a nuisance (Lobban, 1990, p. 310). These offences continue to be used against protesters today. A recent high-profile case saw Trenton Oldfield, who staged an anti-austerity protest at the Oxford-Cambridge

boat race of 2012, charged with public nuisance and sentenced to six months in prison.

The ruling classes' fear of the crowd increased as it began to be seen as posing a danger to the status quo, and, 'paradoxically, this occurred when the crowds were becoming less turbulent, but more organized. The fact that they were political crowds made them a threat: the fact that they might pose a public order threat allowed the authorities to clamp down on them' (Lobban, 1990, p. 352). The connection between the offence of unlawful assembly elaborated in the course of the trials that took place in the wake of the Peterloo Massacre and the current offence of violent disorder has been demonstrated. Unlawful assembly was the forerunner to violent disorder, the offence of choice for the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) when prosecuting protesters today. What is crucial to bring out in the analysis of the transition is the depoliticising significance of charges of unlawful assembly as a means of dealing with political activists rather than high treason or sedition, which were overtly political charges. The depoliticising effect of the criminal law was thus usefully used by the state to achieve its own political purposes. Through the use of public order offences, the state found a way of maintaining the apportionment of power in society by criminalising opposition activity, but without appearing to be crushing political dissent.

The right to protest

Free speech on political matters was sanctioned by the late 1800s but was strictly controlled through common law public order offences:

> persons may meet together so long as they do not trespass on private property, commit a nuisance, obstruct the highway or infringe the law relating to public meetings, or unlawful assemblies.
>
> (Lobban, 1990, p. 307)

The idea of protest today potentially includes a range of activities, such as marches, occupations, direct action and riots. In Britain, the legal foundations of the right to protest are narrower than what we may conceptualise more broadly as protest, and are considered to lie in human rights law. Protected in the European Convention on Human Rights 1950 (ECHR), which is incorporated in the Human Rights Act of 1998, are Article 10 on the right to freedom of speech and Article 11 on the freedom of assembly and association. These provisions, taken together,

provide the foundation, at least in legal terms, of what is known as the right to protest. Article 10 of the ECHR provides for the right to 'hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority', while Article 11 protects the right to 'freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association'. There are delimited restrictions permitted in respect of these rights which must be 'prescribed by law' and 'necessary in a democratic society', including those aimed at protecting national security or public safety, or 'for the prevention of disorder or crime' (Articles 10(2) and 11(2)). Protecting the freedom of assembly and association ensures that people are able to meet in order to exercise their right to free expression and act collectively – for example, by forming a political party or a trade union. Public protest is crucial as a means of ensuring that speech reaches a wider audience. Protest is necessary in order to allow public participation in a democracy outside narrow election periods (Fenwick, 1999, p. 492). Public protest is also crucial to allow marginalised and un/under-represented groups to speak for themselves and to access the media, particularly in a society in which the media is unregulated and does not permit fair access (Fenwick, 1999, p. 493).

Criminalisation of protest in recent years

Although the process of criminalising protest has a long history, in recent years there has been a marked resurgence in the use of the criminal law, in particular the POA, against those arrested during or following protest-related activity. Of particular concern has been the extensive use of Section 2 of the Act, violent disorder, the successor to the common law offence of unlawful assembly, which carries a maximum term of five years' imprisonment. Public order offences have been used against protesters in the past, notably following the Garden House riot of 13 February 1970 when fifteen protesters were prosecuted, seven of whom were acquitted.[8] The use of the criminal law to attack protesters becomes particularly salient in times of political upheaval or economic crisis, and in the course of implementation of unpopular or divisive government policy, because groups and individuals make their opposition to government policy known in the public sphere. In recent years, violent disorder – often viewed as a catch-all charge and normally used for serious football violence – has increasingly been used against protesters. This practice has taken on a worrying frequency since the protests against George Bush's trip to the UK in June 2008. Previously, individuals arrested during protests tended to be given cautions, tickets

and fixed penalty notices. However, following the anti-war protests in Parliament Square on Sunday 15 June on the occasion of Bush's visit, twelve protesters were charged with violent disorder.

The most recent stream of cases of protesters charged with this very serious offence relate to the student protests of 2010. These demonstrations, which took place in the autumn months of 2010, were organised in opposition to the increase in tuition fees and cuts to Higher Education funding, and the abolition of the Education Maintenance Allowance. In total,[9] fifty-eight protesters, all young and of good character, were charged with violent disorder following the 2010 protests, of whom twelve have received prison sentences. Of the nineteen students who pleaded not guilty to charges of violent disorder, eighteen have been acquitted. Thus the vast majority of those who fought the charges of violent disorder have been acquitted. In view of the guilty plea figures, it is important to bear in mind the considerable amount of pressure placed on those charged with offences to plead guilty in view of the severity of the charges, a sentencing discount, the absence of knowledge of one's legal rights and the lack of legal representation or advice at police stations. In light of this, these figures suggest that the CPS and the police have failed to prove that students engaged in unlawful violence at the 2010 student protests in Millbank and that had more protesters fought charges of violent disorder, more acquittals might have resulted. There is thus a real possibility that disproportionate sentences have been given to those who might have been wrongly charged with violent disorder and pleaded guilty under pressure. Further, the use of serious criminal charges against those who engage in protest poses a threat to protest activity. The danger lies not only in the criminalisation of those who are exercising their fundamental rights to expression and association, but also in the risk that those who might engage in protest activity would be deterred from doing so for fear of being criminalised. In the following section the offence of violent disorder is examined and several problems identified in relation to its use against protesters.

Violent disorder

In 1983 the Law Commission proposed the abolition of the common law offences of affray, unlawful assembly, riot and rout, and it recommended the replacement of the first three with new statutory offences under the POA. The context for the introduction of the Act was increasing protest and unrest during Margaret Thatcher's rule. Although the Riot Act of 1714 was repealed by Schedule 3, Part III of the Criminal

Justice Act 1967, in 1981, in the aftermath of the inner-city riots, the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) argued vigorously for its re-enactment (Vogler, 1991, p. 3). Although Lord Scarman, in the context of reporting on the Brixton riots of April 1981, did not recommend the enactment of a new Riot Act, he 'favoured a modern restatement of the law relating to public disorder, including the common law offences'.[10] Apart from the Brixton riots, Britain in the early 1980s was a hotbed of political activity, including movements opposing the Falklands War, demonstrations against mass unemployment, and the hugely popular protests of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in 1983. There is no doubt therefore that the impetus to introduce the POA came from the government's and other authorities' – in particular the police's – desire to deal with political activity that they regarded as undesirable. The activity was presented as disorder and the police in need of more powers to deal with it. This context is reminiscent of that which saw the introduction of the 'Six Acts' by Parliament following the Peterloo Massacre in 1819.

The Law Commission's stated purpose in reforming the common law public order offences listed above was to place them on a modern statutory footing, 'eliminating... certain anomalies and uncertainties, but retaining for the greater part the principal features of the structure and application of the common law offences'.[11] Despite the Law Commission's emphasis in its 1983 report on the need to act in a cautionary manner in view of the close connection between public order offences and fundamental freedoms,[12] not only has the POA been used to ban protest altogether[13] but, disturbingly, the very serious offence of violent disorder eventually delimited in the Act has been used extensively against individuals arrested in the course of, or following their involvement in, protest activity. This raises a series of profound concerns in relation to the way in which the POA operates in the context of the fundamental freedoms to assembly and expression, threatening the right to engage in protest. These concerns will be discussed below.

In place of unlawful assembly, the Law Commission proposed the creation of two new offences, one based on threatening violence and another on the use of violence. The proposal eventually culminated in the introduction of one offence, that of violent disorder, with a broad scope, encompassing both the threat and the use of violence in Section 2 of the POA. The offence is defined as follows:

(1)   Where three or more persons who are present together use or threaten unlawful violence and the conduct of them (taken together) is such as would cause a person of reasonable firmness

present at the scene to fear for his personal safety, each of the persons using or threatening unlawful violence is guilty of violent disorder.

(2) It is immaterial whether or not the three or more use or threaten unlawful violence simultaneously.

(3) No person of reasonable firmness need actually be, or be likely to be, present at the scene.

(4) Violent disorder may be committed in private as well as in public places.

(5) A person guilty of violent disorder is liable on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years or a fine or both, or on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum or both.

(Public Order Act 1986, Section 2)

Despite the offence being very similar to that of unlawful assembly, it is perhaps telling that the name of the offence was changed to 'violent disorder', reflecting the moral reprehensibility of the offender rather than the illiberalness of the state. The terminological transition is in keeping with an age in which states are keen to maintain their liberal appearance. Thus, by prohibiting violent disorder, the state is merely purporting to maintain order for the good of the wider public, rather than restricting the rights of assembly. Entailed in the naming of the offence is also the idea that so-called 'disorder' is necessarily violent. Despite the evidence of indiscriminate baton use and heavy policing at public order events, order is habitually equated with the state and legitimacy, while the imaginary violence of the crowd tends to be conceived of as disordered and illegitimate.

As mentioned above, the offence is a very serious one and is used to charge behaviour which is considered to amount to serious disorder, but which falls short of the offence of riot. On indictment, the offence is punishable with a maximum of five years imprisonment and a fine. Although the offence is triable either way, CPS guidance, in recognition of the seriousness of the offence, makes clear that it is 'highly unlikely that any offences of Violent Disorder will be suitable for summary trial'.[14]

Violent disorder as an overcharge

In view of the majority acquittals in the trials of protesters charged with offences relating to the 2010 student protests, it is argued here that the

use of the offence of violent disorder against protesters consists of a practice of 'overcharging' by the police and the CPS. This very serious offence has been applied to behaviour which could either have been charged with a lesser offence or not charged at all. Art student James Heslip received a custodial sentence of twelve months for smashing a window during the Millbank occupation. Zenon Mitchell was sentenced to fifteen months imprisonment for throwing a placard stick. The pattern of prosecutions, convictions, and harsh and exemplary sentences points towards a policy of criminalising dissent. In the light of the pressure placed on individuals to plead guilty, overcharging leads to the very likely possibility that individuals will receive either undeserved or disproportionate punishments. The statistics relating to charges of violent disorder against protesters in recent years demonstrate its operation as an overcharge. The vast majority of protesters who pleaded not guilty to charges of violent disorder have been acquitted. Along with the statistics related to the student protests of 2010 mentioned above, it is useful to consider those related to the 2009 protests against Israel's assault on Gaza. Ten months after the Gaza demonstrations, seventy-one young protesters 'of good character' were charged with violent disorder. Of those, sixty-four pleaded guilty and received prison sentences. However, of the seven who pleaded not guilty, six were acquitted. Thus we can observe a similar pattern to that of the student protest trial acquittals.

On proposing the offence of violent disorder in 1983, the Law Commission intended it only to be used for very serious criminal activity taking place in a context of disorder. The criminal law already provides for a range of offences to deal with violence used against the person and property. In its 1983 report, the Law Commission stated that the charge would be 'appropriate for use only when the extra gravity of the circumstances of the group's conduct is such as to justify prosecution for such an offence'.[15] The Law Commission makes clear, for example, that 'missiles' thrown, whether or not they hit their target, may consist of violence provided that the missile is 'capable of causing injury'. Thus, according to the Law Commission, 'a paper dart would...not qualify'.[16] The types of violent conduct that would fall within the scope of the offence of violent disorder envisaged by the Law Commission instead include 'the wielding of a lethal instrument or the discharge of a firearm in the direction of another'. Recent and authoritative commentaries on the state of the law also reflect this position (Wainwright *et al.*, 2012). In spite of this, we have in recent years seen protesters charged with violent disorder after throwing or

waving placard sticks.[17] Part of the problem may be that CPS guidelines on charging violent disorder do not clearly reflect the need for gravity in the violence used for the threshold of the offence to be reached. Despite the Law Commission's insistence that missiles thrown are 'capable of causing injury', the CPS guidelines on the type of conduct which may be appropriate for a Section 2 offence merely state: 'serious disorder at a public event where missiles are thrown'.[18] Not only is it clear that the Law Commission had in mind a very high threshold of violence in the context of a severe level of disorder when proposing the offence, but also it is acknowledged that there is a need for caution when dealing with an area of criminal law so closely associated with fundamental freedoms. In spite of this, we have witnessed the charging of activity which would not only appear to fall well below the threshold of severity envisaged by the Law Commission for the purposes of charging Section 2, but also took place in the context of political protest.

The political nature of the charge

The use of the POA against protesters has significant political implications in serving to divert public attention away from the political message of the protesters and instead presents them as having engaged in disorderly and criminal behaviour. In the face of political opposition to unpopular government policy, a government mindful of public opinion might perceive an interest in presenting those protesting as disorderly, violent and engaging in criminal activity, rather than exercising their right to expression and assembly. As discussed above, the use of public order offences to target those who have engaged in protest-related activity in the face of police violence has a long history. The nineteenth-century example of the Peterloo Massacre is important because it led to the development of the doctrine of unlawful assembly, which was the precursor to today's offence of unlawful assembly, in the cases of those activists criminalised and victimised for their political activity. The trials which followed Peterloo were of paramount importance to the rulers of the day, 'From the first reports of the massacre, the government had vindicated the authorities in Manchester, and had invested time, money and reputation in justifying the militia' (Lobban, 1990, p. 348). Lobban (1990) writes that 'The Treasury Solicitor gave instructions at the time of Hunt's trial that, if any magistrate or yeoman faced a bill of indictment, the government would defend them'. In E.P. Thompson's (1963, p. 750) words,

> If the Government was unprepared for the news of Peterloo, no authorities have ever acted so vigorously to make themselves accomplices after the fact. Within a fortnight the congratulations of Sidmouth and the thanks of the Prince Regent were communicated to the magistrates and military 'for their prompt, decisive and efficient measures for the preservation of public peace'. Demands for a parliamentary inquiry were resolutely rejected. Attorney and Solicitor-Generals were 'fully satisfied' as to the legality of the magistrates' actions...State prosecutions were commenced, not against the perpetrators, but against the victims of the day.

The case of the Hilliard brothers, accused of pulling an officer off his horse at the anti-fees student protest of 9 December 2010, exemplifies the politicised nature of the prosecutions of the student protesters. David Cameron risked influencing the outcome of the legal process when he publicly drew attention to the case, claiming that police had been 'dragged off horses and beaten'.[19] In fact, evidence emerged during the trial that a mounted officer had pulled Christopher Hilliard's hair before coming off his horse. The defence succeeded in its argument that it was this, along with the officer's failure to follow the normal procedure of tightening the girth on his horse, that led to his unseating. The brothers were eventually acquitted of violent disorder charges.

On his visit to Britain in January 2013, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association expressed concern at the implications for the right to protest of the use of the POA, as well as police tactics at demonstrations:

> I am concerned that provisions in the legal framework, and ongoing detrimental police practices, have hindered the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. While this right is guaranteed under article 11 of the Human Rights Act, it is governed by a series of laws aimed primarily at ensuring public order, most notably the Public Order Act 1986. Thus the focus is often ensuring on public order [sic], rather than a human rights based approach that would facilitate assemblies.[20]

In the course of the trial of Alfie Meadows and Zak King, two student protesters acquitted in 2013 of charges of violent disorder relating to the student protests of 2010, the trial judge was at pains to deny the relevance of politics in the case, asking the jurors to adopt a 'clinical' approach to considering the evidence. The prosecution also insisted that

it did not doubt the strength of political feelings of the defendants, but was merely focusing on their actions on the day of the protest. However, the politicised nature of the charge of violent disorder against protesters cannot be ignored, not merely in light of the significance of the historical advent and trajectory of the offence but also in view of the circumstances surrounding the prosecutions of students following the 2010 student protests. Protesters are not only being criminalised after engaging in political protest in opposition to government policy, but also being accused of engaging in violence and prosecuted after attending protests which have been heavily, and often violently, policed. Alfie Meadows' case is of particular concern because he had to receive life-saving emergency brain surgery after being hit on the head with a police baton at the protest, a fact which was not disputed by the prosecution in the course of his trial. There is a profound concern that protesters have been prosecuted in an attempt to cover up police wrongdoing at public order events.

Modes of criminalisation of protest: Police practices

We have seen a series of trials related to the student protests of 2010 in the course of which evidence has emerged of the use of horse charges and indiscriminate baton strikes against protesters who are subjected to a containment or 'kettle'. In spite of this, it is the protesters who have been charged with violent disorder after participating in the demonstrations. The protests themselves have been heavily, and often violently, policed, a concern echoed by the United Nations Special Rapporteur's report on the freedom of assembly and association on his recent visit to the UK.[21] After his visit the United Nations Special Rapporteur expressed his profound concern at

> the use of embedded undercover police officers in groups that are non-violent and which exercise their democratic rights to protest and take peaceful direct action. The case of Mark Kennedy and other undercover officers is shocking as the groups in question were not engaged in criminal activities. The duration of this infiltration, and the resultant trauma and suspicion it has caused, are unacceptable in a democracy. It is a clear violation of basic rights protected under the Human Rights Act, and more generally under international law, such as the right to privacy.[22]

In 2013, Alfie Meadows and Zak King succeeded in their plea of self-defence against the charge of violent disorder against them relating to

the student protest of 9 December 2010. It is clear that the trial judge, Mr Justice Moore, was concerned that the jury were shocked and upset by the evidence of police violence used against protesters on the day of the protest. Addressing the jury in the course of summing up, Mr Justice Moore said:

> It is imperative that you set political feelings, or hostility or perhaps sympathy aside. It is not your job to assess the lawful nature of police action. In a case like this it is very easy to be sidetracked into collateral issues. It is imperative that you look at evidence that is relevant to the issue to determine.[23]

The question of police violence is, however, far from being merely 'collateral' to the question of the alleged violence on the part of protesters. The police are not neutral observers at public order events but actively relate to those whom they are policing. If their tactics antagonise protesters, this needs to be borne in mind when any violence that may result is considered, not just in terms of considering a plea of self-defence, but more importantly at the stage when the decision to prosecute is being made. Unfortunately the CPS guidelines on when to prosecute protesters fail to account for the role played by police officers in creating the conditions for violence in their policing of public order events. According to the guidelines issued, certain factors make it 'more likely' that prosecuting a protester will be considered to be in the public interest. The guidelines are intended to aid prosecutors when differentiating 'between violent or disruptive offenders' and those 'whose intent was … peaceful'.[24] Problematic is the underlying assumption that individuals attending protests necessarily have either peaceful or violent intentions. In fact, violence more frequently flows from police practices, including containment or 'kettling', the use of batons, agents provocateurs, undercover officers and dispersal techniques such as horse charges. Research on crowd behaviour has shown that the behaviour and presence of police at public order events affects to a significant extent the behaviour of the crowds that they are policing. Indeed, heavy-handed policing has been shown to increase rather than decrease 'disorder' as alienated individuals transform into collectives resisting and defending themselves against police violence.[25] In the course of his research on crowd behaviour, Cocking (2013) conducted a series of interviews with protesters subjected to police tactics such as horse and baton charges, concluding that police violence is a significant cause of 'violence' on the part of protesters. One participant, who attended an

anti-tuition fees protest in 2010, when questioned about how they and the people around them reacted to a horse charge, gave the following responses:

> *Participant:* There was a sort of initial panic, as people ran back…fleeting would be the way I would describe it - there was a sort of shock that they should be charged…that you've got to turn and run, because if you don't run, you're gonna get trampled by a horse, or hit with a baton, erm…and then very quickly a regroupment, and a realisation that what the police was doing was outrageous, and that there was no need to panic, and actually, you should turn round and have a go back.
>
> *Interviewer:* Can you remember how you felt after the charges, and how the crowd behaved?
>
> *Participant:* It was like they were going back into battle…before the charges, there was less togetherness, but the charges actually provoked people to come together to go back as groups…once the police attacked, the response was 'we're gonna go back in there', and I saw kids pick up placards, sticks…There was a real sense that 'we wanna go back in and have a fight'.[26]

This contradicts the assumption underlying the current CPS guidelines on prosecuting protesters that individuals come to protests with violent intentions. The guidelines serve to decontextualise the behaviour of individuals from the social context in which that behaviour takes place, treating the individual as a rational being with free will and thus wholly responsible for her actions. The social context in which actions take place ought to be entirely relevant when assessing the ethics of an individual's actions (Norrie, 2000), and indeed when considering whether to charge a person with a serious offence, such as violent disorder, including a situation where protesters have been charged at with horses and officers wielding batons.

Despite evidence of indiscriminate baton use and police violence that has emerged in the course of the student protest trials, the CPS guidelines provide that 'prosecutors should have particular regard to whether…a person had come to the protest equipped with…items that could be considered body protection'. It is not clear why the donning of body protection should be deemed problematic, even if it is considered to 'indicate…anticipation of disorder'. Activists aware of historical instances of police violence at demonstrations should be entitled to protect themselves. Protesters such as Alfie Meadows and Zak King have

both recently succeeded in pleas of self-defence. Zak King attended the anti-fees protest of 9 December 2010 wearing shin pads on his arms in order to protect himself and others from police baton strikes.

Problematic also is the lack of clarity in the guidelines with regard to the prosecution of protesters 'in possession of a weapon at the time of the offence'. The relevant question here is what is to be considered a 'weapon' for the purposes of the guidelines. A clearer category might have been that of an 'offensive weapon'. That is particularly salient in light of the practice among the prosecution to refer in court to the use of 'missiles' at protests, when referring to items such as broken pieces of placard sticks made out of plywood. In spite of this, Francis Fernie, a young man of twenty years, was sentenced to twelve months in a young offenders' institution for throwing two placard sticks. Quite apart from the fact that the placard sticks did not hit anybody, a placard stick made of plywood thrown in the direction of police clad in riot gear cannot reasonably be conceived of as 'likely to cause injury'. In the case of Meadows and King, Mr Justice Moore demonstrated a measure of incredulity at the notion that placard sticks could cause injury in the course of his summing up, stating that he understood them to be made of 'balsam wood, the sort of thing you built little planes with as children'.[27] Such circumstances should be taken into account when charges are being considered. Bearing in mind the Law Commission, in the report in which it recommended the introduction of the offence of violent disorder, insisted that items that were thrown had to be 'capable of causing injury' in order to meet the threshold of violent disorder, it is crucial that this is reflected in the CPS guidelines on prosecuting protesters on what is to be considered a weapon. Furthermore, practices of criminalisation of protesters begin prior to any offences being committed. Despite the systematic police practice of videoing public protests, the guidelines indicate that where suspects take 'steps to conceal their identity', prosecution will be more likely.

The situation has not been helped by the recent judgment from the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Austin v. UK* that declared the kettling of protesters and passers-by at the 2001 May Day demonstrations did not deprive them of their right to liberty, protected under Article 5 of the ECHR.[28] The Court accepted the UK government's argument that the containment needed to be prolonged due to the violent behaviour of a minority after the kettle's formation, but at no point did the court consider that the coercion entailed in creating and maintaining the kettle might itself have caused the violence. The willingness of the courts to sanction coercive police tactics is especially worrying

in light of the police and the CPS record of arresting and charging protesters with serious offences, in particular violent disorder. In *Austin v. UK*, the Court stated that circumstances necessitated the imposition of a cordon, despite the fact that the aim of the measure which results in the restriction of liberty cannot be taken into account when determining a breach, unless it falls under the delimited subsections.[29] The Court also stated that kettling is one of those situations that 'commonly occur in modern society where the public may be called on to endure restriction on freedom of movement or liberty in the interests of the common good'.[30] There is little sense in the entirety of the judgement that the kettled protesters were exercising their right to public protest, protected under Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention, crucial to sustaining a democratic system. There is not a modicum of evidence that the Court entertained the thought that governments might perceive an interest in suppressing dissent and discouraging or deterring protest, and therefore that the actions of their police forces should be subjected to an especially high level of scrutiny in the context of protest. Had the Court considered this point, it might have avoided the wholly inappropriate analogies which it drew in comparing police actions at protests to the policing of a football match or traffic incident, or protecting the public from a dangerous individual.[31] A House of Commons Home Affairs Committee report, which followed the G20 protests of 2009 at which Ian Tomlinson collapsed and died after being hit by a police officer, recommended that kettling should be used only 'sparingly and in carefully defined circumstances'.[32] Following the 2010 student protests, the House of Lords and House of Commons Joint Committee on Human Rights expressed concern about the use of kettling at the demonstrations, noting 'a lack of clarity about the level or seriousness of the violence that must have occurred before containment or "kettling" can be resorted to'. The committee also expressed concern about the

> lack of opportunity for non-violent protestors to leave the contained or 'kettled' crowd, the adequacy of arrangements to ensure that the particularly vulnerable such as disabled people are identified and helped to leave the containment, and the general lack of information available to the protestors about how and where to leave.[33]

The United Nations Special Rapporteur stated he believed kettling to be:

> ...detrimental to the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly due to its indiscriminate and disproportionate nature.

I heard, for instance, appalling stories of peaceful protestors, as well as innocent by-standers – such as tourists – held for long hours with no access to water or sanitary facilities. It also undeniably has a powerful chilling effect on the exercise of freedom of peaceful assembly, and I was informed of many people who refrained from exercising their right to freedom of peaceful assembly for fear of being kettled. Finally, it appears that kettling is used for intelligence gathering purposes, by compelling those kettled to disclose their name and address as they leave the kettle, increasing the chilling effect it has on potential protesters.[34]

The scenes of the containment put in place by the MPS were captured on film and played to the court during the course of the trial of Alfie Meadows and Zak King. The kettle, put in place at approximately 3.20pm, lasted until close to midnight on 9 December 2010, the day of the vote in Parliament on the tripling of tuition fees, with protesters being contained for several hours on Westminster Bridge. Protesters could be heard complaining that they could not breathe and shouting 'you're going to kill someone'.[35] Scenes of indiscriminate baton use by officers were played to the court. Despite a senior officer's claim that batons should only be used as 'an absolute last resort', when shown footage of officers using batons against protesters with their palms raised and heads turned away, he claimed that he was behind his officers '100%'. In his words they had shown 'superb restraint'. 'Apart from giving the protesters a bunch of flowers,' he said, 'I don't know what else they could have done.' When challenged by defence barrister Carol Hawley about whether batons had been used against protesters as a last resort, his reply was that 'the absolute last resort would be if I got a machine gun out and started shooting'.[36] Protesters were eventually allowed to leave the kettle in single file, but had first to agree to having their photograph taken by the police.

These scenes are reminiscent of accounts of the Peterloo Massacre:

I saw ten or twelve of the Yeomanry Cavalry, and two Hussars cutting at the people, who were wedged close together . . . The people, closely packed and trampling on each other in the effort to escape, made no effort at retaliation until the very edges of the field, where a few trapped remnants . . . threw brick-bats at their pursuers.

(Thompson, 1963, pp. 753–754)

This description is evocative of accounts of protesters' experiences in kettles, whereby those at the front of the protest – where it meets a police

cordon – are subjected to police violence and can do little to defend themselves.[37]

The absence of accountability of those responsible for this violence against protesters is almost total. The 'violence' that is interrogated is that alleged to have been committed by the protesters, while that of the police habitually remains unscrutinised. Gareth Peirce has called for the prosecution of those who act unlawfully on behalf of the state.[38] Following the Peterloo Massacre, there was a lack of scrutiny of the actions of the state's forces, such as in *Redford v. Birley*, a case for damages brought against an officer by an injured claimant in the course of which the behaviour of the claimant on the day was nevertheless subjected to a greater level of scrutiny than that of the officers.[39] Mr Justice Holroyd refused to allow evidence on behalf of the claimant, demonstrating that the military had used excessive force, insisting that it was not relevant to the question of whether or not the particular assault being considered in the case had taken place.[40]

In a trial emerging from the anti-cuts Fortnum & Masons occupation of 26 March 2012, District Judge Michael Snow, who convicted ten protesters of aggravated trespass, nevertheless stated that 'History often vindicates those involved in such acts.'[41] This certainly rings true in the case of Peterloo. Despite the witch trials which followed the event, there is no doubt that the Peterloo Massacre was one of the most reprehensible and repressive moments in the domestic history of the British state. In spite of this, the means employed by the state to repress and punish those who sought to speak their minds are still in use today. The POA and, in particular, the offence of violent disorder find their origins in the cases which followed Peterloo. Similarly, the viciousness with which the event was policed is reminiscent of the actions of the state's forces in policing protest since the event: the killings on Bloody Sunday in 1972, the killing of Blair Peach at an anti-fascist demonstration in 1979, the death of Ian Tomlinson at a G20 protest in 2009, the attack on Alfie Meadows at a student demonstration in 2010, not to mention the crackdowns on resistance in the British colonies in Malaya, India, Palestine, Egypt, Kenya, Cyprus, South Yemen, Oman and Northern Ireland, to name but a few.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the process of the criminalisation of protest, beginning with the trials which followed the Peterloo Massacre of 1819 and ending with a discussion of the trials which followed the student protests of 2010. This historical treatment of the subject has

demonstrated a genealogical connection between the offence of unlaw-ful assembly and that of violent disorder. The common law offence of unlawful assembly was elaborated in the trials which criminalised those who had participated in the peaceful gathering at St. Peter's Fields in August 1819. These prosecutions took place at a time of political upheaval which saw reformists calling for parliamentary representation through extension of the suffrage. The state's response was to clamp down on public meetings and protest activity. The offence of violent disorder found in Section 2 of the POA 1986 is the direct descendant of unlawful assembly, and it remains framed in very similar terms. Despite the claim that violent disorder is not a political charge, the history of the offence tells a different story. The Peterloo trials saw the development of the practice of using public order offences against those expressing dissent, and such offences continue to be used against protesters today. The prosecution practice of charging protesters with violent disorder is particularly worrying in light of the evidence of heavy-handed police tactics used at demonstrations, including indis-criminate baton use, horse charges and kettling. In the course of the trials which followed the student protests of 2010, much evidence emerged suggesting that the police used excessive force. Almost all of those who pleaded not guilty to charges of violent disorder won their cases. These statistics not only suggest a practice of overcharging by the police and the CPS, but also raise questions as to the political nature of these prosecutions. The effect of the practice of criminalising protest is to undermine political struggle. Through its depoliticisation it is presented as disorder rather than as legitimate political contestation, the exercise of which is protected by the rights to free expression and assembly.

Notes

1. These were the four squadrons of cavalry of the 15th Hussars, infantrymen from the 88th Foot and 31st Foot regiments, a detachment of the Royal Horse Artillery with two six-pounder guns and the Cheshire, Manchester and Salford Yeomanry cavalries. See J. Marlow (1971). *The Peterloo Massacre*. London: Granada Publishing, 133.
2. *R v. Yorke* (1795) 25 St Tr, 1079.
3. *R v Hunt* and Others (1820) 3 Barnewall and Alderson 566 106 E.R. 768 1820; *Redford v Birley* (1822) 1 St Tr NS 1071; *R v. Dewhurst* (1820) 1 St Tr NS 529.
4. *R v. Hunt* and Others (1820) 3 Barnewall and Alderson 566 106 E.R. 768 1820, para. 566.
5. Ibid., para. 401.

6. Ibid., para, 433.
7. *Public General Acts Passed in the Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland: 60° Geo. III & 1° Geo. IV*; 1819–1820.
8. *R v. Caird* (1970) 54 Cr.App.R 499.
9. These are the figures relating to the cases known to the London Defence Monitoring Group, the source of these statistics.
10. The Law Commission, *Offences Related to Public Order*, LAW COM. No. 123, (October 1983), para. 1.3.
11. The Law Commission, note 10 above, para. 2.2.
12. Ibid.
13. Article 13 of the POA allows for the prohibition of marches. In September 2011, Theresa May resorted to the act to ban protest for one month in three East London boroughs.
14. CPS, Guidance for Prosecutors for Charging Public Order and Other Offences, August 2011. Retrieved from http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/p_to_r/ public_disorder_-_guidance_for_prosecutors_on_charging_public_order_and_ other_offences_(august_2011)/#violentdisorder.
15. The Law Commission, note 10 above, para. 5.29.
16. Ibid., para. 5.33.
17. For example, in July 2010, Francis Fernie, then 20 years old, was sentenced to 12 months in a young offenders' institution for throwing two placard sticks, which hit nobody.
18. CPS, note 14 above.
19. See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVb3AkHse7E.
20. Statement by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association at the conclusion of his visit to the UK (January 2013). Retrieved from http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/ Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12945&LangID=E.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. *R v. Meadows and King* (unreported 2013).
24. CPS guidelines on Public Protests, retrieved from http://www.cps.gov.uk/ legal/p_to_r/public_protests/.
25. See C. Cocking (2013). Crowd flight during collective disorder – A momentary lapse of reason? *Journal of Investigative Psychology & Offender Profiling.* DOI: 10.1002/jip.1389; S. Reicher (2001). The psychology of crowd dynamics. In M.A. Hogg and R.S. Tindale (Eds.), *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes.* Oxford: Blackwell; S. Reicher, C. Stott, P. Cronin and O. Adang. (2004). A new approach to crowd psychology and public order policing. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management,* 27(4), 558–572.
26. C. Cocking, ibid., 9.
27. *R v. Meadows and King* (unreported 2013).
28. *Austin and others v. UK* ECHR Application nos. 39692/09, 40713/09 and 41008/09 Grand Chamber 15 March 2012.
29. *Austin and others v. UK,* ibid., Joint Dissenting Opinion of Judges Tulkens, Spielmann and Garlicki, para. 4.
30. *Austin and others v. UK,* note 28 above, para. 59.

31. Ibid.
32. House of Commons Home Affairs Committee. (2009). *Policing of the G20 Protests*, Eighth Report of Session 2008–2009. (London: HMSO), 86. Retrieved from http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmselect/cmhaff/418/418.pdf.
33. House of Lords and House of Commons Joint Committee on Human Rights, *Facilitating Peaceful Protest*, Tenth Report of Session 2010–2011 HL Paper 123 HC 684 (2011), 8.
34. Statement by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, note 22 above.
35. Evidence presented by defence counsel in the case of *R v. Meadows and King*, note 27 above.
36. *R v. Meadow and King* (unreported 2013).
37. *R v. Meadows and King*, note 27 above.
38. Gareth Peirce, Solicitor, speaking at a Defend the Right to Protest public meeting, Justice Delayed is Justice Denied (London, 4 February 2013).
39. *Redford v. Birley and Others* (1 January 1822) 3 Starkie 76 171 E.R. 773, para. 85.
40. Ibid.
41. M. Evans, Judge expresses sympathy with Fortum & Mason Protesters *The Telegraph* 17 November 2011. Retrived from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/8897288/Judge-expresses-sympathy-with-Fortnum-and-Mason-protesters.html.

References

Cocking, C. (2013). Crowd flight during collective disorder – a momentary lapse of reason? *Journal of Investigative Psychology & Offender Profiling*, 10(2), 219–236.

Fenwick, H. (1999). The right to protest, the Human Rights Act and the margin of appreciation. *Modern Law Review*, 62(4), 491–514.

Lobban, M. (1990). From seditious libel to unlawful assembly: Peterloo and the changing face of political crime c1770–1820. *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 10(3), 307–352.

Marlow, J. (1971). *The Peterloo Massacre*. London: Granada Publishing.

Norrie, A. (2000). *Punishment, Responsibility and Justice: A Relational Critique*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reicher, S., Stott, C., Cronin, P., and Adang, O. (2004). A new approach to crowd psychology and public order policing. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, 27(4), 558–572.

Reicher, S. (2001). The psychology of crowd dynamics. In M.A. Hogg and R.S. Tindale (Eds.), *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Thompson, E.P. (1963). *The Making of the English Working Class*. London: Penguin.

Vogler, R. (1991). *Reading the Riot Act: The Magistracy, the Police and the Army in Civil Disorder*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Wainwright, T., Morris, A., Craig, K., and Greenhall, O. (2012). *The Protest Handbook*. London: Bloomsbury.

Documents

The Law Commission, *Offences Related to Public Order*, LAW COM. No. 123, (October 1983).
House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, *Policing of the G20 Protests*, Eighth Report of Session 2008–2009 (London: HMSO, 2009).
House of Lords and House of Commons Joint Committee on Human Rights, *Facilitating Peaceful Protest*, Tenth Report of Session 2010–2011 HL Paper 123 HC 684 (2011).

English case law

R v. Meadows and King (2013, unreported).
R v. Caird (1970) 54 Cr.App.R 499.
R v. Cunninghame, Graham and Burns (1888) 4 TLR 212.
Beatty v. Gilbanks (1882) 9 QBD 308.
Redford v. Birley (1822) 1 St Tr NS 1071.
R v. Hunt and Others (1820) 3 Barnewall and Alderson 566 106 E.R. 768 1820.
R v. Dewhurst (1820) 1 St Tr NS 529.
R v. Yorke (1795) 25 St Tr, 1079.

ECHR case law

Austin and others v. UK ECHR Application nos. 39692/09, 40713/09 and 41008/09 Grand Chamber 15 March 2012.

6
The English Riots of 2011: Misreading the Signs on the Road to the Society of Enemies

Steve Hall and Simon Winlow

Introduction

Most of the riots that have occurred in England throughout modernity have been associated with symbolic protests and fuelled by an underlying sense of injustice about specific, objective grievances related to the position of the agrarian or industrial working classes in the socio-economic and political structure. In the period that stretched from the 1880s to the 1930s, however, it is possible to discern a significant shift in form. Perhaps the most important aspect of this shift was the gradual emergence and development of coherent, unifying political discourses among the popular classes (Thompson, 1991). To be specific, the motivation and symbolism that underpinned both protests and riots became increasingly shaped by the related but competing political visions of communism, socialism or Labourite social democracy. These discourses did not incorporate populations en masse, and indeed many individuals remained apolitical or conservative in outlook despite their continued economic exploitation and political marginalisation. However, the influence exerted by these discourses was most certainly on the rise and, between the two world wars, it could be seen at the forefront of most protests and riots.

The basic shape of the developmental curve is worthy of brief investigation. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, protests and riots tended to be focused on specific concrete issues, such as taxes, food prices, alcohol control, religious rights, land rights, imports undercutting prices, and the mechanisation of the production process and subsequent job losses (Rudé, 1964). Although ethical discourses loomed

large, there was little sense of an underlying political discourse that could 'join the dots' and locate these issues and others like them in an overall political and socio-economic system. However, in the first half of the nineteenth century, from the 1819 Peterloo riots near Manchester, it becomes possible to discern the beginnings of the political complexity and motivational drive that would characterise future protests. This developmental process was framed in a growing awareness of capitalism's socio-economic structure and exclusionary politics as mainstays of an interconnected system with a dynamic logic (Thompson, 1991). However, this awareness did not instantly permeate the popular classes to produce a coherent political response. As Priestland (2012) has recently argued, the latent underlying class struggle was superimposed, and in many respects overwhelmed, by the cultural politics of an internal 'caste struggle' between aristocratic landowners, merchants represented by the free trade movement, and idealistic bourgeois social liberals, Chartists, Utopian socialists and so on. In England, even in the later nineteenth century, revolutionary Marxists were rather thin on the ground.

Despite this usurpation, the air in the nineteenth century crackled with the energy of political reform. It had become obvious to the more honest commentators that capitalism had replaced the relatively poorer yet far more stable agrarian way of life with an unstable market-driven economic system that was prone to periodic crash and recession (Hobsbawm, 1968). During these periods of crisis the underlying class struggle tended to emerge in very sharp relief for all to experience and symbolise, which presented a grave danger to the partnership of landed aristocrats and merchant-industrialists that constituted the ruling class. Many of the riots and protests were associated with unemployment and impoverishment. In 1886, in the midst of the severe Long Depression of 1873–1896, the relatively spectacular West End riots represented the complex tensions of the new English political dialectic. The riots were triggered by a demonstration by the Fair Trade League and a counterdemonstration by the new Marxist-inspired Social Democratic Federation, Britain's first organised socialist party, led by Henry Hyndman (see Bevir, 2011). The symbolism was quite clear and directly related to the primary dialectic tension that configured political economy. The bourgeois support for free trade and marketisation was pitted in direct conflict with the protectionism and co-operative industry demanded by the new representatives of the industrial working class, who claimed that the contradictions inherent in free trade and the unregulated marketisation of the economy were behind a recession

predicated on unemployment and a reduction in domestic demand. Despite this early influence, English socialism as it developed became heavily influenced by unorthodox Christian movements and middle-class social liberalism (see Chase, 2007). Thus it eventually resisted and marginalised Marxism, and there was to be no revolutionary struggle.

Riots and protest in the twentieth century

The frequency of riots and protests declined in the early and mid-twentieth centuries. Those that the country did see, such as the General Strike in 1926, were by this time far more articulate and directly related to class politics (for a full discussion, see Laybourn, 1993). The general decline of riots and protests is correlated with the rise of institutionalised opposition. The rise of the Labour Party and the Trade Union Movement, supplemented by various fringe socialist groups catering for more stringent political demands, was indicative of the gradual institutional-isation of class struggle (Dahrendorf, 1969; Sassoon, 1997), which was then – and some argue still is – the primary socio-economic conflict in the capitalist system. This institutionalisation process allowed conflict to be articulated, symbolised and sublimated to construct a long-running dialogue of interclass negotiation, often tense and barbed but very rarely manifested in street protests, riots or physical violence. Social conflict, however, was always more complex and multilayered than the basic class struggle (see Skeggs, 2004). The women's suffrage movement staged a number of protests in the early twentieth century, and, after the rise of fascism and Nazism after the First World War, England saw a number of anti-fascist protests, some of which, such as Cable Street in 1936, became quite riotous (see Kushner and Valman, 1998; Wingerden, 1999). However, from the General Strike in 1926 to the Jarrow March in 1936, most political demonstrations were relatively peaceful. The recognition, institutionalisation and articulation of primary social conflicts seem to correlate with peaceful protests and a healthy, if rather protracted and partial, progressive momentum (see Wieviorka, 2009; Winlow and Hall, 2003).

It was this progressive momentum that characterised the post-war settlement during the period 1945–1979. Aided by an increased empha-sis on human rights as the world reflected on the horrors of Nazism, Stalinism and the Second World War, social conflict was institution-alised and intersectional ethicosocial conflicts based around ethnicity, gender and sexual relations were gradually recognised, articulated and incorporated into the institutional arrangement. The riotous protest

was transformed into the peaceful, organised demonstration, which became the norm in the post-war period up to 1981. In the 1950s, immigration, racism and ethnic tensions were behind some riots, but the rather accelerated recognition and institutionalisation of this social conflict gradually defused the situation. Tension persisted, individual acts of racial violence still occurred and fringe fascist parties arranged demonstrations, but serious violence was largely avoided as legislation and anti-racist cultural forces slowly began to change perceptions and impact on the structural tension in race relations.

However, just as some level of success was achieved in the social democratic era, in the 1970s the country entered the era of 'late' or 'advanced' capitalism. In economic terms, this was characterised by the arrival of a long recession in the West, and in political terms by the revival of classical economic liberalism in the guise of neoliberalism. This new political movement, dubbed the 'Restoration' by Alain Badiou (2007, 2010), was represented in England by the Tory government elected in 1979, nominally conservative but in its philosophy and practice a tense combination of cultural conservatism, individual libertarianism and economic liberalism. In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher's deindustrialisation policy, an aspect of a US-led neoliberal economic macrostrategy of reversing the global flows of trade and capital in an effort to restore growth and profitability (see Varoufakis, 2011), destroyed the heavy industrial base of the British economy. Although some areas in the South-East of England prospered, the old heavy industrial and manufacturing zones in the North suffered badly, along with similar regions in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. One of the deleterious results was a 'crime explosion' as criminal markets expanded in the deindustrialising zones (Hall *et al.*, 2008; Reiner, 2007). Under neoliberal governance supported culturally by the mass media's relentless broadcasting of the TINA ('there is no alternative') doctrine, politics became truncated and compressed in the centre-right sector and the UK parliamentary political system lost even the restrained oppositional stance once represented by the left wing of the Labour Party.

The depoliticisation of the 1980s and 1990s

From the 1980s a potent depoliticising current ran through the population as the majority were rapidly incorporated into the seductive spectacle of consumer culture (Hall *et al.*, 2008). The British state buckled under the authority of the large corporations and banks as all nations became ensnared in the stringent logic of a globalising capitalist market

(Judt, 2010, 2011). The supine and heavily policed liberal intellectual establishment, under the influence of thinkers such as Derrida, Foucault and Giddens, jumped at the opportunity to abandon the class struggle and plunge everyone into the fragmentary, divisive world of lifestyle, gender and identity politics, whose advocates ranged across a spectrum from multicultural tolerance and reconciliation to hostile separatism (see Winlow, 2012). For some of these new left-liberal thinkers, race and gender replaced class as the fundamental socio-structural relations of inequality (see Žižek, 2002). Amid a dwindling number of protests, the category of socio-economic class, already deracinated and turned into a politically inert occupational classificatory order by Weberian stratification theorists using a rigid and undialectical geological metaphor, was marginalised in the liberal-dominated intellectual and political establishment. Some former leftists, such as Young (1999), took the opportunity to suggest with no great subtlety that the decline of a working class that still contained currents of racism and sexism was perhaps no bad thing. It was not a good time to be a member of the working class. Genuinely sophisticated analyses of the intersection of race, class and gender, as well as culture and socio-economic positions, did not begin to reappear until quite recently (see Skeggs, ibid.).

After the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) was betrayed by an increasingly fragmented Trades Union Congress and subsequently defeated in the Miners' Strike in 1985, the English working class virtually disintegrated as a latent collective political force, a potential class for itself (Marx and Engels, 2004; 1848). As Eastern European state socialism and the Soviet Union disintegrated in the early 1990s, Francis Fukuyama (1993) proclaimed the 'end of history' and the ultimate triumph of liberal capitalism. The TINA doctrine looked to have won the day, and the majority adapted to its unforgiving demands with a shrug of the shoulders; 'it's corrupt and exploitative, but it's better than totalitarianism', muttered the almost silent majority. Both Marx and Engels (ibid.) and Bauman (2000) were wrong. The modernist tradition and its agents neither melted into air nor liquefied. They turned to dust and lay in an inert heap on the ground, staring upwards into the consumer spectacle's giant movie screen. In the 1980s the working class project of recognising mutual interests, constructing coherent, unifying political symbolism and seeking political representation also disintegrated in the wake of heavy political defeats and the triumph of neoliberal ideology. In an electoral democracy there was no longer anything solid enough to offer the coherent alternative vision that would have been necessary to inspire mass resistance against the shift to neoliberalism, and

therefore the shift was abrupt and its effects were quite spectacularly destructive. The economic heart was ripped out of numerous industrial regions and urban centres (Winlow, 2001), the 'solidarity project' was abandoned, competitive individualism reappeared in intense forms, long-term unemployment and family breakdown increased, and criminal markets – especially drugs – burgeoned (Hall *et al*., 2008; Reiner, 2007). Ill fared the land.

The neoliberal realignment and the ensuing socio-economic destruction that characterised the 1980s triggered a number of riots in economically disadvantaged areas – following a smaller riot in Bristol in 1980, in 1981, larger riots erupted in Brixton in London, Toxteth in Liverpool, Handsworth in Birmingham and Chapeltown in Leeds. Smaller skirmishes appeared in many economically deprived areas throughout the decade, but in 1985, closely following a smaller riot occurring yet again in Brixton, a major riot erupted in the Broadwater Farm area of North London. A black resident was shot by police during a house search and a policeman was also killed by rioters wielding machetes and knives, the first policeman to be killed in an English riot since 1833 (see Lea and Young, 1993). In the same year a second major riot erupted in Handsworth. Individual riots are always quite complex affairs, but throughout the decade this normal aetiological complexity was overridden by two major common factors – long-running racial tension between black residents and the police, and long-term socio-economic deprivation in which criminal markets had burgeoned. The symbolism of comprehensible protests against racism, injustice and deprivation permeated the riots and the political discourse that lingered throughout the decade. The riots followed the tradition of protest with an object, but what had changed was the marginalisation of the sort of heavy undercurrent of named and institutionalised visionary political symbolism – communism, socialism and social democracy – that had to varying degrees played a fundamental role in the riots of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and which had been both the trigger and purpose of some, such as the West End riots of 1886. The riots in the 1980s were against various injustices, but, unlike the Miners' Strike, which was strongly associated with socialist politics, for nothing that could be ascribed even the vaguest political name.

Occasional riots and protests continued into the 1990s. In 1990 the Poll Tax riots that occurred across the UK were most emphatically against the Poll Tax, but, among the majority of participants, again for nothing in particular apart from perhaps the broadest abstraction of socio-economic justice. It is perhaps telling that, despite the

organisation of initial protests by the Militant Tendency-led All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation, the larger riots that followed were associated with an individualist agenda. The Poll Tax would have hit individuals in their pockets, so among the majority it was difficult to discern a collectivist political agenda apart from a vague anti-Thatcherism. We might suspect that this individualist agenda was necessary to provoke action from the majority. Those who carried forward the positive political agenda of the original organising body were quickly confined to the fringes of what they might have regarded as their own protest and, as usual, their presence was misrepresented by the press as opportunistic political entryism and troublemaking. Leftist factions blamed each other for the violence and vandalism that flared up, but all including the usual suspects, the anarchists, were cleared in later police reports. The most feasible explanation is that most of the violence was the product of random individuals and groups taking advantage of the cover given by large crowds and hard-pressed policing.

Contemporary forms

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, protests and riots tended to take three major forms. First are riots triggered by hostility felt towards the police, such as the Meadowell-Elswick riots in 1991 in Newcastle upon Tyne and the Brixton riots in 1995, the former triggered by insults thrown by police at young offenders and the latter by the death of a black man in police custody. Second, the country saw riots triggered by the racial tension that had built up in the late twentieth century, such as those in Oldham, Leeds, Bradford and Burnley in 2001 (see Webster, 2003, 2012). These first two forms, however, share a common context insofar as they occurred in areas of deindustrialisation, economic insecurity and relative deprivation. Smaller-scale riots also emerged from politically inspired protests, but the temporal pattern of this form is interesting. In 1993 the Welling riots occurred amid political protests organised by the Socialist Workers Party and the Militant Tendency, both of which had clear, articulate political visions of the sort that inspired the Social Democratic Federation in the 1880s, although the riots of 1888 were on a far larger scale. As we move into the 2000s, however, we can see a shift to a third form of protests and riots. The Carnival Against Capitalism in 1999, the May Day riots in 2000 and 2001, the G-20 summit protests in 2009, the UK student protests against increases in fees and public sector cuts in 2010 and the anti-cuts protest in London against government public spending cuts in 2011 were all characterised by some rioting,

but the positive, articulate political vision had virtually disappeared and the negative protest that to some extent characterises and often triggers riots had monopolised each event as a whole. The protests staged by the international Occupy movement in 2011–2012 were quite vociferously against banking malfeasance, corrupt politics and austerity measures, but, if we define politics as the means by which socio-economic systems are organised to benefit all, they had no coherent, alternative political programme to offer (Winlow and Hall, 2012a). The pattern of the shift across these two decades was from a mixture of negative and positive protests to purely negative protests. The articulate political symbolism had virtually disappeared. Perhaps Slavoj Žižek (2011) is right that history has not ended, but the majority, whose motivations are restrained by an unconscious acceptance of neoliberal ideology and the TINA doctrine, now act as if it has. The shifting nature of protest and riots suggests that over the past 200 years we have travelled from an era of pre-political negativity through an era of political positivity to enter a post-political interregnum characterised by a disavowed capitulation to neoliberalism.

At a higher level of abstraction we can distinguish three major strands in the mutation of politics as indicated by the shifting nature of riots and protest. From a pre-political era where the majority were largely excluded from the political process, we moved through, first, an era of objectification, complexity and abstraction in the nineteenth century to, second, a political heyday of unification through abstraction in the first half of the twentieth century. After this 'politics of the real' (see Badiou, 2002) collapsed into the horrors of the Gulags, the Cultural Revolution and the Killing Fields, the English – since the seventeenth century quite averse to such extreme militancy and revolutionary fervour – along with most of Western Europe, developed pacified, institutionalised systems of political negotiation over fundamental socio-economic and cultural conflicts during the era of the post-war settlement (Wieviorka, 2009). The class struggle did not disappear in England, but it was conducted in an environment of compromise and negotiation, with at least some recognition of mutual interests across the social structure.

Third, however, the ideological and political triumph of neoliberalism between 1980 and 2008 propelled England and most of the West into a post-political era (see Žižek, 2008). The defeat of militant political organisations, such as the NUM, and the witnessing of the spectacular collapse of the economically stagnant and politically corrupt Soviet Union and its satellite states turned public opinion away from the traditional socialist alternative. Social democratic control of the global

capitalist economy – based on Keynesian exchange controls, fiscal stim-
ulus and demand management – was lost as neoliberals dismantled
the interventionist political apparatus on which it depended. As lib-
eral postmodernism achieved popularity it launched a philosophical
attack on the very principle of unifying abstraction, which further weak-
ened the defences against triumphant neoliberalism. The jury is still
out on whether this was a deliberate capitulation based on a cynical
and pragmatic 'least-worst' calculation or an unwitting political disaster
(see Badiou, 2002; Žižek, 2011). Universal symbolism, dialectical class
struggle and the 'passion for the real' (Badiou, 2002) were abandoned
in favour of pluralistic identity politics, autonomous social movements
and single-issue politics. Strikes diminished and union membership
decreased (see Thomsen, 1997). To the chagrin of more radical thinkers,
the Fabian centre-left liberals who dominate English political science,
philosophy and the social sciences carried on as if nothing major had
happened, as if the return of a few decent politicians in the parlia-
mentary system to implement a few decent policies would stabilise the
tectonic socio-economic shifts that we are all currently experiencing
and arrange the 'inclusion' of those being cast out of the system at an
alarming rate.

Hegemonic triumphalism

The triumph of ideology in popular culture has been quite remarkable
(Winlow and Hall, 2012b). It went hand in hand with the incorporation
of the majority of the population into the surrogate world of consumer
culture, where individuals now compete against each other to acquire
and display symbols of social distinction carried by consumer goods.
Liberal-left and postmodernist academics once saw consumer culture as
a site for free identity creation, new communities and resistance against
the norm (see Featherstone, 2007), but this rather naïve view, born of
capitulation and compromise amid neoliberal triumph, is now coming
under increasing attack (see Hall *et al.*, 2008; Heath and Potter, 2006;
Smart, 2010). What we can see clearly as a major pattern across the
past 30 years is the destruction of the unifying political institutions
and symbolism that were once either embraced or at least considered
worthy of attention by the majority of the population, and their con-
comitant incorporation into consumer culture as the two main strands
of an overall project aimed at once again removing the mass from the
political sphere. The gradual depoliticisation of protests and riots is a
major indicator of this process.

So, put simply, in broad terms the typological pattern of riots in England since the early nineteenth century follows the rise, institutionalisation, deinstitutionalisation and fall of unifying political symbolism. The bulk of thinkers in the broad liberal-postmodernist school tend to argue that what followed the decline of unifying political symbolism was a complex and fragmented yet ultimately progressive realm of identity politics operating in the liberated spaces created by consumer capitalism (Featherstone, 2007; Lash, 2010). Most tend to avoid the more critical analysis, that unifying politics was systematically dismantled by a combination of neoliberal and liberal-postmodernist forces whose agents had decided that managed global capitalism attended by a culturally fragmented and highly individualised post-social realm was the safer option. No more dialectical conflicts and struggles, no more rebellions and no more violence (Hall, 2012a). Even more assiduously avoided was the sophisticated and well-rehearsed critique of consumerism – drawn from eclectic intellectual sources across the traditional political spectrum from conservative romanticism to Marxist-Freudianism – that consumer culture was a depoliticising trap that captured libidinal drives and desires in order to distract them from politics and the transcendental ideals that nourished the political imagination and incited political action (see Hall *et al.*, 2008; Stiegler, 2010, 2011). The sheer theoretical narrowness and superficiality of the politically truncated Weberian and liberal-postmodernist sociology that has been dominant since the 1980s is one of its most striking features, and we have to ask whether it is, in its current form, able to supply us with the concepts and critical depth that we need to analyse today's social phenomena. Criminological theory, beholden to this currently restrictive form of sociology and fixated on its own long-running critique of external systems of control – with few alternative positions to draw upon apart from conservative-administrative positivism – appears to be in an even weaker condition.

However, thinkers from other disciplines, such as philosophy, cultural studies, politics and humanities, along with the anarchic denizens of the blogosphere, seem to operate with significantly less restriction. As soon as the English riots of August 2011 hit the news headlines they were dubbed 'the consumer riots', 'the riots at the end of history' and so on. There was good reason for this. Early attempts by researchers to uncover proto-political resistance and the struggle for justice as the main drives for the riots were unconvincing (Treadwell *et al.*, 2013). The riots began as a small protest in Tottenham, London, against the shooting of an alleged criminal, Mark Duggan, by Metropolitan police officers.

However, as rioting spread across London and other large metropolitan areas of England, including Manchester and Birmingham, the initial protest against injustice seemed to disappear into the background. The riots did not evolve into a broader protest that displayed any articulate, coherent or unifying political symbolism. In fact, there was no political symbolism at all in the traditional sense of the term, and none of the usual involvement by fringe political groups. The initial object disappeared very quickly, no political symbolism appeared and the riots rapidly degenerated into what can only be described as aggravated shopping. Of course, they occurred in areas of socio-economic deprivation, and the coalition government's austerity cuts were making conditions worse, but, despite this, the only way to describe the riots as in any way 'political' would be to redefine the term itself beyond its limits.

It would also be to fly in the face of the evidence. As we have said, early research studies were unsatisfactory and the ascription of even inarticulate underlying political motivations is hasty and quite dubious. The experienced ethnographers working in our research team – Daniel Briggs and James Treadwell, situated in London and Birmingham, respectively – headed onto the streets to collect data from active rioters during the riots, and over the following weeks followed up this initial sweep with a number of in-depth semi-structured interviews with participants in the riots. The data gathered during the heat of the moment, backed up by data gathered later from respondents who had entered into relations of trust with the researchers and volunteered for lengthy interviews, were stark indications of the relative ineffectiveness of the earlier voxpop-style interviews conducted by the joint London School of Economics/*The Guardian* researchers. These data have already been published (see Treadwell *et al*., 2013) but, to sum up, both sets indicate very strongly that the rioters' primary concern was not to exact revenge on the police and the government, or to broadcast some political message or even specific complaints about life on the socio-economic margins. For us it would have been perfectly understandable and legitimate – in fact heartening and inspiring – if it had been, but it was not. The most common motivation for participation in the riots and their brief, limited but nonetheless spectacular diffusion was that those initially looking on became envious of others who had taken the early initiative to loot desirable designer goods – clothes, watches, jewellery, electronic gadgets and so on – and on the spur of the moment decided to join in. The 'buzz', so often associated without a great deal of reflection by criminologists to some suppositious 'natural' urge to defy 'authority' (see Katz, 1988), was, according to these data, inextricably linked

to the acquisition of goods. Even those who stole to sell on expressed the wish to use the money to buy similar objects in an upmarket store, adding the 'shopping experience' to the symbolism of the objects themselves. These riots occurred during a phase of advanced capitalist history in which the total lack of coherent class politics and alternative sources of identity has left the majority of young people with no choice but to seek identity, status and respect by acquiring the post-social, post-political symbolism that has been attached to consumer objects by the marketing industry.

It is a rather sobering thought that many of our respondents could not name Mark Duggan or describe how he was killed. Very few talked about the withdrawal of welfare services or any government policy. All of those taking part failed entirely to deliver an articulate ethical or political message associated with their socio-economic plight or the politics of the day. No outrage was directed towards corrupt elites, and the political and ideological agents of the exploitative neoliberal capitalist system. They appeared in the interviews and in their observable actions as individuals without a history, without a future and without an identity outside consumer symbolism. With the forces of law and order temporarily caught on the back foot, the riots carved out a space for the 'acting out' of deep political impulses (see Stiegler, 2009), but nothing happened at all except a bout of frenetic shopping. There was no transgression of any aspect of the liberal-capitalist order apart from the law, only hyper-conformity to the drives captured and energised by consumer culture. No trace of the symbolically efficient collectives, the institutions of conflict or the articulate political statements that had become working class norms in the heyday of industrial capitalism and high modernity could be found.

The interviewees' statements and demeanour were shot through with resignation, cynicism, pragmatism and the depressive hedonia described by Mark Fisher (2009) in his encounters with further education students. There was no faith in today's politics or politicians, only the constant expression of 'capitalist realism' (ibid.), the new postmodern function of ideology, which attempts to retain the gap between conscious knowledge and the unconscious drives and desires that incite social action. This was working class (and we must stress that we use this term only in the sense of a class in itself and not a class for itself) youth culture amid the decline of 'symbolic efficiency' and collective political narratives, the total disappearance of the inspiring political symbolism that could represent an alternative socio-economic system (Winlow and Hall, 2012a; see also Žižek, 1995, 2008, 2011). This is the era of the total

triumph of neoliberal ideology among the English masses, where, in the battle to win hearts and minds, mass-mediated consumer culture has won hands down as the left threw in the towel. This is now the default position, the context in which all social action takes place.

The failure of the Occupy movement and other organised protests in the USA, the UK and mainland Europe to garner mass support despite their accurate identification of the object of ethical critique can also be attributed to the absence of a coherent alternative ideology based on a plausible means of reorganising the global economy. The middle class, hyper-alienated from the working class across a huge chasm of differentiated cultural and symbolic capital, can no longer inspire the latter by constructing the potent symbolism that was once their 'caste speciality' (see Priestland, 2012). Nor, for that matter, can they inspire themselves. Their protests were shot through with appeals to justice and parliamentary liberalism, which betrayed a naïve belief in the parliamentary democracy and reformism that has palpably failed to deliver social justice, or to change course even after the recent financial crash. Even the traditionally symbolically rich and sophisticated middle class offered no articulate vision. They were against everything but for nothing, apart from vague abstractions kept alive by elaborate yet insubstantial rhetoric.

Conclusion

Traditional liberal-left social science and politics, trapped in an obsolete intellectual framework from a superseded era where economic stability and political militancy provided an organic contextual platform, entirely lack the conceptual armoury required to analyse the phenomena appearing in the midst of the current economic turmoil or to help to reconstruct a new positive politics. The canon of old post-war texts in sociology and criminology is now largely obsolete, an 'undead' presence that, although resolutely kept moving to dominate intellectual space by agents who refuse to admit its demise, possesses no internal vitality of its own, and certainly no political function beyond being a cheerleader for Fabian welfarism. The disciplines continue to operate with obsolete concepts – resistance, moral panic, culture of control and so on (see Hall, 2012a) – and obsolete notions of ideology and subjectivity. Social science in general is an incestuous, narrow, self-referential, exhausted and hierarchical institution that allows established ideas all the space that they need to defend themselves and steadfastly refuses to construct, import and utilise new concepts that are suitable for the

analysis of today's social world. Those who do produce potent and relevant ideas, such as Bauman (2000 passim) and others, tend to have their ideas diluted or marginalised in favour of traditional Weberian fare or the anodyne products of an undead postmodernist regime discredited in the 1990s by the cutting edge of continental philosophy (see Badiou, 2002; Žižek, 2002).

In its refusal to adopt new ideas, to cut its ties with Fabian reformism, liberal-left politics and the doctrine that human beings in late capitalism are still driven by values, and to look upon the world from an unflinchingly realistic perspective, social science is incapable of conceptualising the socio-economic context in which social life is to be played out in the coming decades. Since 1800 the capitalist economy has grown by a factor of 32 – a huge exponential spurt across a relatively short period of time. After 1945, Western nations called upon consumer culture as a 'new religion' (see Lebow, 1955) to ensure the continuation of demand-driven economic growth and to prevent the collapse that led to the Great Crash of 1929, the Great Depression, the rise of Nazism and the Second World War. The following statement is invariably dismissed as 'reductionist' by liberals who seek only to avoid the issue of deep political intervention in the socio-economic system because they fear the return of barbaric totalitarianism more than barbaric chaos, but it needs to be made and repeated often: consumer culture captured the drives of the masses in the post-war era, distracted them from their own politics, and made their identity and happiness dependent on the acquisition of its symbolic objects. Depriving consumer subjects of their objects generates hostility, resentment and apolitical unrest. This, in the absence of unifying political symbolism, does not lead to the continuous dissent and transgression hoped for by liberal postmodernists but to an atomised and resentful 'society of enemies' (Hall, 2012b).

As the capitalist economy enters a new phase in history where its past high level of growth becomes impossible (Harvey, 2011; Heinberg, 2011), the neofeudal socio-economic structure is polarising even further, and economic participation and status – even subsistence for those in the Global South – cannot be guaranteed for the bulk of an expanding population. Further serious unrest and an increasing migration into low-level, normalised and largely undetected criminality is likely (see Hall *et al.*, 2008) alongside the continuation and probable expansion and intensification of the systems of surveillance and social control operated by neoliberal states. This is not a 'prediction'; in many pockets across the globe, this is happening right now (Hall, 2012c; Žižek, 2011). The only question is how far and how rapidly it might spread

as global growth moves deeper into its uneven slowdown. Unless social science – already caught with its trousers down once as it offered virtually no response to the financial crisis in 2008 (Chakrabortty, 2012) – accepts that fundamental context, it will lag quite considerably behind the pace of real processes and events and be unable to contribute to the intellectual and political renewal required to avert a slow-motion disaster.

References

Badiou, A. (2002). *Ethics*. London: Verso.

Badiou, A. (2007). *The Century*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Badiou, A. (2010). *The Meaning of Sarkozy*. London: Verso.

Bauman, Z. (2000). *Liquid Modernity*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Bevir, M. (2011). *The Making of British Socialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Chakrabortty, A. (2012). Economics has failed us: But where are the fresh voices? *The Guardian*, 16 April 2012.

Chase, M. (2007). *Chartism: A New History*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Dahrendorf, R. (1969). *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Featherstone, M. (2007). *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*. London: Sage.

Fisher, M. (2009). *Capitalist Realism*. London: Zero.

Fukuyama, F. (1993). *The End of History and the Last Man*. London: Harper Perennial.

Hall, S. (2012a). *Theorizing Crime and Deviance: A New Perspective*. London: Sage.

Hall, S. (2012b). Consumer culture and the meaning of the urban riots in England. In S. Hall and S. Winlow (Eds.), *New Directions in Criminological Theory*. London: Routledge.

Hall, S. (2012c). Don't look up, don't look down: Liberal criminology's fear of the supreme and the subterranean. *Crime, Media, Culture: Special Issue: York Deviancy Conference* 2011, 8(2), 197–212.

Hall, S. and Winlow, S. (2003). Rehabilitating Leviathan: Reflections on the state, economic regulation and violence reduction. *Theoretical Criminology*, 7(2), 139–162.

Hall, S., Winlow, S., and Ancrum, C. (2008). *Criminal Identities and Consumer Culture: Crime, Exclusion and the New Culture of Narcissism*. Cullompton: Willan.

Harvey, D. (2011). *The Enigma of Capital*. London: Profile Books.

Heath, J. and Potter, A. (2006). *The Rebel Sell*. London: Capstone.

Heinberg, R. (2011). *The End of Growth*. London: Clairview Books.

Hobsbawm, E. (Ed.) (1968). *Labouring Men*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Judt, T. (2010). *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*. London: Vintage.

Judt, T. (2011). *Ill Fares the Land*. London: Penguin.

Katz, J. (1988). *Seductions of Crime*. New York: Basic Books.

Kushner, A. and Valman, N. (1998). *Remembering Cable Street: Fascism and Anti-fascism in British Society*. London: Vallentine Mitchell.

Lash, S. (2010). *Intensive Culture*. London: Sage.

Laybourn, K. (1993). *The General Strike of 1926*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Lea, J. and Young, J. (1993). *What Is to Be Done about Law and Order?* London: Pluto Press.

Lebow, V. (1955). Price competition in 1955. *Journal of Retailing*, 31(1), 5–10.

Marx, K. and Engels, F. (2004, 1848). *The Communist Manifesto*. London: Penguin.

Priestland, D. (2012). *Merchant, Soldier, Sage: A New History of Power*. London: Allen Lane.

Reiner, R. (2007). *Law and Order: An Honest Citizen's Guide to Crime and Control*. Oxford: Polity.

Rudé, G. (1964). *The Crowd in History: A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England 1730–1848*. New York: John Wiley.

Sassoon, D. (1997). *One Hundred Years of Socialism*. London: Fontana.

Skeggs, B. (2004). *Class, Self, Culture*. London: Routledge.

Smart, B. (2010). *Consumer Society*. London: Sage.

Stiegler, B. (2009). *Acting Out*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Stiegler, B. (2010). *For a New Critique of Political Economy*. Oxford: Polity.

Stiegler, B. (2011). *The Decadence of Industrial Democracies – Volume 1*. Oxford: Polity.

Thompson, E.P. (1991, 1963). *The Making of the English Working Class*. London: Penguin.

Thomsen, J.P.F. (1997). *British Politics and Trade Unions in the 1980s*. London: Dartmouth.

Treadwell, J., Briggs, D., Winlow, S., and Hall, S. (2013). Shopocalypse now: Consumer culture and the English riots of 2011. *British Journal of Criminology*, 53(1), 1–17.

van Wingerden, S. (1999). *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain, 1866–1928*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Varoufakis, Y. (2011). *The Global Minotaur: America, The True Origins of the Financial Crisis and the Future of the World Economy*. London: Zed Books.

Webster, C. (2003). Race, space and fear: Imagined geographies of racism, crime, violence and disorder in Northern England. *Capital and Class*, May, 80, 95–122.

Webster, C. (2012). Return of the repressed? A retrospective of policing and disorder 1981–2011. In S. Winlow and R. Atkinson (Eds.), *New Directions in Crime and Deviancy*. London: Routledge.

Wieviorka, M. (2009). *Violence: A New Approach*. London: Sage.

Winlow, S. (2001). *Badfellas: Crime, Tradition and New Masculinities*. Oxford: Berg.

Winlow, S. (2012). Is it OK to talk about capitalism now? Or, why criminology must take a leap of faith. In S. Winlow and R. Atkinson (Eds.), *New Directions in Crime and Deviancy*. London: Routledge.

Winlow, S. and Hall, S. (2012a). A predictably obedient riot: Postpolitics, consumer culture, and the English riots of 2011. *Cultural Politics*, 8(3), 465–488.

Winlow, S. and Hall, S. (2012b). What is an 'ethics committee'? Academic governance in an epoch of belief and incredulity. *British Journal of Criminology*, 52(2), 400–416.

Young, J. (1999) *The Exclusive Society: Social Exclusion, Crime and Difference in Late Modernity*. London: Sage.

Žižek, S. (1995). *Tarrying with the Negative*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Žižek, S. (2002). *Did Someone Say Totalitarianism?: Four Interventions in the (Mis)Use of a Notion*. London: Verso.

Žižek, S. (2008). *Violence*: *Six Sideways Reflections*. London: Verso.

Žižek, S. (2011). *Living in the End Times*. London: Verso.

7
Inequality Constitutes a Particular Place*

Danny Dorling and Carl Lee

Introduction

Riot draws the landscape around it into unique focus. In the USA, in late 2011 and early 2012, hundreds of tent cities were erected, in protest more than as modern-day Hoovervilles. The global Occupy movement spread to the steps of St Paul's Cathedral. Across Europe, there was anger and turmoil. In a few places there was rioting, including places that had thought themselves largely immune. Violent clashes played out on the streets of Athens and Madrid as responses to externally imposed 'restructuring' from the troika of the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In the UK, many people asked why a large number, but tiny proportion, of mostly young people rioted in August 2011. Many have also questioned the part that rising inequalities could have played in making a number of people poorer and for some to become angry.

By 2018, government cuts in the UK are predicted by the IMF (2013) to bring the UK level of public spending (as a share of Gross Domestic Product) almost to a par with the paltry proportion spent by the USA. Given current spending plans for austerity, the UK will spend less of its wealth on public goods than Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan. Is it any wonder that more extreme Republicans and affiliates of the Tea Party have been visiting England to examine government austerity, or, as they call it, 'learn lessons'? However, now, when they come, they should be careful exactly where they stay in London. It is no longer that

---

safe a city. Young adults in both the UK and the USA today have only ever known a country in which income and wealth have been redistributed from poor to rich – to the detriment of all. How much money could be saved by doing the reverse and redistributing from rich to poor? The answer is an enormous amount, but more in the USA than anywhere else. Within the last few years the record of the USA on curtailing the growth of inequalities has been poor, but far better than that of the UK. Given all of this, it is worth asking how much reparation is required in the long run for a sense eventually to emerge that we are all in this together. It may help to see how events are viewed from outside a country, so we start with reports from a Chinese daily newspaper and end with a study published in *The Washington Post*.

Riots: The language of the unheard?

For a few days in August 2011, London and anarchy were the talk of the world. The Chinese government even congratulated the government in London for considering turning off the power to mobile phone towers and thinking of censoring the internet. Indeed, it was reported that the government had considered deploying the 3rd Battalion The Rifles onto the streets of London. On the riots themselves, writing in the *China Daily Post*, Londoner Murad Qureshi reiterated a common response:

> Western youths do not suffer absolute poverty. Nevertheless, they feel the pangs of relative poverty in a city where some parts, like central London, have become a playground for the super-rich and where they feel excluded from the game of consumerism. The scale of inequality in our society is undoubtedly an underlying factor. But it is tragic that young people seem to believe that the only way to fix this imbalance is to have all the latest electronic gadgets, which they looted from the shops and establishments they destroyed or damaged.
>
> (Chair of the London Assembly Environment Committee, quoted in 'Debate: London riots', *China Daily Post*, 15 August 2011)

Murad Qureshi was writing in a debate that the paper had set up with Binod Singh, an Indian lecturer working at Beijing's Foreign Studies University. In reply to Quereshi's comments about the underlying factors, Singh quoted what he thought were Martin Luther King's words. From outside the UK, what was happening looked both extreme and familiar. This is what Singh reported Martin Luther King to have said 44 years earlier:

> When you cut facilities, slash jobs, abuse power, discriminate, drive people into deeper poverty and shoot people dead whilst refusing to provide answers or justice, the people will rise up and express their anger and frustration if you refuse to hear their cries. A riot is the language of the unheard.

Martin Luther King could have said this, but it is hard to find any evidence that he did. What we know he did say is: 'A riot is, at bottom, the language of the unheard' (Knowles, 2009). Quite how his words were edited and added to we may never know, but Binod's version now circulates widely on the Chinese whispers of the internet. There is a delicious irony in Binod's version.

The irony is that recently two economists have hypothesised that quickly cutting public spending causes riots. They used data from almost all of the last century and found that the nature of the austerity is key: 'expenditure cuts wreak havoc, tax increases do so only to a small extent and insignificantly. Overall, the budget balance matters for predicting unrest' (Ponticelli and Voth, 2011).

Furthermore, historical comparisons throw up inconvenient truths. On 4 March 1941 *The Times* reported on an 'epidemic' of looting in the aftermath of bombing raids over the city. In that same year, 4,584 looting cases were processed by London courts alone. Some 70 years later, following the riots in England in 2011, the calls to mend what David Cameron termed our 'broken society' – usually couched in terms of better parenting and more discipline in schools – had a hollow ring when held up against the historical record.

In the UK in August 2011, five people died in the riots. The riots in Los Angeles in August 1965 claimed at least 28 lives (BBC, 2008). It was amid the aftermath of that Los Angeles bloodshed that Martin Luther King wrote about the language of the unheard. No doubt his detractors during the 1960s when he was writing claimed that poorer Americans had never had it as good and there was no excuse for their criminality.

In contrast with being poor and/or black in the 1960s, this was certainly true. It was striking how many British people in the summer of 2011 articulated that the London rioters should be sent to Sierra Leone or Sudan to experience real deprivation. However, in reality, few people compare their lives with their parents' standards of living, or with the living standards of people in another country. When they complain about inequality and injustice, or just about being bored and not having stuff, they – we – compare ourselves with those around us.

Riots: The work of gangs?

In many ways, the internet resembles a graffiti-covered wall, replete with people writing on it complaining about graffiti. One of the pieces of graffiti plastered across the blogosphere in August 2011 claimed that the riots were the work of gangs. Members of the upper classes, whose predominant experience of gangs is their membership of university dining clubs (and later exclusive gyms), were especially vocal.

David Cameron, the UK Prime Minster, had famously been a member of an aristocratic dining club in his early 20s – a club which revelled in disorder and violence, but which did not give him much experience of normal street violence. In response to Cameron's views on gang culture, a series of better-informed people began to explain why it was not in the interests of gangs to start riots.

Elijah Kerr was reported by the news organisation Reuters as being a former London gang member who did not trust the government, police or press, but who nevertheless decided on 15 August 2011 to speak out because the claims were simply getting silly. He explained:

> They [the government] is trying to say gangs . . . organised the whole riot a week before to loot a Curry's [electrical store]. It's so stupid and ridiculous . . . It's just rubbish . . .

> All those involved, they are little kids on bikes. KIDS. Look at who has been charged . . . they're not gangsters. Youths who have nothing, who have been swept up in trying to fight back against their circumstances and the police 'cos there's just nowt for them.
>
> (Ambrogi, 2011)

We can begin to assemble a picture of the rioters from the Ministry of Justice's (2012) own figures. As of 10 August 2012, those who had been convicted and sentenced for public order offences were predominantly young men aged 10–20. Some 41% of defendants were from the white ethnic group (self-reported), 39% from the black ethnic group and the remainder from other ethnic backgrounds. Sentencing was swift and severe, with 81% of offences leading to immediate custody compared with 33% in normal times.

Important research has also been undertaken on the neighbourhood conditions of those appearing on riot-related charges (Singleton, 2011). Using Ministry of Justice data on the addresses of those appearing in magistrates' courts, the postcodes of those suspected of rioting were mapped against the indices of deprivation. The research concluded that

41% of suspects lived in the 10% most deprived places in England, and that the majority of areas where suspects lived were categorised as deprived, with 66% of those areas becoming poorer between 2007 and 2010 (Singleton, 2011).

A tale of three cities: London, Manchester and Sheffield

Why, for example, were places like Sheffield not hit by riots in August 2011? Were youngsters there not 'feral' enough (as the then Secretary of State for Justice, Ken Clarke, had chosen to describe those who rioted)? There was not as much as a sniff of civil disorder in Sheffield in August 2011. This was also true in the 1980s. Even in 1981, apart from a 500-strong crowd that was dispersed before they could turn their attention to some street anarchy, Sheffield was quiet while other major cities burned.

Sheffield also has one of the lowest crime rates in Western Europe for a city of its size. Is there a place-specific ingredient that could help to explain why citizens of Sheffield seem less inclined towards civil disobedience? That great inequality exists in Sheffield is not in dispute, but the way it is manifested on the ground is different from London and many other cities in the UK. Residential segregation is more marked in Sheffield, with large outlying social housing estates being the areas of greatest deprivation in the city.

Poorer Sheffield estates can be relatively self-contained, with low levels of residential churn. They are notably far away from the wealthier areas and usually disconnected from the city centre. Travelling to wealthier areas for richer pickings is fraught with danger. If you go looting you need an escape route to get your booty home. Opportunity is everything, as that spate of looting in 1941 showed.

As previously noted, Alex Singleton (2011) of the University of Liverpool has mapped the Manchester riots according to the given addresses of arrested rioters. His work demonstrates a clear link between areas of deprivation and propensity to riot – 41% of suspects lived in the highest decile of deprivation. It also shows a clear inclination for rioters to commute. Using the same mapped data it can be demonstrated that the distance between where rioters lived and their acts of rioting was on average between 2 and 3 km. Why then did disaffected youth in Sheffield show less inclination to commute to riot?

First, Sheffield city centre isn't Manchester city centre. There are far fewer shops and few selling big-ticket items. According to research by Callcredit Marketing Solutions, in 2010, Manchester city centre was

the second largest retail concentration in the country with an annual turnover of £921 million. By comparison, Sheffield, with a turnover of £420 million, ranks a mere 22nd nationally. As for what are known as 'premium retailers', Manchester is nationally top, beating even Oxford Street in London. Sheffield barely makes the top 30, with Meadowhall Regional Shopping Centre at number 29.

Meadowhall is way out of town and designed like a retail fortress. It is a privately controlled space set among the 'prairie-lands' of car parks, and bordered by the M1 and industry. From a retailer's perspective it is a highly defensible space. Press one button and the modern equivalents of portcullises descend.

This last observation may be pertinent for the future of our retail environments. As class divisions become entrenched through growing inequality, and as consumption patterns become increasingly differentiated, 'premium retailers' may increasingly choose to 'ghettoise' themselves in tightly controlled, closely watched-over and privately policed retail environments.

Geography matters when analysing riots. However, if you are a Cabinet Minister planning our apartheid future, it is best not to be too bullish about Sheffield. The city is not a stranger to public disorder, particularly that driven by a political agenda. One of Margaret Thatcher's longest-held memories may well have been her only Prime Ministerial visit to the city, on 28 April 1983, when 1,000 police battled thousands of protesters outside Sheffield Cathedral.

Battle of Orgreave

No shops were looted but significant violence was unleashed on those defending Thatcher. Some 14 months later the 'Battle of Orgreave' (held on the city's boundaries) saw Thatcher's troops extract significant revenge and retribution, with 95 people being charged with riot-related offences.

Such behaviour was a fairly recent phenomenon in the city. A bit of industrial push and shove in some earlier steel strikes notwithstanding, Sheffield, led by a leftist local government, was largely at one with its working class population.

From the first Labour council of the 1920s right through to the late 1970s, inequality in the city had been progressively reduced. Citizens had an active stake in their city and the city council through housing, transport, education and leisure facilities, which were at the heart of the city's self-image. Thatcherism changed all of that.

The language of outrage and demonisation is not new, nor is the focus on a supposedly 'new' and dangerous underclass. The quote 'The present troubled state of our social life [rests] with the 30 years' blind worship of their nostrums by . . . our Liberal friends' could quite easily have come from the pen of Melanie Phillips of the *Daily Mail* in 2011. Instead 'mendacious' Mel's response to the riots was entitled 'How the liberals ruined Britain' (Phillips, 2011).

The first quote above is actually attributed to Matthew Arnold writing in 1869. For those wishing to immerse themselves in this historical continuum of outrage and fear by the wealthy about the poor, Geoffrey Pearson's classic work, *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears*, published just after the 1982 riots, is an invaluable source.

Wherever you look across a world in tumult, whether it is Egypt, Syria, Spain, India, London or even Manchester, common themes emerge. Above all else, within these countries and cities there is growing inequality and an increasing exhortation towards consumption. Power is becoming more concentrated in a confidently assertive class of the global super-rich who are increasingly detached from the everyday lives of most people.

In India, uneven GDP growth at nearly 10% year on year has led to a staggering growth of shopping malls. In the city of Bengaluru (Bangalore) there were 16 major malls at the last count. All are privately policed and keen to enforce clear socio-economic segregation. These are spaces for the urban elite, but they are looked upon with covetous eyes by the majority of Indians who are excluded from the global brands that proliferate on the marble shopfloors.

Is India that different from Britain? India is far from immune from civil disorder and rioting, and enclave living is increasingly the norm for the wealthy elites and even those a few clicks down the social scale.

As the super-rich enter a new stratosphere of wealth it will become increasingly difficult to convince millions of poor Britons, tens of millions of others around the world, hundreds of millions of people in China living just over the breadline, and 700 million very poor Indians to accept their lot. It is this new world economy that has become more feral, more dog-eat-dog, more untamed, more uncultivated.

A growing divide?

Commenting on the unfolding disorder in August 2011, Lynsey Hanley, a columnist for the London-based newspaper *The Guardian* argued that it was impossible to divorce the troubles from the growing social divide

in the UK, and the feeling that some people were being left behind. She concluded:

> Polarisation between rich and poor areas, as much as between rich and poor people, has been increasing since the 70s, in large part because regeneration projects have not been able to make good the simple fact that wages and employment prospects at the bottom have collapsed, while those at the top have gone through the roof.
>
> (Hanley, 2011)

She was not alone in her views. While leading politicos flew back from their luxury resorts, facial tans gleaming, youth workers on the ground in London were explaining to reporters what they thought was happening. Bloggers began constructing the basis of a narrative that is likely to become more firmly cemented as time passes:

> as one youth worker explained to a reporter, 'Youths are frustrated, they want all the nice clothes. They ain't got no money, they don't have jobs...' Couple this with the growing police harassment, the shutting down of social services, rising rents and gentrification and an ideologically bankrupt – in many cases just plain bankrupt – economic system that rewards only the most avaricious, competitive individualism and nobody should still be surprised that a generation born of futility and resentment, wholly unheard and bereft of any sense of consequence or accountability, has seized upon an opportunity to reclaim some small and fleeting handful of power.
>
> (Eloff, 2011)

If it were only the extent of inequality that fuels riots there would have been fewer riots in the UK in the early 1980s. Back then – measured both by income and wealth – we had almost never been as equal. However, in the early 1980s (as is again the case now), the UK was becoming more unequal and there was not much hope of that trend reversing. So it is not the extent of inequalities but the direction that they are taking which correlates with riot. Yet how much awareness of inequality do people explicitly have and how much seeps through implicitly into a collective, largely unconscious, well of despair?

There is evidence of a growing fear of falling to the bottom. Near the bottom are people who are appealing benefit decisions. Gateshead's Citizens Advice Bureau (2011) reported that in the North-East of England the benefit appeal process invariably takes over 6 months, sometimes

12 months or longer. Cuts to legal aid are likely to make a bad situation worse. Young adults can see how their parents are treated and do not look at that kind of future with envy.

> An adult [in England] appealing an incapacity benefit decision suggesting she/he is fit for work is entitled to a reduced rate of income support amounting to £52.36 a week. She/he is likely to spend, on average, £10 on gas and £10 on electricity, leaving her/him with £32.36 a week. Water charges are at least £6 a week and many people have to make up a shortfall in rent, uncovered by housing benefit, of at least £5 a week. This leaves £21.36. A basic TV licence is £3.50 a week, which leaves £16.36, i.e. £2.33 a day for everything else, including food and drink, clothes and travel expenses.
> (Gateshead's Citizens Advice Bureau, 2011)

Put more succinctly from a part of the UK (Cambridge) that is often seen as affluent, a debt adviser writes:

> It makes me so angry that the gutsiness and sheer hard graft of the people I see is buried under garbage about benefit scroungers: so many people with disabilities and/or caring for small children and/or living on pension credit, people who care for people with disabilities... And that on incomes that don't cover the rent, maybe in villages where services are increasingly non-existent.
> (Personal communication to one of the authors from an adviser at Cambridge Citizens Advice Bureau)

Fewer young people can now look forward to a decent life, especially in London. For the large majority, getting rich quick or even moving into the best-off fifth of society is an increasingly unlikely option. As income inequalities rise, the gaps between us grow, and the chances of moving between groups diminish just as the significance of such moves rises.

In the UK it appears foolish to suggest that the current trend of rapidly rising inequality is unrelated to disorder. If the wealth of the rich had been cut, it is unlikely that people would have taken to the streets, as we show in the Tables 7.1 and 7.2, there are simply not enough rich people. Yet how bad is inequality in the UK and what would it take to get back to those days before the early 1980s riots when it was a more equitable and peaceful place? Let us start with what has happened most recently and then work back a generation.

A divided nation

In October 2010 the UK Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) produced a series of estimates demonstrating that the comprehensive spending review announced that month would hit families in the poorest 20% of the income bracket the most. An incensed government turned on the IFS. The Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, said that 'the IFS was wrong to claim that the biggest losers from the £81 billion public service cuts were the poorest families' and he suggested that a fuller analysis would reach a different conclusion. By this he meant an analysis that suggested that the middle and upper classes would come to rely less on state support, but he could not produce any numbers to back his claim.

Andrea Leadsom, a former Barclays banker and now UK Conservative MP, said that the IFS figures 'might misrepresent the number of poorer households affected by tax and benefit changes' (Inman, 2010). Yet, just like Nick Clegg, she provided no evidence for her assertion. This was the routine response of government in 2010 and 2011 to criticism: try to rubbish opponents with the statistical equivalent of innuendo.

Mike Brewer, then head of direct tax and welfare at the IFS, responded by pointing out that what was being criticised in the IFS analysis was the reliability or assumptions made within the government's own surveys, conducted on its behalf by the Office for National Statistics and directly in the case of those of the Department for Work and Pensions. *The Guardian* reported:

> Brewer conceded that a minority of households within the lower deciles of its analysis, when interviewed about their responses to surveys, produced answers that could skew the analysis. But he emphasised the small number of people involved were unlikely to alter the outcome.
>
> (Inman, 2010)

What he might have added is that there are likely to be more problems inherent in estimating hidden income for tax avoidance reasons at the top of the income distribution than at the bottom and, if anything, the estimates might be more biased in underestimating how well the very affluent have avoided being hurt in the downturn.

In 2010, London's *Sunday Times* newspaper reported that the wealth of the 1,000 richest people in the UK had risen by 29.9% in one year, with each holding, on average, £335.5 million (Beresford, 2010). In 2011 it reported that this figure had risen by a further 25%. Beneath these 'very richest', the 'extremely rich' did almost as well, the 'very rich' not quite

as well and so on down to the 'average', who experienced a real fall in living standards for the first time in decades. It is likely that figures will soon show that those below the 'average' experienced a real increase in absolute poverty. So if, as the IFS says, the cuts have hurt those at the bottom most and those at the top have seen their wealth soar and bonuses restored, just how bad has inequality become?

Just how unequal are we?

Almost three years before defending the IFS against Liberal and Conservative attack, Mike Brewer and two colleagues produced a report on the extent of income inequalities in the UK. It was entitled *Racing Away? Income Inequality and the Evolution of High Incomes* (Brewer *et al.*, 2008). Because of what has happened since, we now know that this represents a conservative analysis of the current state of income inequalities.

Table 7.1 is based on data provided by that 2008 IFS report, reproduced because its figures can be used to compare inequality in 2008 with the situation in 1970. Data are also incorporated from the recently released World Top Incomes Survey. The table presents just how well paid people at the top are compared with those near the top, those near them and the rest. These groups are defined as follows. The richest are the best off 1000th (0.1%) of the population. The next row of the table is the remainder of the best off 1% of the population (people in the top 1% but not in the top 0.1%). The next row is the remainder of the best off 10%, and then the final row is the 90% of us all remaining.

Non-taxpayers and wealth not subject to income tax are not included in the table. If they were, the picture would be far more inequitable.

Table 7.1   UK annual income, before tax, all taxpayers, 1970–2005 (2005 prices)

	Number of people	Average income in 2005	Change in 1970–2005 (%)	Share in 2005 (%)	Average income in 1970	Share in 1970 (%)
Top 0.1%	47,000	£780,043	694	5.0	£98,193	1.2
Top 0.1–1.0%	420,000	£155,832	181	9.0	£55,535	5.9
Top 10 – 1.0%	4.2 million	£49,960	143	28.8	£20,525	21.8
Bottom 90%	24.8 million	£16,837	48	57.2	£11,400	71.2

Similarly, if these figures were worked out for households rather than individuals, the inequalities would grow (but, equivalised for household structure, they would shrink a little too). Even so, these figures are bad enough.

Table 7.1 indicates that most earning adults in the UK – almost 25 million taxpayers – have an income of just under £17,000 a year (£16,837). This has risen by 48% in real terms since 1970. Two people today can buy what three could afford during their parents' time. The next column shows that this 90% of the population have recourse to 57.2% of all income, a much smaller share than the 71.2% that their parents held but, in absolute terms, much more money.

Above the bottom 90% of the population, the next 9% (the top 10% less the top single percentile) have an average income of almost exactly £50,000 a year. They are doing well. They are 143% better off compared with their equivalents 35 years before, who received just £20,525 each a year. Two of these people can now buy what five in the same group could buy a generation ago. Compared with those below them, they have been raking it in.

Yet above most of the best-off 10% are the best off 1%, who have done even better. Even excluding the very richest 1000th (0.1%) of the population, the best off 1% of people are now each, on average, more than three times as rich as the remainder of the best-off 10% of taxpaying adults in Britain. Their average income exceeds £155,000 a year. They now take home 9% of all income, even though they are only 0.9% of the population. Assuming they come from the same strata of society, a couple now has the combined spending power of their four parents and of another couple as well; all of this as compared to as recently as a single generation ago. These are the people in the Prime Ministerial pay bracket.

However, the Prime Minister does not operate in the circles of people in his pay bracket. Will Hutton (2011) was sponsored by the UK government to produce a supposedly independent report on income inequalities during 2010 and 2011. His report revealed that the Prime Minister's real take-home pay, including such perks as country retreats, exceeds £500,000:

> Radio 4's *More or Less* calculated that the PM's total package could be worth £581,651, including an estimate of the annual cash value of the pension (£45,651), a nominal rental value of accommodation at Downing Street and Chequers of £338,000.
>
> (Hutton, 2011)

The Prime Minster moves in the circles of the best off 1000th of the UK population. In 1970 the average income of this group in today's money was just below £100,000. Today it exceeds £780,000. A couple in the best-off 1000th today has the income of eight such couples a generation ago. That is enough to leave the remainder of the best-off percentile feeling very sore indeed, especially when they are told that they receive too much. Like everyone else, they receive too much compared with those below them and too little compared with those above them.

Redistribute

Pay is relative – just like poverty. What matters is what everyone else is paid. That is what determines where you can live, where your children can go to school, whether you can have what is considered to be a decent holiday, and pay the television licence and be part of society or not pay it and be a criminal. The current pay bill of the UK, based on simply multiplying the figures above, is £730 billion a year.

This is calculated simply by multiplying 47,000 by £780,043 and adding to that total the product (multiplication) of 420,000 by £155,832; 4.2 million times £49,960 and 24.8 million times £16,837. It is a remarkably simple calculation to carry out. All of the figures are simply taken from Table 7.1. One reason why such high income inequalities might be tolerated in the UK and the USA is that multiplying four pairs of relatively large numbers together and adding up the results is seen in these countries as a particular skill.

If we were to return to the pay differentials of 1970, but to increase the incomes of the bottom 90% of the population by 1%, the total pay bill would be only £537 billion a year. It is easy enough to work this out from the figures above. The overall pay bill could be reduced by 25% and – at the same time – 90% of people in the UK could be better off. It is interesting to hear the wealthy try to explain how this is not affordable.

As the pay differential increases, the way in which people treat each other changes. For example, students who receive a tiny fraction of lecturers' incomes, often now in the form of loans, can be seen as less deserving to be heard. In fact, how do you legitimise hearing them when they work so little in comparison with the great orator who beings: 'This morning's lecture is on . . . ' (Delph-Janiurek, 2000).

If you think what has happened in the UK is astounding, take a look at what is going on elsewhere. In Canada, it is now becoming accepted within cities such as Toronto that whereas recently 80% of people were

doing okay and 10% were either rich or poor, today 40% are struggling beneath those former poverty rates, only 20% remain in the middle and the rest are strung out above the middle but having to constantly compete to appear talented in a race based on lies (Wilson and Keil, 2008). Both the UK and Canada have been replicating trends that began a little earlier in the USA.

Table 7.2 for the USA is reproduced exactly as Table 7.1. All we have done to create it is to merge a couple of cells of data from a more complex original that was published in *The Washington Post* on 18 June 2011.

Britain's wealthiest 1000th (0.1%) still has a long way to go to match their counterparts in the USA, but they are currently converging with them. Even more remarkable is the fact that, in real terms, the bottom 90% of adults in the USA are slightly worse off today than they were in 1970. Give everyone in the bottom 90% in the USA back that 1% and reduce the inequalities between the remaining 10% to what they were in 1970, and you then reduce the overall pay bill of the USA from $8,247 billion to $6,404 billion. Funnily enough, the Tea Party has not yet worked out how easily the USA could start to live within its means by this mechanism.

Finally, a word needs to be said about wealth – the amalgamation of excess income. Within the USA today, wealth inequalities have recently risen rapidly when comparing households designated to be of white ethnicity and those who are labelled black or Hispanic. This increase in inequality in wealth began before the economic crash of 2008, but it was greatly exacerbated by it. By 2009 the average white family had recourse to 19 times the wealth of the average black family.

By 2009, when all of the wealth of black households in the USA had been averaged out, there was just $5,677 to share among every

Table 7.2 USA annual income, before tax, all taxpayers, 1970–2008 (2008 prices)

	Number of people	Average income in 2008	Change in 1970–2008 (%)	Share in 2008 (%)	Average income in 1970	Share in 1970 (%)
Top 0.1%	152,000	$5.6 million	385	10.3	$1.15 million	2.7
Top 0.1–1.0%	1.4 million	$636,522	118	10.6	$291,527	6.2
Top 10–1.0%	13.6 million	$164,372	49	27.1	$110,181	23.4
Bottom 90%	137.2 million	$31,244	−1	52.0	$31,560	67.6

household. Just four years earlier that figure had been $12,124. The housing market crash hit black families especially hard. However, Hispanics were similarly affected, their average wealth falling from $18,359 per household in 2005 to just $6,325 by 2009. These are huge drops for millions of people from already relatively low levels of average wealth over very short time periods. All of the sources for these claims are provided by Kochhar *et al.* (2011).

In contrast with other ethnic groups in the USA, the average white family saw its mean household wealth fall from $134,992 in 2005 to $113,149 by 2009. Most white families are not that wealthy but the average is dragged upwards by a very wealthy minority. However, the median white family is still much richer than the median black or Hispanic family. Having low wealth in the richest country on earth is particularly demeaning. Inequalities in wealth by ethnic group in the UK have not yet been measured as carefully as they have in the USA.

Conclusion

Just as rioters do not consider possible prison sentences as they riot, not a single rioter will have been seething with anger over that 694% increase in the income of the richest in the UK over the course of a generation as they put a single brick through a single window, but prison sentences and rising income and wealth inequalities still influence riots. The people imprisoned will be more careful to cover their faces next time. However, until inequalities begin to fall, there will always be a next time.

The recent riots in England have drawn the social landscape around them into unique focus. At first there was condemnation, then recrimination and now contemplation. Next there may be concern, fear and contestation. Places are constituted not only by the social landscape found there but also by what then ensues due to that landscape. These were not just any riots; they were the riots that constituted what it meant to be in London, and indeed the UK, in August 2011.

References

Ambrogi, S. (2011). *Riots Are a Cry for Help: Ex London Gang Leader*. Retrieved from the Reuters website: http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/08/12/us-britain-riots-gangs-idUSTRE77B47I20110812.

BBC (2008). *On This Day*. Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/15/newsid_3750000/3750939.stm.

Beresford, P. (25 April 2010). The Sunday Times Rich List 2010. *Sunday Times*, *Supplement*.

Brewer, M., Sibieta, L., and Wren-Lewis, L. (2008). *Racing Away? Income Inequality and the Evolution of High Incomes*. London: Institute for Fiscal Studies.

Delph-Janiurek, T. (2000). Walking the walk and talking the talk: Bodies, conversation, gender and power in higher education in England. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 1(1), 83–100.

Dorling, D. (2012). Inequality constitutes a particular place. *Social and Cultural Geography*, 13(1), 1–9.

Dorling, D. and Lee, C. (2011). The geography of poverty. *Socialist Review*, October.

Eloff, A. (2011). *Hackney is Everywhere*. Retrieved from http://www.thoughtleader .co.za/readerblog/2011/08/12/hackney-is-everywhere/.

Gateshead Citizens Advice Bureau (2011). *2010/2011 Annual Report*. Gateshead: Citizens Advice Bureau.

Hanley, L. (2011). *Invisible Forcefields Surround Our Estates*. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/11/invisible-forcefield-regeneration-estates.

Hutton, W. (2011). *Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector*. Retrieved from http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130129110402/ http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/hutton_fairpay_review.pdf.

Inman, P. (2010). *IFS Stands by Judgment That Spending Cuts Are Regressive*. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2010/nov/01/ budgetdeficit-public-sector-cuts.

International Monetary Fund (2013). *World Economic Outlook Database: October 2013 Edition*. Retrieved from http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2013/ 02/weodata/index.aspx.

Knowles, E. (Ed.). (2009). *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kochhar, R., Fry, R., and Taylor, P. (2011). *Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Blacks, Hispanics*. PEW Research Center Social and Demographic Trends Report. Retrieved from http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/ 07/26/wealth-gaps-rise-to-record-highs-between-whites-blacks-hispanics/.

Ministry of Justice (2012). *Statistical Bulletin on the Public Disorder of 6th to 9th August 2011–September 2012 Update*. Retrieved from https://www.justice .gov.uk/downloads/statistics/criminal-justice-stats/public-disorder-stats/ august-public-disorder-stats-bulletin-130912.pdf.

Pearson, G. (1983). *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Phillips, M. (2011). *How the Liberals Ruined Britain*. Retrieved from http:// melaniephillips.com/how-the-liberals-ruined-britain.

Ponticelli, J. and Voth, H. (2011). *Austerity and Anarchy: Budget Cuts and Social Unrest in Europe, 1919–2009* (Centre for Economic Policy Research No. 8513). London: Centre for Economic Policy Research.

Qureshi, M. (2011). *Debate: London Riots*. Retrieved from the *China Daily Post* website: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2011-08/15/content_ 13110309.htm.

Singh, B. (2011). *Debate: London Riots*. Retrieved from the *China Daily Post* website: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2011-08/15/content_13110309_ 2.htm.

Singleton, A. (2011a). *Update: Riots and Area Deprivation*. Retrieved from http://www.alex-singleton.com/update-riots-and-area-deprivation/.

Singleton, A. (2011b). *What are the Neighbourhood Conditions of Those Appearing on Riot-related Charges?* Retrieved from http://www.alex-singleton.com/what-are-the-neighbourhood-conditions-of-those-appearing-on-riot-related-charges/.

The Washington Post (2011). *(Not) Spreading the Wealth*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/business/income-inequality/.

Wilson, D. and Keil, R. (2008). The real creative class. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 9(8), 841–847.

8
Riots in France: Political, Proto-political or Anti-political Turmoils?

Fabien Jobard

Introduction

Since the beginning of the 1980s, France has witnessed a series of small-scale urban riots, which have seemed to recur in a very similar fashion. A deadly encounter with the police (or the rumour thereof) in a deprived urban area is followed by the gathering of angry young men on the main square of the local estates (and not in the wealthier city centres), who engage in nightly confrontations with the police. The confrontations are themselves marked by the rare use of deadly weapons, uneven scenes of looting and, as a kind of trademark of the French riots, a large number of burned cars. Riots in the Lyon area in 1981 seemed to introduce the model, and the most recent known event (Amiens, a middle-range city about 100 km north of Paris, in August 2012, and Trappes, a smaller city about 25 km south-west of Paris) followed the same pattern. To this extent, the famous 2005 episode, when around 300 cities were hit by riots following the death of two youngsters trying to avoid an ID check by the police (Moran, 2012), escaped this unalterable ritualisation only by its duration (two to three weeks of turmoil) and its magnitude (mentioning the probably unintentional homicide of Mr Chenadec – an inhabitant of Stains, near Paris – through a fist punch in the head, when he attempted to avoid the burning of some garbage on the street). Riots in France seem to occur and develop along the lines of an imperturbable rituality, with a quite low effectiveness.

Rituality, reiteration, uselessness: these violent but voiceless urban rioters are frequently defined in the academic (and, more broadly, in public) discussion as 'primitive rebels', in reference to the famous work

of the British historian Eric Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm, 1971; for the recent case of urban riots, Wacquant, 2008 or Lapeyronnie, 2009; and for critical assessments directly focused on the urban youths, Lea, 1999 or Rea, 2006). From this perspective, rioters express strong political grievances (the need for recognition, indignation about their social condition and so on), but they lack the willingness and/or the practical opportunity to gain access to the sphere of the political (parties, press, public opinion and so forth), and therefore their rebellions conform to a 'proto-political' form of collective anger rather than political mobilisation.

The aim of my chapter is to shed new light on the notion of 'primitive rebellions' on the basis of more than 30 years of urban uprisings in France. I will first briefly describe the evolution of the riots since the beginning of the 1980s and the different phases that can be observed under an apparent sense of continuity. This history of the riots shows that rioters are mainly second-generation male immigrants, which supports the idea that rioting is a first act of gaining a political voice, in fact a proto-political revolt.

I will then shift my focus to the argument of rituality, and show how this rituality is in no way the choice of deprived actors engaged in issueless collective actions but the cross-result of the state's tactics (maintenance of order strategies) and town-planning structures of the cities concerned. Moreover, in a manner that refuses to dissociate rationality and rituality, I will use some examples of violent rites as part of a broader political strategy deployed by the rebels. I will show that riots are always local, if not parochial, events and that 'the political' at stake is related to local political demands and local political structures, a point that is unseen by large-scope analysis. This will give me the opportunity to contest the assumption that rioters gain nothing in rioting.

Finally, I will support the point that the political dimension of the riots is not so much a proto-political revolt as an anti-political movement and, as such, a full political voice. At stake in French riots is not the rioters' inability to be part of the political game but their refusal to be involved in it, which in specific circumstances implies a subtle bargaining between violence and vote, and between unconventional and conventional political mobilisations.

At the end, I hope to give a more complex view of French riots than the one which is mostly given in academic debates, and to show that normative views about what should be defined as 'political' actually harm our understanding of this major aspect of contemporary politics in France.

Riots as second-generation migrants' voice?

Riots are numerous and repetitive in France. In reality, they display some patterns of evolution since at least the beginning of the 1980s, when the first urban disorder hit the news and made headlines in the nationwide press. Locating the beginning of this story could fuel a rich debate. In a country characterised by the physical presence on its metropolitan soil of the war in Algeria from 1954 to 1962, and by violent insurgencies of workers and the poor, among whom there were large numbers of migrants, the term 'urban riots' requires cautious use as a historical concept, including the idea that they were first born when they made the headlines at the beginning of the 1980s (on the unseen history of riots see Zancarini-Fournel, 2004 on the Lyon area; and more recently on Paris, see Blanchard, 2012). Deadly encounters with forces of order were a frequent cause of urban disorders as early as the eighteenth century in France (Nicolas, 2008).

Meanwhile, it is undisputable that what has been called the *été chaud des Minguettes* (hot summer in the Minguettes estates, near Lyon) created a shock in public opinion and among political elites. From then on, urban riots were a matter of concern, and to some extent they fuelled moral panic; in any case they contributed to promoting the urban issue on the political agenda in France. My aim in the following section is to describe the evolution and the possible phases of urban disorders in France since 1981, and to address the specificity of the autumn 2005 events when more than 250 cities were hit by a wave of violence.

The socio-geographic evolution of riots since the beginning of the 1980s

In 1981, dozens of youths in housing estates around Lyon engaged in joyriding trips with stolen cars, torching them and letting them burn on their own estates. Even though the total number of destroyed cars is really small in comparison with today's numbers (fewer than 300) and though the Lyon area had already experienced such episodes some years before, these anomic forms of action still create a shock wave among the French public and media (Hajjat, 2013). The *été chaud* occurred only a few months after the election of François Mitterrand as President of the Republic, the first left-wing government since the mid-1950s, and the events seemed to highlight spectacularly a blind spot on the social agenda. Following the *été chaud*, the urban problem was a matter of concern for the public in France. Terms like *cité* (estates) and *banlieue*

(suburb) become usual notions of the everyday political discourse. These notions encompass social concerns that started to emerge in the previous decade, like the unemployment of urban youth, immigration, petty crime or violence, but that from then on fell into common use.

The French government reacted promptly by allocating a large amount of financial resources in order to sustain social prevention programmes, prioritising the removal of (putative) troublemakers from their *cités* during the summer, placing them in summer camps on the French coasts or in the French mountains under the supervision of newly hired social workers (programmes called '*plans anti-été chauds*'; see also Juhem, 2000). More structural policies were then implemented, but they could not stop the deepening of the industrial crisis, the multiplication of hate crimes in the *cités*, the growth of violent acts recorded by the police, and the successes of a right-wing political party – *Le Front National* – headed by Jean-Marie Le Pen. These political and social strains culminated in the second half of the decade, when a conservative government headed by Jacques Chirac (1986–1988) supported law-and-order police chiefs, launched anti-immigration policies and culminated in Jean-Marie Le Pen winning around 15% of the votes in the first ballot in the 1988 Presidential election (for an overview of the 1980s and 1990s, see Bonelli, 2007). Meanwhile, *banlieues* displayed no notable urban disorder during the decade, suggesting the success of the policies implemented in the wake of the Minguettes turmoil.

The situation suddenly changed in October 1990 in a *banlieue* near Lyon called Vaulx-en-Velin, which had experienced civil disturbance as early as 1971 (Zancarini-Fournel, 2004). The death of a handicapped youth during a police chase set the place in flames for two days and nights, during which youths destroyed and plundered the large shopping mall and the local café in the centre of the *cité*, destroyed and burned the local youth club, and fought against riot police forces. Again, the shock was intense. The day before the riots, Lyon's entire political elite had gathered in the *cité* in order to celebrate the renovation programme that led to the renewal of the estates, a programme that was then benchmarked as a model throughout the country. Media coverage of the burning youth centre violently signalled that the causes of urban crisis were still alive. However, in contrast to the preceding decade, numerous episodes of violence hit different *banlieue* towns thereafter, including Mantes-la-Jolie in 1991, Sartrouville in 1992, Melun in 1993, Paris in 1993, Dammarie-lès-Lys in 1997, Toulouse in 1998, Lille in 2001, Montfermeil in 2006, Villiers-le-Bel in 2007, Saint Dizier in 2007, Grigny in 2008, Romans-sur-Isère in 2008, Woippy in

2010, Clermont-Ferrand and Amiens in 2012, and Trappes in 2013. The first half of the 1990s seemed to be particularly intense, when 10–15 urban disorders took place in French *banlieue* towns. In the vast majority of cases, police interaction (or a rumour thereof) was the immediate cause of the violent outbreaks. In all cases, the disorders consisted of a nightly confrontation with the police, the burning of nearby cars and sometimes the plundering of some local shops. During this series of disturbances, significant transformations of riots were at stake.

Contextual aspects of the 2005 riots and their followers (structural analysis)

Over the years, and specifically after the nationwide episode of 2005, the *cités* hit by the riots were small-scale and remote, located in deprived and under-urbanised areas, in contrast to the cities that experienced riot episodes at the beginning of the 1990s in England (Campbell, 1993; Lea and Young, 1993). Saint-Dizier, Romans-sur-Isère, Woippy, Clermont-Ferrand, Amiens and Trappes are not *banlieue* towns swallowed into larger cities but full cities located in former industrial landscapes. To some extent the 2005 episode as such drew a line of demarcation vis-à-vis the 1990s decade. Except for the Paris *banlieue* towns close to the location where two boys died in an electric substation following an ID check operation led by a riot police unit, most of the places involved were towns in the under-urbanised western part of France, known as a place for settlement of new waves of migration from sub-Saharan Africa. Apart from this geographical aspect, some of the recent riots, specifically in the greater area of Paris, have undoubtedly proved to be more violent than the majority of the former ones, the stones being replaced in some cases by firearms (Moran, 2012).

Sociologist Hugues Lagrange (2009) mapped the different variables that seemed to contribute to the riots in 2005. Unsurprisingly, the determining factors of these nationwide riots were the proportion of youths in the town, the rate of illiteracy and the presence in the town of one of the 750 *cités* targeted by government policy on the basis of their acute deprivation. None of these factors is a matter of surprise. The exclusion of young men from Maghrebian origin from the labour market is severe in comparison with peers with French parents, and more spectacular if one considers that the overall educational level reached by these two groups of pupils is broadly the same (Duprez, 2009). More striking are two other factors: a structural one and an event-related one.

The factor linked to the present juncture is a positive relationship between the implementation (or the foreseen implementation) of an urban renewal programme and the riot. A national renewal programme had been introduced by a law in 2003 and began to be implemented in hundreds of French towns from 2004 onwards. These programmes, which aimed to ameliorate the living conditions in these towns (and specifically in their housing estates or *cités*), led in very practical terms to the temporary or definitive eviction of families living in the most rundown buildings, thus inaugurating a great period of uncertainty and stress. The provisions of the urban renewal law affected no fewer than 300,000 housing units. As a result, most of the towns that implemented these projects saw riots occurring in November. Even if social determinants played their unsurprising role, riots also seemed to have been the (rather violent) result of a specific period of stress and uncertainty in given areas, or the collective answer to a political change.

In addition, a structural factor was also at play, namely the presence of recent migrants, mostly from sub-Saharan Africa, in the concerned *cités*. Like many European countries, France does not feature any 'ethnic' of 'racial' information in its census, and sociologists usually base their analysis on self-made inquiries or on proxy variables. Lagrange's variables used to identify migration processes in riot processes were based on the percentage of foreigners from outside the European Union residing in a town and the percentage of large families (with more than six members), which are family structures that in today's France are mostly encountered in families from sub-Saharan Africa. The double presence of non-European foreigners and of large families is largely correlated with the occurrence of riots.

Second-generation migrants as primitive rebels

Put together, these predictive factors show that the 2005 episode did not occur in towns that were hit by the 1990s waves of riots: the 2005 rioters were not the children of the 1990 rioters, who were mostly the sons of immigrants from Maghreb countries (mostly Algeria and Morocco); and, conversely, the children of the 1990 rioters did not take part in the 2005 incidents, which seemed instead to mostly involve sub-Saharan youths. To sum up, migrants' sons protest in the form of urban disorders, confrontations with the police, and the destruction of cars and public goods. And as in every deviant life-course, a desistance process then starts, where participation in violence is discarded as soon as the actors enter adult life. More interesting, however, is that their sons seem

not to engage in this kind of civil disturbance either. Rioting is therefore not a form of deviant or criminal collective protest at a given individual age; it is, rather, a mode of protest undertaken in a familial, migration-related collective life. New waves of migrants' sons settle down and protest through the same inherited pattern of collective action (Rea, 2006, p. 464).

Under this consideration, riots share aspects of historical 'primitive rebellions'. Originally, Eric Hobsbawm coined the notion for rural, not urban, societies (Hobsbawm, 1965, p. 23), but rural societies demonstrating a pattern of maladjustment to the urban capitalist society. In our case, the clash of societies occurs through the confrontation of new waves of migration and the main society embodied by the police in which an 'incident' (Hobsbawm, 1971, p. 15) gives rise to a collective confrontation, specifically an incident that breaches the code of the local moral economy. The death of the youths in Clichy, or the shooting of a tear-gas grenade by some riot police against the local mosque three days later (see below), were breaches of that sort.

Meanwhile, our protesters are not social bandits. Unlike Robin Hood, they do not seem to be interested in organising a deprived residents' protest. Neither do they, for the most part, turn their involvement in protest into a definitive criminal career. If we keep our eyes on the 1990s rebels' generation, we could say that the then 'primitive rebels' rather disappeared and integrated into society, leaving a place for the next wave of migrants, and protesters.

In order to test more profoundly the accuracy of the notion of 'primitive rebellion', we need to examine the rituality at stake in French urban disorders, and then to shed some light on the parallel movements of protest and destruction, and of voting.

Rituality and rationality

One of the most striking aspects of the riots that have occurred since the beginning of the 1990s in France is their unchanged scenario: a deadly encounter with the police in a *cité*, and one, two or three nights of violent confrontations between local youths and riot police forces accompanied by a number of cars set ablaze. Unlike those in the UK, French riots usually do not feature any looting of electronics or youth clothes stores, nor do they consist of conflicts between different ethnic groups. This apparent repetition prompts one of the recurrent questions of commentators in France: why do the deprived youths in bleak estates show such an intense willingness to contribute to the self-destruction of

their own living conditions and inflict damage on the lives of their parents and relatives? Is this ritualised form of protest not clear evidence of an incapacity, or even lack of willingness, to offer a structured political voice, and on the contrary proof for the hopeless confinement of these youths in a spiral of masculinity, violence and nihilism?

In response, we will focus on (1) the tactical aspects of the confrontations that have taken place in French *banlieue* towns and (2) on the almost invisible aspect of local bargaining behind the spectacular broadcasting of cars set ablaze.

Rituality and repetition as mirrors of city planning and state strategies

Why do the rioters not go beyond the borders of their home area but instead restrict their actions to the limits of the place where, the morning after, their families and friends might be confronted with the loss of their cars (sometimes the only way to go to work in remote *banlieue* towns) or the closing down of the school or the sports centre, torched in flames? This question is among those most commonly asked by commentators in France: why this apparent self-destructiveness? More theoretically, are French riots the models for what Gary Marx termed 'issueless riots' (Marx, 1970)? Are they located even below the line of 'proto-politicalness'?

To these questions, we are inclined to respond by taking a look at the tactical and political circumstances of the riots. Riots occur, as we said, in *cités* – that is, sink estates that are usually the product of 1950s, 1960s and 1970s urbanism and the erection of huge housing estates away from city centres which had not been destroyed (unlike in the UK) by the air operations of the Second World War. As a matter of fact, *cités* developed where the land was least costly, on the outskirts of *banlieue* towns. *Cités* are then mostly situated not only at the periphery of main urban centres, such as Paris, Lyon and Lille (Marseille here being a notable exception), but are isolated from the rest of their own cities. To illustrate this, stop-and-search operations set up by the police in *banlieue* towns usually feature a check of vehicles going in and out of the *cités*, at the crossroads that separate them from the town – leading to what the *cités* residents vehemently refer to as checkpoint operations, drawing a clear analogy between this and what routinely occurs in Israel and Palestine (Jobard *et al.*, 2012).

In such circumstances it is certainly not inconceivable for youths there to gather and join in their town centre, if not the centre of the

bordering agglomeration. But since the 'flashpoint that ignites the riots' (Waddington, 2012) usually takes place in the *cité* itself, it is immediately followed by gatherings in the *cité* (mostly around the mourning family or at familiar places of the victim) and by the surrounding of the *cité* by riot police sent by government authorities (*préfet*): both parties contribute to limiting the conflict within the strict borders of the area. After the scene is set, it is almost impossible for the young rebels to leave; indeed it would be a futile risk to leave with destructive weapons or even self-incriminating clothing (Jobard *et al.*, 2012). Riot police know perfectly well how to manage line-to-line confrontations with violent youths, and they prefer to limit the clashes to places where the damage will be limited in a spatial, but also in a financial, sense. A few cars set on fire are so much less costly than a rampaged city centre, train station or shopping mall. But even in the absence of any local triggering event, as in October-November 2005 where hundreds of *cités* nationwide showed solidarity towards the two dead juveniles in Clichy-sous-Bois, rioters largely prefer to stay in a place where they have the tactical resources to escape riot police. In contrast, the police are mostly national units sent by the government in order to calm down the disorder, who will not know the area as well as the rioters. As a result, the riot police units rarely risk engaging in offensive action and penetrating further into the estates, allowing the rioters more time and opportunity to destroy whatever is within range (de Maillard and Roché, 2005).

Urbanism, police organisation and cost–benefit calculations thus strongly contribute to what appears to third-party observers to be collective rituals. In this regard, of great (but largely unnoticed) interest is the recent law unanimously adopted (which rarely happens in France) by MPs of both the left and the right regarding the compensation by judicial authorities of victims of criminal acts (law 2008–644, 1 July 2008). Article 3 of the law explicitly focuses on cars being destroyed on the occasion of confrontations with the police, and aims to facilitate the car owner's compensation by the state (now Article 706-14-1 of the Criminal Proceeding Code, untouched since). The socialist MP Delphine Batho ecumenically defended the law with the following words:

> Since the November 2005 riots, there have been almost 45,000 torched cars in France every year. This number is considerable. During the years before, the 'norm', if I may use this term, it was around 20,000 torched cars. Since 2005, numbers have then more or less doubled . . . Everyone knows how dreadful it is, for a modest family living in a low-income estate, a *banlieue* place, mostly badly served by the public transportation system, to see its car set alight.

As such, the 2008–644 law reinforces the rituality of French riots. In an ambiguous stance towards the insurance fraud that frequently occurs as a result of such events (a typical case for classical 'social crime' within the protest, to the benefit of the local community – Lea, 1999), the state is encouraged by the law to regard torched cars during confrontations with the police in the *cités* as the 'norm', in the embarrassed words of the MP; or, to paraphrase the classical phrasing of French jurisprudence in administrative law, as 'normal perturbations in the due course of social life', riot is not a breach of order or a disruption of society's life, but a risk which, as such, belongs to the normality of deprived areas (Ewald, 1990), if not 'institutionalised riots' in the sense that Paul Brass gives to this notion (Brass, 1996, p. 12). Seen from the stage of law and politics, riots in France belong to a specific area of political economy: burnt cars are a negative externality, and the law is intended to optimise these externalities. It is useless of course to demonstrate how much such a law reinforces the circular rituality of riots occurring in France.

Violence as part of political bargaining: Riots and policies

We just saw that the apparent stability and nihilist form of riots in France is actually the result of urbanism, police strategy and political-economic anticipations by the state. But this view on the form of the riots does not say much about their causes. Rituality is a notion aimed at making sense of the form a riot takes, not of the causes of it. And in our case the strict rituality of the riots in France focuses the debate on their apparent uselessness and clouds possible questions about their causes. Unique forms, unique igniting events, so unique causes?

Mundane and academic research unfortunately has difficulty in engaging in the deep scrutiny of local situations. US-like spatial analysis tends to consider hundreds of riots as mere 'outcomes of variables to be explained' in an overview that does not care much about the local, if not parochial, causes of the events. On their side, French social scientists too often collect punchy but imprecise quotes in the *cités* from disadvantaged youths about work, police and education, which does not contribute to understanding why given *cités* stage riots and others do not (for an overall appreciation of the right distance of social scientists towards riots, see Keith, 1993 or Lea and Young, 1993).

Fieldwork analysis has provided clear indications that rituality and repetition do not preclude political strategy from the point of view of rioters. It can go from a micro-evaluation of the cars to be burnt to a greater appreciation of the opportunity to riot. From my own

observations conducted in Dammarie-lès-Lys since 2002, I could see how collective violence after a case of lethal use of force by the police resulted from a collective deliberation aimed at exploiting the opportunity to make use of Molotov cocktails or of conventional forms of peaceful action (leaflet distribution, interruption of the municipal council, open letters sent to the Justice Minister, gathering in the town, gathering in front of the Justice Minister in Paris and so on). I could also observe how the overall strategy by the state's authorities (judicial and police authorities) contributed to a radicalisation of the protesters (Jobard and Linhardt, 2008). On a more micro-level, I witnessed how the cars that were destined to destruction by fire were actually chosen according to two criteria: the incitement by the car owner to fraud the insurance, and the consideration that the car owner should be punished because 'he does not give a shit about the state of the *cité*' (conversation between two 'rioters', personal observation, December 2007 – tenth anniversary of the shooting of Abdelkader Bouziane, a *cité* juvenile, by a police officer).

Michel Kokoreff (2009) reported precise observations about the fact that given targets had been chosen in Saint-Denis, the largest town of the main deprived urban district in France, on the basis of a very local deliberation on the political intent of such an action. Social scientists could have made a substantial effort to sort out the explanatory factors on the basis of general variables, but his study showed, for instance, that the destruction of a given town's school was decided because of the reputation of the principal for being 'a racist' (Mr Chenadec's death in Stains during the riots could be the consequence of a similar local rumour). Marwan Mohammed (2009, pp. 164–168), who conducted an in-depth analysis of the *cité* where he grew up, could perfectly observe the finest grain of the political bargaining between the local mayor (a political figure who enjoyed a moment of national interest when he attributed the riots to the polygamy of the rioters' parents) and the local youths. In the town concerned, the youths first tried to launch an attack against the large shopping mall in the neighbouring town (150 shops, 10 restaurants and so forth), but the information came to the police's attention and the young rebels did not even dare to get out of their *cité* when they saw the massive presence of riot police on the roads leading to the place where they were heading and heard that the police had begun to close down the shops. Later on in the year, however, they engaged in a series of violent threats towards the mayor. A new building devoted to the wellbeing of local youths was about to be inaugurated by the Ministry of Urban Affairs, and the youths started to 'apply pressure' and 'to pop up

in force' (to paraphrase the American author Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991, p. 325, who observed the same equilibrium point between violence and bargaining) around the building, leaving some Molotov cocktails in the area or stealing some goods from the mayor's office. A few days later the mayor hired some of the gang's members as private security officers devoted to the protection of the new building and the town's other public buildings.

To sum up, ritualisation and apparent repetition of the same patterns develop from a substantial diversity of situations, forms of collective lives and forms of collective deliberations. In Michel Foucault's terms, rituality must force social scientists to 'hear the battle rumble'. At this level, violence (or the threat of violence) not only appears to be the result of a collective deliberation over the costs and the gains of the operations, about their aims and their effects, but might also be included in a cycle of group bargaining with local authorities.

Rituality and rationality – is rioting worthy?

More generally, the right framing regarding riots in France should not be one of suicidal forms of collective protest or even nihilist or criminal forms of protest, but of the possible gains of riots for the rioters. Keeping in mind the words of Foucault for which 'politics is war by other means' (Foucault, 1980), the right framing should rather point to the gains obtained by rioters in France, with the explicit assumption that such a recurrent form of protest should not be reiterated if it amounts to a negative cost–benefit balance for the protesters. From the beneficiaries of the *anti-étés chauds* actions in the 1980s to the creation of a Ministry of Urban Affairs in 1990, or to the different 'marshall plans for the *banlieues*' decided after episodes of riots, and with a look at important reforms in the field of criminal proceedings in 1993 and 2000, or at the hundreds of possible moves by local elected officials at the parochial level (and this since the very beginning of the 1970s; Zancarini-Fournel *et al.*, 2011), it is obvious that an anticipation of some gains is elaborated by the rioters as soon as they engage in the destruction of public buildings and the cars of their neighbours. It is not our goal here to touch upon the now-classical debate about the usefulness or the hopelessness of 'disruptive actions' (Giugni, 1998; Piven and Cloward, 1991), but without inflating the individual rationality and collective ability of resource mobilisation, I focus on the fact that from the local level onwards, riots seem to be articulated with a

real sense of opportunity and, more rarely, with a willingness to gain some political or economic advantages – and this rationality goes along with rituality (Buechler, 2008). Too much attention has been devoted in my view so far to the means of the protesters, and much less effort has been made to understand the quest for public resources through collective violence in this 'murky area' where collective violence and politics go side by side (Auyero and Moran, 2007; see also Lapeyronnie, 2009). From this perspective I would not qualify riots in contemporary France as 'proto-political protests', but as the continuation of politics with disruptive means; indeed, as political protests in the full sense of the term.

In the third section I will contrast the notion of 'proto-political' no longer with the 'full political' option but with its opposite side: the 'anti-political' aspect of the riots.

Rebels' politics

Too often, social scientists suggest a dual schema of pre-political and full political protest. I would rather suggest the introduction of the notion of 'anti-political' to characterise the politicisation process in riot-torn areas of France. I will base my analysis here (1) on the relationship between disruptive and conventional political voice and (2) on the specific history of the attempts towards an integration of young rebels into the political system.

Burning cars made headlines, but these destructions happened in places where conventional political protest was far from being absent. In Clichy-sous-Bois, the town where the two juveniles lived before losing their lives in the electrical substation, violence certainly occurred, but it coexisted with the efforts of other (or the same) youths to maintain some dialogue with elected and, more difficult, state authorities. These efforts reiterated those launched two decades before, right after the *été chaud des Minguettes* in 1981. The Clichy group, which included local *cité* leaders and relatives of the two dead boys, reactivated the revolutionary 1789 gesture and the 1983 march that started in the Minguettes (Hajjat, 2013): they went across numerous French *cités* and gathered grievance registers (*cahiers de doléance*) in order to solemnly present them to the government in Paris (Kokoreff, 2009, p. 153, and for comparable political entrepreneurship after the Villiers-le-Bel's riots in 2007, see Moran, 2011, p. 310; Moran, 2012, pp. 235–240). In an ambivalent move of refusal and acceptance, the mobilised youths in

Clichy disapproved of violence, as clearly suggested by their acronym AC-LeFeu (Association Collectif Liberté Egalié Fraternité Ensemble Unis), an acronym which reads as *assez le feu* (stop with fire). But at the same time they knew that the window of opportunity opened not because of the two deaths but because of the nationwide episode of violence that ignited the country for more than two weeks afterwards. In contrast, the maintenance of a long-term political involvement in the absence of any violence that is able to raise media interest is extremely costly, and is prone to fail due to the weakness of resources of the protagonists, as shown by the example of the mobilisation in Dammarie-lès-Lys in 2002 and the years after (Jobard and Linhart, 2008).

Besides conventional mobilisations, the vote played a crucial role in the collective life of the *cités* in the aftermath of the riots (Braconnier and Dormagen, 2012). First of all, riots contributed to an unprecedented rise in poll registrations in housing estates (around +10% in the *cités* in France, mainly made up of the young people who had not previously registered). In fact, this rise was in a way preceded by a first wave of registration after the right-wing candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen reached his peak at a Presidential election in April 2002. In a way, the riots contributed to a wave of voters' registrations that occurred in a context of voters' polarisation. As such, riots belong to a political cycle that originated in 2002, or in the mid-1980s, when French political debates started to focus on law and order, and on immigration issues, under the active pressure of Le Front National.

The second aspect of voters' mobilisation was the coincidence of voting against Nicolas Sarkozy and the riots. In towns hit by the riots, like Clichy-sous-Bois, Sarkozy only attracted 38% of the voters in the second ballot of the vote in 2007, and between 14% and 27% of the voters in the polling stations of Clichy's *cités* (Jardin, 2009). He received 43% in the wealthier town of Argenteuil, where he staged a tumultuous public appearance two days before the deaths in Clichy, publicly talking about the local *cité* youths as riff-raff (*racaille*; see also Moran, 2012, pp. 40–47), and 36% in La Courneuve, where a few weeks earlier he declared that the local *cités* should be cleaned up with a high-pressure hose. Votes were no different in the first ballot of the 2012 Presidential race, when Sarkozy opposed François Hollande. Not only did Hollande reach his best score in the district where the riots were most numerous (Seine-St-Denis, 39% of the votes) and achieve among his highest scores in towns like Clichy (48%), La Courneuve (47%) and Argenteuil (38%),

but also he received over 50% in numerous polling stations within the *cités* (Jérôme, 2012, p. 6).

Meanwhile, these votes mean in no way an adhesion to the political system. Voter turnout in the *cités* regressed as soon as the June 2007 parliamentary elections, so much so that it is not an exaggeration to consider the sudden surge in registration from 2002, and notably from 2005 onwards, as an adhesion to a polarised political scheme in which the vote is used as an ultimate tool against two sources of fear and hatred: Nicolas Sarkozy and Jean-Marie Le Pen, the leader of Le Front National (Jobard, 2009). As soon as these leaders were not individually involved in the race, young voters of the 2007 and 2012 Presidential races turned their backs on the polling station. More generally, far more than by the riots, the vote is strongly determined by structural factors: political scientist Antoine Jardin shows that there is a strong correlation in the Seine-Saint-Denis district between the overall urban marginality index and the weakness of the vote against Sarkozy, in 2007 as well as in 2012, this correlation being much stronger than in English cities, such as Birmingham (Jardin, 2009).

The reason for this refusal to vote on a constant basis is linked with the political history of urban youths in France. Rather than indifference, it should be characterised as a refusal to commit oneself in politics – as a protest against past developments, as well as the result of religious alignments in the lives of young protesters in France.

Rioters' retreat from politics

It would be incomplete to describe rioters' attitudes towards the political only in terms of primitive or full political protest. The ambiguity towards the political goes so far that the collective action clearly serves a need to be heard and to get some resources by the authorities, but also to express an implacable defiance towards politics. This defiance encompasses two aspects.

The first is linked to the earlier revolts that occurred at the beginning of the 1980s and had their first developments during the 1970s in the Lyon area (Béroud *et al.*, 2011). As one remembers, Lyon's *cités* were particularly hit by civil disturbance after 1981. During the summer of 1983, after some violent encounters with the police and in the absence of any reaction from the government, youths there decided after a hunger strike to launch a 'march for equality and against racism' to express solidarity with a local leader, Toumi Djaïda, who had been wounded by a police officer a few weeks before. The march, which

started from Marseille in the south of France and passed through numer-ous *cités* on its way to Paris, succeeded in gathering 100,000 people in the capital. The President, François Mitterrand, who at that time faced great difficulties in the polls, encouraged this mobilisation in order to form a youth movement in his favour. The ruling Socialist Party cre-ated for that purpose a competing association called SOS-Racism, which ousted the grass-roots activists from the field and succeeded, through a series of national festival events, in creating a youth movement aimed at the electoral success of François Mitterrand, while sacrificing the autonomy and the empowerment of the *banlieues* activists. This episode, which helped to create a new generation of Socialist Party leaders (SOS-Racism's founder is now head of the ruling Socialist Party), signalled to a whole generation of second-generation migrants that their mobilisation is clearly and definitely incompatible with the French political system, if not confined to a subordinate role under a paternalistic flag. These events are now more than a generation away from the present rioters, but the 'SOS-Racism treason' belongs to the basic corpus of knowledge inherited by any young activist who wishes to know about the history of urban rebellion in contemporary France, and it echoes the larger sense of a 'treason from the left', since the war in Algeria was decided in the mid-1950s by the ruling party (François Mitterrand was at that time Minister of the Interior, saying at the Assemblée Nationale that 'The rebellion in Algeria can only find a terminal answer: war', 5 November 1954). Political rap songs, which repeatedly glorify autonomy and purity as indispensable political virtues, still refer to these episodes of 'betrayal'.

The second reason for the defiance regarding politics is immediately linked with political ethos. Autonomy, purity, generosity, integrity or even evergetism, frugality or asceticism, the search for the *sunna* (the per-fect ethos achieved by the Prophet Muhammad), and the consequent amount of disenchantment with the world are central notions of young Muslims who, facing a society that denies them fairness and equality, find in different forms of escapism a justification for the overall refusal of any compromise with the mundane political sphere. This attitude, which is richly documented in Gilles Kepel's inquiry in Clichy-sous-Bois (Kepel, 2012, pp. 415–452), is not adversarial to moments of fury, epit-omised by the very frequently cited notion of *hogra* (i.e. the exposure to harassment or contempt). *Hogra* is, for instance, the obvious term that linked different generations of Muslims during the 2005 riots. The death of the two juveniles was only a triggering event for the local insur-gencies – the ones that occurred in Clichy and in surrounding towns

(mainly Montfermeil and Aulnay-sous-Bois). However, the launching of a tear-gas canister by national riot police on Friday night against a place used as a mosque by Clichy's Muslims was unanimously seen by the Muslim community in France as a sign of *hogra*: if the death of the youths could be seen as an accidental event, what was called in an explicit reference to the Holocaust 'the gassing of the Mosque' could not be understood as anything other than a declaration of war by the state against Muslims living in France. And all of that was in a context where questions of immigration control or the politics towards the religious veil were constantly raised by the elected politicians, and above all the Minister of the Interior and President-in-waiting, Nicolas Sarkozy.

Conclusion: An original political voice

In such circumstances where defiance finds historical and religious, mundane and unearthly justifications, it is hard to characterise the political voice of the rioters and their friends or family members as mere indifference to politics. On the contrary, the rioters surely display a set of justifications that rationalise collective violence both as a legitimate reaction against any form of *hogra* and as a natural refusal to compromise with conventional politics. These considerations do not imply, of course, that daily attitudes and behaviours amount to a strict observance of Islamic principles, nor that the place assumed by Islamic ethics in their way of life makes them turn into radical salafists. But, in turn, social scientists are too often prone to considering the place of religion in urban upsurges in France through the (salutary) aphorism that riots are not jihads (Body-Gendrot, 2008), or by making the argument that the apparent refusal of French society hides a strong desire to be part of it (Koff and Duprez, 2009), without having enough consideration of what is at stake in religious-driven notions of what 'political' means. To this extent the growing importance given by Islam to the rationalisation of the world and the experience of the self in the daily course of the cités youths' existence definitely separates their political protest from the institutionalised field of politics. Far from indifference towards politics, this political ethic rather amounts to a strong adherence to a massive refusal of the mundane political as it is practised and celebrated in France. To this extent, such an attitude evokes what Michel Foucault described as the 'enigma of uprising' in 1978 Iran: 'a strike against politics' launched in a vacuum between an impossible (and undesired) millenarism for an Islamic society and a political refusal to be part of the usual political game.

References

Auyero, J. and Moran, T. (2007). The dynamics of collective violence. *Social Forces*, 85(3), 1341–1367.

Béroud, S. *et al*. (2011). *Engagements, rébellions et genre dans les quartiers populaires en Europe*. Paris: Editions des archives contemporaines.

Blanchard, E. (2012). La Goutte d'Or, 30 juillet 1955: une émeute au cœur de la métropole coloniale. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 5, 98–111.

Body-Gendrot, S. (2008). Muslims: Citizenship, security and social justice in France. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 36(4), 247–256.

Bonelli, L. (2007). Policing the youth: Toward a redefinition of discipline and social control in French working-class neighborhoods. In S. Venkatesh and R. Kassimir (Eds.), *Youth, Globalization, and the Law*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 90–122.

Braconnier, C. and Dormagen, J.Y. (2012). Logiques de Mobilisation et Inegalites Sociales de Participation Electorale en France. *French Politics, Culture & Society*, 30(3), 20–44.

Brass, P. (1996). *Riots and Pogroms*. New York: New York University Press.

Buechler, S.M. (2008). Social strain, structural breakdown, political opportunity, and collective action. *Sociology Compass*, 2, 1031–1044.

Campbell, B. (1993). *Goliath. Britain's Dangerous Places*. London: Methuen.

De Maillard, J. (2005). The governance of safety in France: Is there anybody in charge? *Theoretical Criminology*, 9(3), 325–343.

Duprez, D. (2009). Urban rioting as an indicator of crisis in the integration model for ethnic minority youth in France. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(5), 753–770.

Ewald, F. (1990). Norms, discipline, and the law. *Representations*, 30, 138–161.

Foucault, M. (1980). Society must be defended. In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *Michel Foucault. Power/Knowledge*. New York: Pantheon.

Giugni, M.G. (1998). Was it worth the effort? The outcomes and consequences of social movements. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 371–393.

Hajjat, A. (2013). Rébellions urbaines et déviances policières. Les 'jeunes' des Minguettes face à la police (1981–1983). *Cultures & Conflits*, 93, 11–34.

Hobsbawm, E. (1965), *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th Century*. New York: Norton & Company.

Jardin, A. (2009). Social inequalities and voting turnout in the French 'banlieues', Communication at the Joint Doctoral Seminar Oxford – Sciences Po, Decembre.

Jérôme, B. (2012). Le vote PS en tête dans les quartiers populaires. *Le Monde*, 26 April, 6.

Jobard, F. (2009). Rioting as a political tool. The 2005 French riots. *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 48(3), 235–244.

Jobard, F., Lévy, R., Lamberth, J., and Névanen, S., (2012). Measuring apparence-based discrimination. An analysis of identity checks in Paris. *Population-E*, 67(3), 349–376.

Jobard, F. and Linhardt, D. (2008) The check and guardianship. A comparison between two surveillance spaces, Orly international airport and Dammarie's housing project. In M. Deflem (Ed.), *Surveillance and Governance. Crime Control and Beyond*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Pbg/JAI Press, 77–102.

Juhem, P. (2000). 'Civiliser' la banlieue. Logiques et conditions d'efficacité des dispositifs étatiques de régulation de la violence dans les quartiers populaires. *Revue française de science politique*, 50(1), 53–72.

Keith, M. (1993). *Race, Riots and Policing. Lore and Disorder in a Multi-racist Society*. Londres: UCL.

Kepel, G. (2012). *Banlieues de la République. Société, politique et religion à Clichy-sous-Bois et Montfermeil*. Paris: Gallimard.

Koff, H. and Duprez, D. (2009). The 2005 riots in France: The international impact of domestic violence. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(5), 713–730.

Kokoreff, M. (2009). The political dimension of the 2005 riots. In D. Waddington, F. Jobard and M. King (Eds.), 147–156.

Lagrange, H. (2009). The French riots and urban segregation. In D. Waddington, F. Jobard, and M. King (Eds.), 107–122.

Lapeyronnie, D. (2009). Primitive rebellion in the French banlieues. On the fall 2005 riots. In Ch. Tshimanga *et al*. (Eds.), *Frenchness and the African Diaspora. Identity and Uprising in Contemporary France*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 21–46.

Lea, J. (1999). Social crime revisited. *Theoretical Criminology*, 3(3), 307–325.

Lea, J. and Young, J. (2013). *What is to be Done with Law and Order?* London: Pluto Press.

Marx, G.T. (1970). Issueless riots. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 391(1), 21–33.

Mohammed, M. (2009). Youths gangs, riots, and the politicisation process. In D. Waddington, F. Jobard and M. King (Eds.), 157–172.

Moran, M. (2011). Opposing exclusion: The political significance of the riots in French suburbs (2005–2007). *Modern & Contemporary France*, 19(3), 297–312.

Moran, M. (2012). *The Republic and the Riots: Exploring Urban Violence in French Suburbs (2005–2007)*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Nicolas, J. (2008). *La rébellion française. 1661–1789*. Paris: Gallimard.

Piven, F.F. and Cloward, R.A. (1991). Collective protest. A critique of resource-mobilization theory. *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 4(4), 435–458.

Rea, A. (2006). Les émeutes urbaines. Causes institutionnelles et absence de reconnaissance. *Déviance et Société*, 30(4), 463–476.

Sanchez-Jankowski, M. (1991), *Islands in the Street : Gangs and American Urban Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wacquant, L. (2008). *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Waddington, D. (2012). The law of moments: Understanding the flashpoint that ignited the riots. *Criminal Justice Matters*, 87(1), 6–7.

Waddington, D., Jobard, F., and King, M. (Eds.) (2009). *Rioting in the UK and France: A Comparative Analysis*. Cullompton: Willan.

Zancarini-Fournel, M. (2004). Généalogie des rébellions urbaines en temps de crise (1971–1981). *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 84(4), 119.

Zancarini-Fournel, M. *et al*. (2011). *Engagements, rébellions et genre dans les quartiers populaires en Europe (1968–2005)*. Paris: Editions des archives contemporaines.

9

The Ritual of Insurrection and the 'Thrill-Seeking Youth'. An Instant Ethnography of Inner-City Riots in Germany

Laura Naegler

Introduction

> Dear anonymous…rioter,
>
> I was there when you came to…[Sternschanze] for the May-First weekend, with backpacks full of stones and accelerants. With Mom's subway ticket from the [well-off] suburbs, head full of cheap booze and few real ideas. Where you are, social life dies. Discourse dies. Because your goal is chaos, violence. Destruction. I watched you, as you cowardly hid under your expensive, branded pullover and once again senselessly rioted in [my neighbourhood]. I watched you as you brainlessly [destroyed] the property of the small people. You photographed each other proudly in front of the destroyed bank counters, in front of the water cannons. Pictures of scum […] You, pubertal suburb-guerilla, how dare you brush 'revolution' on the…[walls] which we once struggled free?! (residents' open letter to The Hamburger Abendblatt, 2010)

Around the early 2000s, the periodic riots in Hamburg's inner-city neighbourhood of Sternschanze changed profoundly. For decades, these riots constituted struggles between state authorities and militant anarchists of the *autonome Szene* (autonomous scene), entwined around resistance to consumer capitalism, control and police repression, and contestations over the production and use of urban space. However, the rapid gentrification of Sternschanze – which has turned from a lower-class

area into a popular nightlife district and expensive neighbourhood for the bohemian middle class in recent years (Naegler, 2012) – also changed the character and public perception of the riots. Over the years, the agitated evocations of supposed terrorist threats caused by militant 'black bloc' anarchists that used to interfuse the public discourse on riots were replaced by moral outrage about adolescent, apolitical rioters vandalising the gentrified, hip and trendy neighbourhood. This notion became so popular in public discourse that a new term came into being to describe these young people: they are the so-called *erlebnisorientierte Jugendliche* (thrill-seeking youth). The term is exclusively meant for those teenagers who participate in riots not out of any political motivation but for the sake of the adrenaline rush, excitement and pleasure found in violence and vandalism. It describes those young people who, bored out of their minds and oversaturated by their consumption of mass-media violence, confuse street riots with the excitement of a video game. For conservative local actors and authorities, the thrill-seeking youth appear to indicate the 'senselessness' of rioting and serve to underline the omnipresent image of violent youth as a perpetual source of irritation for civic order. Furthermore, Sternschanze's residents – traditionally tending to sympathise with left-wing resistance – firmly criticise the thrill-seeking youth as 'illegitimately' invading from the 'outside' and, caught up in their urge for destruction, neither caring about residents' concerns nor about the conflicts that have arisen in the wake of the neighbourhood's gentrification. Moreover, the anarchists – for whom the riots in Sternschanze represent 'real' resistance to gentrification – see the political vigour of *their* riots as being diminished through apolitical 'riots kids'.

This chapter asks what motivates young people to take to the streets in Sternschanze, to burn barricades and to challenge the state's monopoly on violence, even though they would not do so in everyday life. It further asks if their activities can be understood as practices of (political) resistance. By doing so, it challenges the proclaimed 'senselessness' that incessantly pervades the discourse on riots, both in Sternschanze and elsewhere. As Jobard (2009, p. 238) puts it, the 'abiding temptation among scholars and the authorities alike to reduce the meaning of the riots to mere delinquent manifestations or collective debauchery is as old as...riots themselves'. As, for example, shown in the discussions that followed the London riots of 2011, the image of the 'feral' and 'nihilistic' adolescent rioter is omnipresent in public discourse: it is expressed in the conservative accounts of riots as 'sheer criminality' (May, 2011) caused by poor parenting, a soft criminal justice system

and an overall moral decline in society (Hall, 2012, p. 146). Within academic debates, the term 'feral youth' has gained attention, seen as the offspring of a 'feral capitalism' (Harvey, 2011), which turns riots into little more than an 'eruption of enraged conformity' (Hall, 2012, p. 155). Here the riots are not seen as 'an effusion of protopolitical "resistance" but a contemporary late-capitalist culture of depressive hedonia [and] vapid consumerism' (Hall and Winlow, 2012, p. 467). Riots are interpreted as mere 'nihilistic vandalism and aggravated shopping' (Hall, 2012, p. 159) lacking any articulate political demands. In the case of Sternschanze's riots, certainly, the image of the 'senseless', thrill-seeking rioter is embraced by the authorities. Often it is used as an argument to diminish the persuasiveness and vigour of all counterpolitical activity during riots, and consequently the rationale of the anarchists' political activism. Admittedly, many of the rioters in Sternschanze are not driven by outright political persuasions. Yet the argument of riots initiated by 'defective and disqualified consumers' (Bauman, 2011) and rooted in the deep frustration of impoverished youth surrounded by capitalist prosperity (Altenried, 2012) remains difficult to maintain given the mainly middle-class rioters in gentrified Sternschanze. However, I will argue in what follows that the thrill-seeking youth's acts are far from 'meaningless' and solely motivated by a nihilistic urge for destruction. Rather, they derive from a complex situated dynamic that, in fact, indicates an underlying political resentment.

My argumentation is based on ethnographic research on Sternschanze's riots, where I conducted instant ethnographies (Ferrell, 2010; Ferrell *et al.*, 2008) of a total of 12 riots (of which all except two were either May First riots or Schanzenfest riots) in Sternschanze that occurred over a period of three years (2009–2012). I researched the motivations of the 'thrill-seeking youth', who are here defined as (male and female) adolescent rioters who are not associated with the *autonome Szene*. This includes rioters who sympathise with, are indifferent to or refute the political persuasions of the anarchists. As such, the term 'thrill-seeking youth/rioter' is in the following not meant as a denial of *any* political motivation. However, my use of the term explicitly excludes the members of the *autonome Szene*. Although the members of the anarchist subculture might be motivated by 'thrill-seeking' as well, the *autonome Szene* has distinct political (and subcultural) motives for rioting which exceed those that are addressed in this article (Naegler, 2012, pp. 75–84).

Theoretically, I utilise the edgework concept, a combined micro-macro theory of voluntary high-risk behaviour (Lyng, 1990), and the

concept's augmentations in cultural criminology for my argumentation. Drawing from this theoretical framework and the results of my research, I argue that both the motivations and the resistant qualities of the thrill-seeking youth's actions result from the emotional and experimental dimensions of rioting as a form of 'transgressive edgework'. This focus on the emotional and experimental dimensions does not imply that the thrill-seeking youth are acting irrationally and based on an illusion of power through the dissolution of the self in the crowd (Le Bon, 1986/1947) as the result of the processes of deindividuation (Zimbardo, 1969), through which the individual abstains from the adoption of personal responsibility by transferring it to the collective. As research has shown, these (traditional, social psychological) approaches are too simplistic. Young rioters in Sternschanze negotiate the 'edges' of their transgressive activities individually and give meaning to their acts in interaction with the surrounding conditions (Ferrell *et al.*, 2008). However, thrill-seeking alone does not explain the entire young rioter's motivations. Following the arguments of cultural criminology, I will claim that they are additionally motivated by the drive to exercise control and achieve a sense of identity within and through the riot situation. As will be elaborated in the following, this does not only refute the alleged 'senselessness' of thrill-seeking rioting but, eventually, challenges the proclaimed depoliticisation of Sternschanze's riots.

Sternschanze's riots: Riots as urban events

Sternschanze's riots are initiated by the anarchist *autonome Szene*. In this regard, they are part of the regularly occurring riots that have taken place in many larger German cities since the *autonome Szene* developed in the 1970s. The *autonome Szene*, which is infamous for their riots and militant direct action, constitutes an amalgamation between subcultural, anti-authoritarian, and anti-capitalist political movements. It has a broad array of influences and currents, which are very diverse and partly fragmented (AK Wantok, 2010; Geronimo, 2002). Despite being by no means homogenous, the *autonome Szene*'s groups and currents widely share the refusal of the hegemonic state and its monopoly on violence, which led to the criminalisation of members and groups up to the application of the German anti-terrorism law (Naegler, 2012; Schwarzmeier, 1999). The Hamburg *autonome Szene* is factually and symbolically rooted in Sternschanze (Naegler, 2012, pp. 75–80). For this reason, the anarchists' riots almost exclusively take place in this neighbourhood. This is particularly the case for the nationwide

'traditional' May First riots and the Schanzenfest riots, the latter of which follow an annual, non-commercial street festival that came into existence as an anti-gentrification protest. The subcultural background distinctly shapes the riots' 'script', which has contributed to the highly ritualised character of Sternschanze's riots. These riots are 'place-bound', hardly ever crossing the neighbourhood's borders. They have fixed days and, in addition, fixed times. As the 'riot days' are known in advance, the police react with the application of a so-called 'danger zone', a preventative strategy of comprehensive spatial control. The anarchist rioters understand the danger zone as a blatant provocation and have therefore – as an act of resistance – adjusted the start of rioting to fit in with the point in time when it is officially applied. To a great extent this ritualisation has led to the emergence of the thrill-seeking rioters. The predictability enabled them to participate in Sternschanze's riots even if they were not involved in the *autonome Szene*'s communication structures. Yet the thrill-seeking youth were not simply attracted by mere opportunity; their participation also relates to the transformation of riots in the light of the neighbourhood's gentrification.

In Sternschanze, riots hold the character of an event and this, paradoxically (as riots at the same time constitute a strategy of resistance to gentrification by the *autonome Szene* (Naegler, 2012, pp. 114–116)), has led to the 'gentrification of riot'. The party crowd which populates the neighbourhood's countless bars and restaurants on an everyday basis does not stop doing so on riot days. On the contrary, attracted by the spectacular images with which the local media 'advertises' the upcoming event weeks in advance, people increasingly come to watch the riots 'live'. For this 'riot audience', bars and restaurants stay open, cashing in on the lucrativeness of riot days. As long as it is connected to consuming, 'going to the riots' is a legitimate nightlife activity in gentrified Sternschanze. With the masses of onlookers invading riot days, fuelled by the immense consumption of alcohol and other intoxicants, boundaries easily blur. More often than not, those who 'just came to watch' get spontaneously involved in rioting. Increasingly, however, young people outside the structures of the *autonome Szene* come with the outright intention of participating in the riots. This has changed the atmosphere and former subcultural character of Sternschanze's riots. As a result, the riots present themselves today as carnivalesque urban spectacles which are frightful, thrilling and boisterous at the same time. As such, they are distinctly paradoxical and bordering on the bizarre. As was always the case, you see hooded rioters dressed in black attack the menacing looking and fully armed riot police, in between the drifting smoke from the

burning barricades. However, contemporary demonstrations of militant resistance, engendering militarised state power responses, are accompanied by people dancing in the rain of water cannons or mocking the police, mimicking and making fun of them. *Autonome Szene* members walk alongside people wearing costumes or Guy Fawkes masks, or covering their faces with underwear. Some even abstain from wearing clothes at all, as two young women in the Schanzenfest riot of 2011 did. Their photograph, showing them bare-breasted and fuelling a burning barricade, turned into the tabloids' favourite. Amid violent clashes between rioters and police, regularly leading to numerous arrests and severe injuries on both sides, teenagers pose in front of police lines, tanks and water cannons, taking pictures for their Facebook profiles. All of this is watched by the riot audience sitting at a safe distance behind the bars' window displays, enjoying their drinks. Against the backdrop of these paradoxical images, the idea of the thrill-seeking youth – of the hedonist, 'feral' rioter driven by an adrenaline rush and the desire for violence – gained momentum.

The emotional and experimental dimensions of 'thrill-seeking rioting'

It was, first of all, the perception that the young rioters in Sternschanze are motivated exclusively by emotions which gave birth to the term 'thrill-seeking youth'. Given the situation, the role of emotions is hard to deny, as these riots offer the experience of a full range of sensations. From the gathering at the beginning to the very moment everyone knows the police forces are just about to enter, the situation is pervaded by excited anticipation. Those who participate describe the experience of adrenaline highs when they just get away before being hit by the water cannons or caught by the police. They tell about the experience of anger and rage when witnessing others being brutally attacked by the riot task forces, and the humiliation and panic when being pinned down by the police themselves (Naegler, field notes, 4 June 2009, 24 July 2010, 4 September 2010). At the same time, the situation is full of fun and pleasure. Rioters who mock and ridicule the police, accompanied by the cheering crowd, experience moments of panic and rage before they dissolve into periods of laughter and relief. All of these emotions are intensified by the exceptionality of the situation, by its danger and chaos. It is, after all, an intense emotional experience to be confronted by state power, embodied by water cannons, tanks and heavily armed riot police. It is always an intense experience to witness

civic order breaking down, even if this is just for the immediacy of the moment. It seems no wonder that the emotional experiences are appealing for all who participate in Sternschanze's riots, with the tension of the atmosphere offering the excitement of being a revolutionary for a night.

These emotional dimensions are important for an understanding of the motivations for thrill-seeking rioting. They derive from the illicit character of the riot and indicate that the drive to participate relates to the chaotic, experimental nature and unpredictability of the situation – in other words, as it seems, the thrill-seeking youth are rioting not despite the fact that it is inherently transgressive but because of it. In this context, cultural criminology's (Ferrell *et al.*, 2008; Hayward, 2004; Hayward and Young, 2004; Young, 2003) emphasis on the emotional, sensual, expressive, experimental and even aesthetic attractions (Katz, 1988) of transgression becomes critical. Here these features are seen as pivotal. Often they constitute the decisive motivation which exceeds rational, opportunistic and instrumental endeavours and make the transgressive act inherently appealing and rewarding, regardless of any other rewards deriving from pursuits of rational goal achievement. Against this backdrop, the edgework concept, first formulated by Lyng (1990) as a combined micro-macro theory of voluntary high-risk behaviour, and in particular the concept's growth in cultural criminology, is useful for an analysis of the thrill-seeking youth's motivation. According to the edgework concept, individuals are motivated to expose themselves voluntarily to high risks (such as dangerous leisure activities) because of the emotional, existential and corporeal dimensions of the activity. Furthermore, risk-taking, by providing these (otherwise lacking) intense emotional experiences, is understood as an escape from the structural conditions of a post-industrial society characterised by alienation, routinisation and the denial of the need for emotional and corporeal self-experience outside the routine of everyday life.

According to Lyng (1990, 2005a, 2005b), any high-risk activity considered 'edgework' contains 'a clearly observable threat to one's physical or mental well-being or one's sense of an ordered existence' (1990, p. 857) and entwines around the process of negotiating an 'edge' or boundary. This notion of the edge is not limited to merely physical dimensions but relates to a variety of possible boundaries, including cognitive, physiological and moral conditions. To negotiate the edge successfully, the edgeworker needs to obtain certain skills. These include not only physical or technical competences but also specific mental skills, which Lyng (1990, p. 859) refers to as 'survival capacities': the 'unique' and 'cognitive' abilities 'to maintain control over a situation

that verges on complete chaos, a situation most people would regard as entirely uncontrollable'. Both the high-risk character of the activity and the necessitated skills lead to specific sensations and emotions, which hint at the actual motivation that drives the edgeworker. Engaging in a highly risky situation requires confronting and overcoming (existential) fears, which leads (when done successfully) to feelings of omnipotence, control, autonomy and inviolability. Sensations also arise from the activity's demands for concerted concentration and the resulting narrowed focus of attention on the immediacy and unpredictability of the situation. This leads to an experience of hyperreality (Lyng, 1990, p. 861), with the perception of the activity as 'more real' than everyday life, as the emotions and sensations transcend those experienced in everyday existence and daily routine. As a result, engagement in edgework activities elicits feelings of authenticity, visceral and emotional self-actualisation and self-determination.

As argued from the cultural criminological perspective (Ferrell, 2005; Ferrell *et al.*, 2008; Hayward, 2004; Hayward and Young, 2004), the features of edgework can be found in many criminal acts. This is not only the case given the social and physical risks unquestionably inherent in criminal activities and the criminal actor's need to develop skills in order to deal with these successfully. Proximity is given in particular by the emotions and sensations that emerge through an engagement in transgressive activity. This includes in particular the excitement and adrenaline rush resulting from the actor's conscious exposure to the high-risk situation, the possibilities for compensating or overcoming negative emotions like humiliation, fear or anger, and the eliciting of experiences of omnipotence and self-assurance due to successfully maintaining control in the chaotic, unpredictable situation. This proximity indicates a convergence between the edgework concept and the phenomenological dimensions of criminal activities. Many criminal acts can as such be seen as a form of transgressive edgework (Lyng, 2004, 2005a, 2005b). For this transgressive edgework, the criminalisation of activity plays an important role as it both enhances and produces sensations (Ferrell, 1996; Ferrell *et al.*, 2008). The criminals' awareness of the illegality of their actions are heightened, and in purposefully 'courting physical danger, experimenting with the forbidden, provoking the authorities', they not only negotiate risks but also create them 'in a deliberate attempt to manufacture excitement' (Matza and Sykes, 1961, p. 713).

Rioting is a criminalised activity, through the breach of the *Landfrieden* in Germany (§125 StGB), and without doubt, accompanied by high legal

risks and risks of severe physical injury resulting from the circumstances of the situation (e.g. through open fires, thrown objects or panicking crowds), the police force, and even through attacks by other rioters (e.g. when someone is suspected of being an *agent provocateur*). To prevent these risks, rioters must obtain certain skills, such as behavioural strategies (e.g. what to wear to prevent detection on CCTV footage), knowledge of the riot's procedure (e.g. police mobility patterns), communication structures (e.g. how to signal the need for help; how to understand and give information) and 'unwritten rules' (e.g. which stores, institutions and people are 'legitimate targets'). Due to its high-risk nature, the necessity to obtain skills and in particular the emotional dimensions, rioting constitutes a form of transgressive edgework. This, in turn, enhances the motivations of the thrill-seeking youth to engage in rioting. Rioting breaks the routine and 'boredom' (Ferrell, 2004) of everyday life and offers participants the chance to experience intense emotions 'radically different from those of mundane social reality' (Lyng, 2005b, p. 29). The appeal of this 'revolt against the mundane' (Young, 2003, p. 391) and the possibility of experiencing an excitement exceeding the possibilities offered by consumer culture's legitimate leisure activities (Matza and Sykes, 1961, p. 713) can certainly be assumed as significant incentives. However, as argued in the following, they do not constitute the only reasons why young people in Sternschanze start to challenge the state's monopoly of violence during riots, as the exertion of control and the achievement of a sense of identity through the transgressive act of rioting play equally important roles.

Control, solidarity and identity in Sternschanze's riots

In the cultural criminological understanding, the phenomenological dimensions of transgressive edgework (as well as any transgressive activity in general) relate to the structural conditions of the late modern society (Ferrell *et al.*, 2008; Hayward and Young 2004; Lyng 2005a; Young 2003). Here, transgressive edgework constitutes an 'alternative avenue' (Hayward, 2004, p. 154) for coping with the widespread experience of 'ontological insecurity' (Young, 2007, p. 3), the uncertainty of identity caused by cultural hyperpluralism and ephemerality of meaning, the disembeddedness from biography and the resulting discontinuity of individual narratives. This is enforced by structural conditions, such as the bureaucratisation and institutionalisation of society, the involvement of the individual in the mechanisms of the paid labour

market, increased relative deprivation, and the ever-widening extremes of social and economic inequality (Young, 1999, 2007, 2011). With the dissolution of ' "established" norms and codes of modernity' (Hayward, 2004, p. 154), exerting a sense of control in order to cope with feelings of ontological insecurity and powerlessness is significantly heightened. Thus a paradoxical situation results in which the individual feels constantly 'at risk', yet at the same time externally overcontrolled due to structural conditions (Hayward, 2004, pp. 152–163). In this context, transgressive edgework constitutes a 'means of achieving a semblance of control – or, more accurately . . . a "controlled sense of loss of control" ' (Hayward, 2004, p. 163). It is motivated not only by the individual's thrill-seeking but also by the desire to exert control and reassure a sense of identity and self-actualisation. This understanding of transgressive edgework in relation to the 'society/subject in transition' (Hayward, 2004, p. 154) is crucial within the context of Sternschanze's riots. It indicates that the motivations for thrill-seeking youth's activity exceed thrill-seeking pursuits.

Any riot consists, as Altenried (2012, p. 18) puts it, of countless micronarratives, which all come together as an assemblage of insurrection. Accordingly, if one asks the young rioters on the streets of Sternschanze about their motives, there are a variety of answers. 'Excitement', 'curiosity' and even the 'fun character' (Naegler, field notes, 4 September 2010; 20 August 2011; 28 August 2012) of the situation are mentioned by the majority. Some admit quite frankly that they are 'just riot tourists' (Naegler, field notes, 20 August 2011). However, this confession is rare (and mostly combined with a progressed state of intoxication). Most of the young rioters express a need to explain themselves – they give reasons for their engagement, constantly justifying themselves and negotiating the 'edges' of how far they will go and why. Some of these reasons are distinctly personal and outright apolitical – like one young man who said he decided to participate in the riots because his girlfriend had just left him (Naegler, field notes, 20 August 2011). However, there is a common theme: rioters regularly voice their disapproval with the police and its role in the riots, ranging from diffuse resentment to blatant hostility. Most of these statements are blurred, incoherent and vindicating, which is not surprising given the setting. Asking a teenager in front of live water cannons for their motivations for rioting is unlikely to lead to elaborated answers that concisely explain their intentions. However, their answers give a sense that rioting at Sternschanze is not only about thrill-seeking. Rather, it relates to young people's emotional experiences of powerlessness, anger

and insecurity, felt in the contradictions of the late modern society and intensified in the very heart of the riot.

This riot situation in Sternschanze is characterised by substantial external control. The application of the danger zone allows the comprehensive regulation of access to the designated area (Wehrheim, 2006). There are as many as 2,000 police officers present in an area of less than 0.5 km^2 and the number of (potential) rioters is on average estimated to be around 300–500. The massive police presence is complemented by the use of water cannons, tanks, comprehensive technological surveillance and the deployment of specific, heavily armed riot task forces. This deployment of militarised police power, significantly differing from any commonplace encounters that citizens have with the police, is first and foremost a shock for those who lack the subcultural and political experience of the *autonome Szene*. This is regularly emphasised by rioters stating that, although they do not object to the police on the whole, police action during riots 'just went one step too far' (Naegler, field notes, 20 August 2011). Here, rioting – as transgressive edgework – enables rioters to cope with the experiences of powerlessness, humiliation and anger that accompanies the immensely controlled yet unstable and 'chaotic' riot situation (Hayward, 2004, pp. 151–163), and which are voiced by rioters in various ways. This happens, on the phenomenological level, by achieving experiences of autonomy, control and inviolability through successfully negotiating the 'edges' of the high-risk riot situation. By 'teaching the pigs a lesson' (Naegler, field notes, 20 August 2011), rioters exercise control – or at least, experience the 'illusion of control' (Lyng, 1990, p. 872). Here, the aggressive activities of the police, perceived as unjust and lacking proportionality, represent 'decisive events in the breaking of a young person's bond to the status quo' (Young, 2010, p. 23). Eventually, the manifest provocation of the authorities (Ferrell, 2005, 2007; Katz, 1988) through the symbolic and actual challenge of the state's monopoly on violence turns into a symbolic reappropriation of lost control by participating in the temporary visceral and emotional revolt (Lyng, 2005a, p. 7) of the riot.

The exertion of control is likewise enhanced by the 'manufacturing of solidarity' as part of the riot experience. Sternschanze's riots are characterised by the apparent fragmentation of the actors. It was the distinction between apolitical and political rioters that led to the emergence of the term 'thrill-seeking youth' in the first place. In fact, participants rarely share the same motivations, beliefs or (if any) experiences of marginalisation or police repression. They neither internally perceive themselves as a collective movement nor are externally seen

as a unified group. However, collectivity still plays a crucial role – it requires the existence of a 'crowd' to start a riot in the first place – and one can indeed observe a variety of acts of solidarity in Sternschanze's riots. This includes rioters, bystanders and even (uninvolved) residents helping those in dangerous situations – for example, by leading the way, offering hiding places (e.g. by opening hallways), calming down rioters who panic, taking care of those who are intoxicated, and also engaging in symbolic acts of appreciation, such as cheering. Frequently the riot's participants get (physically or verbally) involved when other rioters are arrested or attacked by the police, often going as far as risking arrest themselves. These acts of solidarity are mostly spontaneous and emotionally charged. They result from the situated collective experience within the specific riot situation, rather than relating to a collective identity in terms of a supra-individual belonging to a group, subculture or movement (Drury and Reicher, 1999; Scott and Drury, 2000). In this sense the solidarity during Sternschanze's riots between those standing on the other side of the police line (for whatever reason) is extraordinary, and is to some extent contrary to the characterising fragmentation. Within the situated dynamics (and only within them), fragmentations temporarily dissipate. Here the achievement of solidarity, regardless of any shared goals, persuasion or motivations, is – at least for the thrill-seeking youth – not 'goal-oriented' (as it is, for example, for the *autonome Szene*, which understands solidarity as a tool for achieving social change). Rather, it becomes a means in itself. Solidarity is what is mostly lacking in everyday life in the contested spaces of gentrified Sternschanze, which are characterised by separation, alienation, individualisation and the exclusion of those not holding the means to consume. By engaging in the collective act of rioting, the thrill-seeking youth obtain, temporarily, what is not readily available in everyday life and, as such, as participants regularly emphasise (Naegler, field notes, 1 May 2010; 4 September 2010; 20 August 2011; 25 August 2012), which is in itself rewarding. Finally, the thrill-seeking rioters do not start rioting because of a pre-existing solidarity in terms of belonging to a resistant subculture or movement but rather produce solidarity in highly emotional and risky ways by engaging in the riot experience.

This manufactured solidarity is widely based on the shared agreement of a clear-cut concept of the enemy – the police as representatives of state power to whom all acts of violence are targeted. In their hostility towards the police, the thrill-seeking youth often sympathise with the *autonome Szene* – albeit that this rarely relates to an overall alignment with the political persuasions of 'the communists' (Naegler,

field notes, 1 May 2011). In fact, for most rioters the *autonome Szene* remains obscure, hard to grasp, intimidating and even threatening. This leads to an exaggeration of the subculture's 'power'. One rioter claimed, with deep conviction, that if the police were to try to enter the *autonome Szene*'s squatted headquarters in Sternschanze, 'they would have no chance' and 'would get killed' (Naegler, field notes, 25 August 2012) by the anarchists (aside from the fact that the *autonome Szene* in Sternschanze are opposed to the killing of people – they close the doors of their building during riots because they are afraid that the police might raid it and evict them). This mystification enhances the attraction of the 'forbidden' in rioting as it creates the illusion of a proximity to the rebellious determination of the 'terrorist' *autonome Szene*, perceived as 'in charge' of the situation, and hence it functions as some sort of 'moral authority'. This facilitates a quasipolitical reading of Sternschanze's riots. In this reading, attacking the police also becomes a 'legitimate' reaction for the thrill-seeking youth. This in turn provides the basis on which 'edges' are negotiated and indeed exhausted to a point which exceeds those boundaries set in everyday encounters with state authorities. During riots, the stages are set clearly: it is 'good against evil', 'us against them' (Naegler, field notes, 4 September 2010), the righteous rage of the masses against the malicious power of the state. This is evident in one of the most popular lines shouted during riots, stating that 'the whole of Hamburg hates the police'. In all of this, self-actualisation and a reassurance of identity can be achieved. These are interwoven in the legitimising narratives surrounding the riots. In Sternschanze's riots, the police are the 'others' that help the formulation of a self-identity (Young, 1999, 2007, 2011) which is – at least morally – superior to authority and state power. The fact that police forces react aggressively to riots by demonstrating their authority and physical power reinforces these self-constructions. The police become the symbol of injustice, control and inequality. Thus they represent the coercive arm of a state that has failed, and which can only respond through violence, control and aggressive policing (Ferrell, 1995; Ferrell *et al.*, 2008).

Thrill-seeking rioting as resistance

In the Sternschanze riots, it was the absence of 'recognisable frameworks of political protest' (Jobard, 2009, p. 238) among the thrill-seeking youth that led to the view that their acts are 'senseless', random, irrational (as they do not try to achieve social change), and deeply de-politicised (as they are solely motivated by emotions and thrill-seeking pursuits).

To the extent that state authorities are likely to have a particular interest in denying the political meaning of rioting (in Sternschanze, as elsewhere), this external attribution of thrill-seeking riots as 'non-resistant' becomes questionable. Certainly, it is at the same time problematic to 'see resistance everywhere' (Weitz, 2011, p. 669), to regard too much as 'resistance' (Winlow and Hall, 2007), and to assign a coherency in motivation and resistant intent which is oversimplifying or simply non-existent (Young, 2011, 2010). The resistant and/or political intent of the thrill-seeking youth is not as easily recognisable as it is in the openly contentious and collectively organised political mobilisations (Della Porta and Diani, 2006; Diani, 1992; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004) of the *autonome Szene*. However, as argued in the previous sections, the thrill-seeking youth do not riot 'randomly' and 'senselessly' at all. Even though their opposition to the exercise of state power and authority is motivated by emotional endeavours, this does not close down the resistant qualities of their activities.

In engaging in transgressive edgework, the thrill-seeking youth undergo a process of 'moral transcendence' (Lyng, 2005b, p. 28). As Hayward and Young (2004, p. 266) point out, every transgressive act is a conscious act of rule-breaking. Its performance implies an assessment of the legitimacy and adequacy of an existent rule, and a conscious decision to break it, by means of neutralisation techniques or conscious transgression. The edge that the transgressive edgeworker has to negotiate is also a normative one and as such gains an additional dimension. This becomes obvious in the constant negotiation of boundaries by the thrill-seeking youth, and their anchorage of justification in the narratives of riots offered by the *autonome Szene*. The decisions to break rules, laws and conventions through rioting can be seen as questions of meaning and legitimacy. Therefore rioting constitutes an act of resistance. As in the Sternschanze riots, this act of resistance can be supported, enhanced and legitimised by 'rational' narratives but in itself embodies resistance against normative constraints and the authorities that enforce their perpetuation. Rioting as transgressive edgework, both on its phenomenological level and as a reaction to the surrounding conditions, constitutes a refusal to accept the constraints and control that are innate in the normative frameworks that the individual is subjected to in the very riot situation, and beyond. As Ferrell (2005, p. 84) puts it, for the transgressive edgeworkers, 'the rush exists as a moment of experiential anarchy, of experiential resistance to legal and economic authority, a moment of self-liberation accomplished through the magical, on-the-spot conversion of one's own criminalization and ostracization into an enhanced experience of euphoric excitement'. Rioting embodies this

'magical' oppositional activity aimed at the exercise of self-control by both symbolically and physically confronting those sources that seemingly dispossess the actor of having control over their own fate (Ferrell, 2005, p. 81). In this context, thrill-seeking rioting, even if not motivated by 'rational' reasons (in the sense of goal-orientation), constitutes resistant in its emotional dimensions. Here, the emotional and experimental dimensions of thrill-seeking rioting are 'the moment of illicit pleasure that emerges from the intersection of [creative human action] and illegality [signifies] a resistance to authority, a resistance experienced as much in the stomach as in the head' (Ferrell, 1996, p. 172).

As such, the activities of the thrill-seeking youth are resistant, but this opens up the question of whether this resistance is political. Certainly, political intentions (of achieving social change through rioting) are seldom voiced clearly and unquestionably by the thrill-seeking youth. However, this does not imply a general depoliticisation of the Sternschanze riots. After all, this assumed depoliticisation contradicts the politicised meaning of rioting ascribed 'from above' (Hayward and Young, 2004, p. 259), by those who criminalise, control and condemn it. Rioting is an act which severely challenges the dominant social order, hence why Barnholden (2005) emphasises the symbolic meaning of the 'sound of broken glass' in rioting:

> when does the peace begin to be disturbed tumultuously? The answer in almost every case is the sound of broken glass, or, at the very least, the fear of glass being broken, which moves the police squad to action, and signals the change from an unlawful assembly to the beginning of a riot. Broken glass is a potent image signalling the breakdown of the barrier between public and private property.
>
> (Barnholden, 2005, p. 17)

This 'fear of glass being broken', the symbolic vigour of acts disregarding property and authority, is what causes the use of police force and preventative spatial control. The act of rioting is in itself politicised, as are the transgressive activities which are 'invested with meaning and consequences' (Ferrell *et al*., 2008, p. 22) within the riot situation. Minor criminal offences such as vandalism easily turn into 'political crimes', thus leading to significantly harsher sentences. At the very least, through the information provided by the *autonome Szene* prior to and during the riots, there is also knowledge among the thrill-seeking rioters that this situation is different from any other, in both its framing and its (legal) consequences – or, as one rioter put it, if it were only about excitement, thrill and violence, he 'would go to a football match' (Naegler, field notes, 4 June 2009).

Conclusion

The image created in and of Sternschanze's riots is a powerful one. It romanticises resistance and 'countercultural' coolness while offering the moral justification of fighting the obviously unjust capitalist system and the police as an embodiment of the 'unidentifiable forces that rob one of individual choice' (Lyng, 1990, p. 870). It constitutes a situation in which the overwhelming external control and the direct experiences of state power went 'one step too far to accept'. The motivation for the thrill-seeking youth to participate is to a great extent grounded in the excitement and pleasure inherent in the act per se. However, they are also driven by the desire to exercise control and to achieve self-actualisation in a late modern society pervaded by experiences of loss of control and ontological insecurity. They reveal the intensity of these experiences in 'a world where pleasure has to be seized despite the intense commodification of consumer culture, where control must be struggled for in a situation of ever increasing rationalization and regulation and where identity is threatened by the instability of social narratives' (Young, 2003, p. 391). Against this backdrop, thrill-seeking rioting can be seen as 'symptomatic of a larger set of problems regarding the mass extermination of human spontaneity' (Ferrell, 2004, p. 288) in contemporary consumer culture. The desire to counteract these experiences turns into subterranean motivations (Matza and Sykes, 1961) for the thrill-seeking youth, expressed in 'out-of-control explosions, little revolutions against the routinization of everyday life' (Ferrell, 2004, p. 193) and the 'sensual uprising against boredom, tedium, alienation' (Ferrell, 2005, p. 84). This seems to be exactly what makes participating in Sternschanze's riots so appealing. They enable the realisation of spontaneity and immediacy, including the rewarding experience of excitement and carnivalesque pleasure (Presdee, 2000). For young people, often 'invisible' in urban planning decisions in gentrified Sternschanze, riots eventually turn into an alternative strategy (Hayward, 2004, p. 154) to realise excitement and to cope with experiences of loss of control within contemporary social and cultural dynamics.

References

AK Wantok (2010). *Perspektiven Autonomer Politik*. Münster: Unrast Verlag.

Altenried, M. (2012). *Aufstände, Rassismus und die Krise des Kapitalismus. England im Ausnahmezustand*. Münster: Edition Assemblage.

Barnholden, M. (2005). *Reading the Riot Act: A Brief History of Riots in Vancouver*. Vancouver: Anvil Press.

Bauman, Z. (2011). The London riots – On consumerism coming home to roost. *Social Europe Journal*. Retrieved from http://www.social-europe.eu/2011/08/the-london-riots-on-consumerism-coming-home-to-roost/.

Della Porta, D. and Diani, M. (2006). *Social Movements. An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Diani, M. (1992). The concept of social movement. *The Sociological Review*, 40(1), 1–15.

Drury, J. and Reicher, S. (1999). The intergroup dynamics of collective empowerment: Substantiating the social identity model of crowd behavior. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 2(4), 381–402.

Ferrell, J. (1995). Urban graffiti: Crime, control and resistance. *Youth & Society*, 27(1), 73–92.

Ferrell, J. (1996). *Crimes of Style. Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Ferrell, J. (2004). Boredom, crime and criminology. *Theoretical Criminology*, 8(3), 287–302.

Ferrell, J. (2005). The only possible adventure: Edgework and anarchy. In S. Lyng (Ed.), *Edgework: The Sociology of Risk Taking*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Ferrell, J. (2007). For a ruthless cultural criticism of everything existing. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 3(1), 91–100.

Ferrell, J. (2010). Cultural criminology. The loose can[o]n. In E. McLaughlin and T. Newburn (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Criminological Theory*. London: Sage.

Ferrell, J., Hayward, K., and Young, J. (2008). *Cultural Criminology: An Invitation*. London: Sage.

Geronimo (2002). *Feuer und Flamme: Zur Geschichte der Autonomen*. Frankfurt: ID Verlag.

Hall, S. (2012). Consumer culture and the meaning of the urban riots in England. In S. Hall (Ed.), *New Directions in Criminological Theory*. Oxford: Taylor & Francis.

Hall, S. and Winlow, S. (2007). Cultural criminology and primitive accumulation. A formal introduction to two strangers who should really become more intimate. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 3(1), 82–90.

Hall, S. and Winlow, S. (2012). A predictably obedient riot: Postpolitics, consumer culture and the English riots of 2011. *Cultural Politics*, 8, 465–488.

Hamburger Abendblatt (2010). *Denn dein Ziel ist das Chaos, die Gewalt. Die Zerstörung*. Retrieved from http://www.abendblatt.de/hamburg/article1480392/Denn-dein-ziel-ist-das-chaos-die-gewalt-die-zerstoerung.html.

Harvey, D. (2011). *Feral Capitalism Hits the Streets*. Retrieved from http://davidharvey.org/2011/08/feral-capitalism-hits-the-streets/.

Hayward, K. (2004). *City Limits. Crime, Consumer Culture and the Urban Experience*. London: Glasshouse Press.

Hayward, K. and Young, J. (2004). Cultural criminology: Some notes on the script. *Theoretical Criminology*, 8(3), 259–273.

Hollander, J. and Einwohner, R. (2004). Conceptualizing resistance. *Sociological Forum*, 19(4), 533–554.

Jobard, F. (2009). Rioting as a political tool: The 2005 riots in France. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 48(3), 235–244.

Katz, J. (1988). *Seductions of Crime: Moral and Sensual Attractions in Doing Evil*. New York: Basic Books.

Le Bon, G. (1947, 1986). *The Crowd: Study of the Popular Mind.* London: Ernest Benn.

Lyng, S. (1990). Edgework: A social psychological analysis of voluntary risk taking. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 95(4), 851–886.

Lyng, S. (2004). Crime, edgework and corporeal transaction. *Theoretical Criminology*, 8(3), 359–375.

Lyng, S. (2005a). Edgework and the risk-taking experience. In S. Lyng (Ed.), *Edgework: The Sociology of Risk-Taking*. New York: Routledge.

Lyng, S. (2005b). Sociology at the edge: Social theory and voluntary risk taking. In S. Lyng (Ed.), *Edgework: The Sociology of Risk-Taking*. New York: Routledge.

Matza, D. and Sykes, G. (1961). Juvenile delinquency and subterranean values. *American Sociological Review*, 26(5), 712–719.

May, T. (2011). *London rioters 'will be brought to justice'.* Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-14449979

Naegler, L. (2012). *Gentrification and Resistance: Cultural Criminology, Control, and the Commodification of Urban Protest in Hamburg.* Berlin: LIT Verlag.

Presdee, M. (2000). *Cultural Criminology and the Carnival of Crime.* London: Routledge.

Schwarzmeier, J. (1999). *Die Autonomen Zwischen Subkultur Und Sozialer Bewegung.* Göttingen: Books on Demand.

Scott, C. and Drury, J. (2000). Crowds, context and identity: Dynamic categorization processes in the 'poll tax riot'. *Human Relations*, 53(2), 247–273.

Wehrheim, J. (2006). *Die überwachte Stadt – Sicherheit, Segregation und Ausgrenzung.* Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich.

Weitz, R. (2011). Women and their hair: Seeking power through resistance and accommodation. *Gender and Society*, 15(5), 667–686.

Young, J. (1999). *The Exclusive Society: Social Exclusion, Crime and Difference in Late Modernity.* London: Sage.

Young, J. (2003). Merton with energy, Katz with structure: The sociology of vindictiveness and the criminology of transgression. *Theoretical Criminology*, 7(3), 388–414.

Young, J. (2007). *The Vertigo of Late Modernity.* London: Sage.

Young, J. (2010). *Subcultural Theory: Virtues and Vices*. Retrieved from http://www.malcolmread.co.uk/JockYoung/subculture.htm.

Young, J. (2011). *The Criminological Imagination.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Zimbardo, P.G. (1969). The human choice: Individuation, reason, and order versus deindividuation, impulse, and chaos. In W.T. Arnold and D. Levine (Eds.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 1969*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 17, 237–307.

10
Greece: Social Unrest against Neoliberalism and Austerity

Panagiotis Sotiris

Introduction

Since 2008, Greece has been associated with mass protest, rioting and political crisis, as the result of the combination of economic crisis and an aggressive experiment in neoliberal social engineering. This chapter will attempt to analyse the dynamics of social and political conflict, and the emerging new configuration of mass political practices and social alliances in Greece.

The crisis of the Greek economy and society

The debt crisis and the austerity programmes

In late 2009 the Greek government announced that Greece was facing a sovereign debt crisis that needed immediate measures. At that time the debt/GDP ratio was 129.7% and the general government deficit was at 15.6% (Hellenic Statistic Authority, 2012). It sought assistance from the European Union (EU) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In May 2010 the first bailout agreement was signed with the EU, the IMF and the European Central Bank (ECB), the so called 'Troika'. Since 2010, Greek governments have implemented austerity programmes, under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Troika. These austerity programmes have included budget cuts to health, education and social services; wage reductions for public sector employees; pension reductions and increases in the retirement age; reductions in public sector personnel through reduced hiring, laying off of personnel on limited term contracts, forced retirement and recently redundancies; a complete overhaul of the collective bargaining system, a reduction in the minimum wage and widespread wage reductions in the private sector; labour

law reforms that increase labour market flexibility; increased taxation; increased electricity and public transport prices; and a massive privatisation programme (Bank of Greece, 2012a; INE GSEE/ADEDY, 2011). This strategy aimed at reducing debt levels and restoring competitiveness through a strategy of 'internal devaluation' (INE GSEE/ADEDY, 2012; Ioakeimoglou, 2012). However, despite an extensive debt-restructuring programme in the spring of 2012 (Bank of Greece, 2012a), debt levels remained extremely high and even the IMF estimates that in 2020 Greece will still face the burden of a debt/GDP ratio of 124% (IMF, 2013).

The Greek crisis in perspective

The economic crisis in Greece should not be viewed as the result of deviant public borrowing and spending, constantly rising salaries undermining the competitiveness of the Greek economy, and an unsustainable consumption model (IMF, 2010). In fact, it is the combined result of the global economic crisis, the crisis of the Eurozone and the crisis of the Greek 'developmental paradigm'.

Beginning in 2007 with the financial crisis, it became obvious that the global economy was experiencing a structural capitalist crisis, of which the debt crisis was only a manifestation. In Marxist terms, it is a crisis of overaccumulation, along with a crisis of the extensive financialisation of contemporary capitalism. At the same time, it is a crisis of neoliberalism as economic and social governance (Duménil and Lévy, 2011; Konings (Ed.), 2010; Lapavitsas, 2009; Mavroudeas, 2010; Panitch and Gindin, 2010).

An important aspect of this crisis is the crisis in public finances, in the form of increased sovereign debt and demands for budget cuts to cope with reduced revenue. As was shown by Marxist writers during the 1970s crisis of the 'welfare state', capitalist states during periods of economic crisis face a contradiction, since the measures that they adopt to enhance capital accumulation collide with the necessity to legitimise the system through social spending (Gough, 1979; O'Connor, 1973). The concessions made towards capital in the period that followed the 1970s economic crisis, such as tax reductions for business, various forms of subsidy and public spending in favour of the business sector, left no other solution than increased debt, both public and private, which in turn, under the pressure of international money markets, has led to a new wave of cuts in state spending, thus accentuating a condition of a legitimation crisis of contemporary liberal democracies (Streeck, 2011).

The Greek crisis brought forward the structural contradictions of the financial and monetary architecture of the Eurozone. The euro as a

single currency accentuated the problems caused by the differences in competitiveness and productivity between European economies. The euro practically meant currency devaluation for higher productivity and competitiveness export countries, and a currency overvaluation for lower productivity import countries. In periods of relative growth, this structural imbalance could be tolerated or even endorsed because it could act as a pressure for capitalist restructuring, acting like an 'iron cage' of capitalist modernisation. However, in a period of recession, all of the contradictions of this strategy have been intensified. The absence of any mechanism of redistribution and compensation in the Eurozone, and the reluctance particularly of Germany to consider any such mechanism, meant that the competitive pressure on lower productivity and competitiveness countries could become destabilising, at the same time intensifying the problem of debt (de Grauwe 2009; Lapavitsas *et al.*, 2012).

The Greek debt crisis reflected the crisis of the 'developmental paradigm' of Greek capitalism that was based upon low labour cost, the exploitation of immigrant labour, precarious forms of employment, the use of European funds, socially useless public works as the ones constructed for the 2004 Olympic Games, increased household consumption fuelled by debt, and widespread tax evasion on the part of big business (INE GSEE/ADEDY, 2010; INE GSEE/ADEDY, 2011; Iostis Kyriakis, 2010; Kaplanis, 2011; Sakellaropoulos, 2010). The dependence of important sectors of the Greek economy (construction, tourism and shipping) on the tendencies of the economic cycle and the global economic conjuncture only made things worse. As a result, Greek capitalism, after a period of constant growth, entered a prolonged economic downturn.

A vicious circle of austerity, recession and unemployment

The economic crisis along with the austerity programmes imposed since 2010 have brought Greece close to a situation of social devastation. Since 2008 the country has been constantly in recession and the total contraction of the Greek economy is expected to reach 23.5% for the whole 2008–2013 period in real terms (Bank of Greece, 2012a). Such a contraction can only be compared to the consequences of major warfare. Along with increased unemployment all over the Eurozone, which reached a 12.2% average in May 2013 (Eurostat, 2013), unemployment in Greece has reached levels that can only be compared to those of the Great Depression: the official unemployment rate during the first quarter of 2013 was 27.4% and youth unemployment reached 60% (ELSTAT,

2013). Average real wages have fallen by at least 25.6% (Bank of Greece, 2013), there has been a 25% reduction in total demand in the 2010–2012 period along with a 22.8% reduction in the purchasing power of wage earners and the self-employed, and a 18.8% reduction in private consumption in the 2009–2012 period (INE GSEE/ADEDY, 2012). The percentage of the population at risk of poverty in 2011 was 31%, well above the EU average of 24.2% (Eurostat, 2012). There is also evidence of a deteriorating health situation as a direct result of both the social effects of the economic crisis and prolonged recession, but also of severe cuts in public health spending. Such signs of deteriorating health include an increase in suicide and depression rates, an HIV epidemic amongst injecting drug users (for which government officials tried to scapegoat undocumented immigrants despite scientific evidence to the contrary), malaria and Western Nile virus outbreaks as a result of cuts in anti-insect spraying, and reduced access to health services (Basu and Stuckler, 2013; Economou *et al.*, 2013; Fotiou *et al.*, 2012; Kentikelenis *et al.*, 2011).

Protest and unrest in Greece in a period of economic crisis

December 2008: The postcard from the future

On 6 December 2008, a policeman shot and killed, in cold blood, 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos. For the next month, Greece experienced mass demonstrations and rioting. Although the December 2008 riots in Athens and other major Greek cities occurred before the full eruption of the sovereign debt crisis, they were the first phase of a continuing protest cycle.

In December 2008, mass demonstrations took place not only in Athens but in almost every city and town in Greece, for the whole stretch of time up to (and including) New Year's Eve. Towns that had not experienced a mass rally in years saw clashes with the police. In hundreds of high schools, strikes and other forms of protests ran for two weeks. The majority of university campuses were occupied up until the beginning of the Christmas holidays. Police stations all over Greece became the target of student rallies, which often ended in rock-throwing. Scores of local radio stations were briefly occupied in order for messages of solidarity to be broadcast. The studios of the National Television Company were likewise briefly occupied in prime time. Town halls and other municipal facilities were occupied and housed mass assemblies. Theatrical shows, including a premier at the National Theatre, were interrupted by protesting drama students. More than 180 bank branches were attacked, many of them totally destroyed. Hundreds of

stores, ATMs and traffic lights were smashed, with the total cost of damages estimated to have exceeded €1.5 billion (Sotiris, 2010).

The killing of 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos by a police officer acted as a catalyst for the expression of various forms of social discontent. The economic crisis was already contributing to a general feeling of discontent, marking the first stages of the whole sequence that led to the Greek Debt Crisis. In 2008 the Greek economy was already sliding into recession (Bank of Greece, 2009) in sharp contrast to high growth rates and intense capitalist restructuring experienced from the mid-1990s. Households were facing stagnant wages, job insecurity and rising indebtedness, compounded by a policy of strict fiscal austerity. Rising social inequality became an integral aspect of the Greek social landscape (Kouvélakis, 2008). All of these accentuated feelings of growing insecurity and a widespread sense that things were going to get worse in the coming months.

Moreover, the strategy of capitalist restructuring and the neoliberal turn of the 1990s and 2000s (Duménil and Lévy, 2004; Sakellaropoulos and Sotiris, 2004) had affected young people in particular, both as students and as workers or the unemployed. Already in 2008 the unemployment rate of young people was at 22.1%, with the EU average standing at 15.4% (Eurostat, 2009). Unemployment was not the only problem that young people faced in the labour market. Many of them had to wait for many years for stable employment (Karamesini, 2009). This sense of 'no future' was even stronger among those segments of young people that had not reached tertiary education and mainly opted for vocational training. Things have been even worse for young immigrants, especially 'second-generation' immigrants who were still facing discrimination and prejudice. A picture emerged in December 2008 of a 'unity in difference' (Karamesini, 2009) of Greek youth. Despite the differences in employment and social status between the different segments of the Greek youth, the common denominator is the deterioration of employment prospects. Deteriorating working conditions, higher unemployment and lower earnings for youths has been a constant feature of European social reality across the 1980s and 1990s, with young employees having a stronger presence in sectors where employment was precarious (Castel, 2006; Lefresne, 2003).

Higher education policies also contributed to revolt from young people. From the 1990s onwards there has been a series of neoliberal reforms of higher education. These aimed to bring higher education closer to business interests. At the same time they attempted to make sure that – despite increased access to higher education – university degrees do

not lead to guaranteed work prospects, but instead higher education is adjusted to increased workplace flexibility. Finally, a constant aspect of these reforms has been a conscious effort to discipline the student movement (Katsikas and Sotiris, 2003; Sotiris, 2012). In the 2000s the combination of a highly competitive system of entry exams for higher education – requiring tremendous amounts of studying and many extra hours of expensive tutorial courses – with the prospect of obtaining a university degree that will not lead to secure employment had produced a widespread feeling of growing insecurity with regard to young people's prospects.

In light of the above, police violence acted as a metonymy for the systemic social violence of capitalist restructuring and neo-liberalism (Kouvélakis, 2010). The murder of 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropoulos, as an extreme case of police aggression, was perceived as the 'tip of the iceberg' of all forms of social inequality, insecurity and oppression. On the political level, rising social discontent represented a crisis of legitimisation for the Greek state (Bratsis, 2010). The apprehension of widespread political corruption and direct links between business and the political system intensified these tendencies.

The events of December 2008 in many respects sparked a highly original movement. For the first time it was not just the student movement but also the whole youth movement that dominated the social scene. The December movement united high-school students and youths from vocational training centres, university students and young workers, middle-class youths and youths facing social exclusion, Greeks and immigrants. It was neither a classical student movement nor an explosion of disenfranchised socially excluded youth, like the 2005 *banlieue* riots in France. Both the deterioration of employment prospects and the restructuring of the educational system provided the material basis for this unity.

The movement accelerated the rearticulation of a collective identity in the Greek youth that comprises struggle, solidarity, hostility towards authority and the traditional political scene, and a deeply anti-systemic demand for radical change in all aspects of social life. It was a true movement, not a 'blind' social explosion. The complex interactions and practices within the movement helped the emergence of an anti-systemic collective identity in Greek youths (Psimitis, 2011). Whatever definition of a social movement we choose, the December 2008 explosion of the Greek youth was a social movement. It was obvious that we were dealing with a form of collective action that involved solidarity, engagement in conflict and breaking the limits of compatibility of a

system, in line with Alberto Melucci's definition of a social movement (Melucci, 1989, pp. 29–30; Melucci, 1996). We could discern the characteristics of a social movement grounded in 'informal networks based on . . . shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize . . . conflictual issues, through . . . the frequent use of various forms of protest' (Della Porta and Diani, 1999, p. 16). Furthermore, using Tilly's (2004) work, we could witness the synthesis of a

> sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities . . . employment . . . [of] forms of political action . . . participants' concerted public representations of . . . worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment on the part of themselves.
>
> (Tilly, 2004, pp. 3–4)

The movement was based on various forms of coordination, often informal and self-organised, using extensively the internet and new communication technologies, following the pattern observed in other recent youth movements (Bindix and Park, 2008; Tsimitakis, 2009). The appeal of the movement was not limited to students, or to left-wing or anarchist militants. It also attracted various segments of the workforce, who found a way to express their discontent, including young workers and unemployed youths, teachers and professors, people working in precarious posts of intellectual labour. It also acted as a catalyst and accelerator for all forms of social and political activism, the best example being the impressive movement of solidarity to Konstantina Kuneva, a Bulgarian janitor who was attacked and nearly died because of her union activity against precarious labour. It also represented a collective effort to reclaim and reappropriate public space, exemplified by practices such as the occupations of public buildings and open spaces (Stavridis, 2010).

The movement had elements of an anti-systemic political orientation. One could sense this not only in tracts by leftist or anarchist groups but also in the way students expressed their rage against what they called the 'policies that kill our dreams' and the popularity of slogans, such as 'down with the government of murderers'. Even the mass destruction of banks and retail stores in the centre of Athens on 8 December 2008 was directed mainly against symbols of economic power, and even youths who opted for more 'peaceful' ways to demonstrate engaged in rioting as a necessary aspect of a collective effort to 'make themselves heard'. The political dynamic of the movement, in contrast with other movements that tended to focus on concrete policy

changes, represented a profound demand for radical social change (Gaitanou, 2011).

The 2010–2011 strike wave

The announcement of the first bailout agreement with the Troika in the spring of 2010 led to the first wave of mass collective action, mainly in the form of general strikes and mass demonstrations. The high point of this strike wave was the General Strike of 5 May 2010, when hundreds of thousands of protesters filled the streets of Athens and other major cities in Greece, some of them attempted to climb the stairs that led to the building of the Greek Parliament, and three bank workers were killed when they were caught inside a burning building (Michael-Matsas, 2010). In terms of collective feeling and aspiration, most people participating in this strike wave were convinced that such a show of strength would force the government to withdraw the proposed austerity measures. In a way, it was as if they thought that it would be enough to have a show of force equivalent to the 2001 General Strike that forced the then government to withdraw a proposed pension reform (Mitralias, 2001). This first wave of general strikes was to continue until 2012 with the Trade Union Confederations calling 26 General Strikes from 2009 to September 2012.

The 'Movement of the Squares': Political crisis and social unrest

The first strike wave lasted until the spring of 2011. At the same time there were elements of a looming political crisis. In November 2010 the municipal and regional elections showed losses for the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima (PASOK)) the socialist ruling party, and an extremely high percentage of abstention suggesting growing distrust of the political system (Mavris, 2010). In the spring of 2011 it was obvious that a new austerity package was under way. Unemployment and recession were already causing hardship in many households, hence fuelling anger. In the winter of 2010/2011, discontent was expressed in many forms, mainly through strikes and mobilisation in particular sectors, that tended to take a much more confrontational form. The occupation of the Ministry of Health by striking doctors in February 2011 was such an example. Even more representative of this kind of confrontational protest was the mobilisation of the town of Keratea in the Greater Attica region against the construction of a landfill site. There, protests took the form of violent confrontation with the police for many weeks, with large segments of the town's population taking part in the clashes (Contrainfo, 2011).

At the same time the images coming from the Arab Spring and especially Cairo's Tahrir Square (Sowers and Toensig, 2012) started dominating the imagery of many activists. The idea was that it would be possible to stop austerity by staging mass rallies in squares and especially Syntagma (Constitution) Square, in front of the Greek Parliament. Yet it was the eruption of the movement of the Indignados on 15 May 2011 in Spain (Adell Argilés, 2011) that gave the final thrust towards this form of protest in Greece.

In reality, from 25 May 2011 to mid-July, Greece experienced something close to a peaceful popular insurrection. Mass gatherings and mass assemblies were organised in Athens and almost every city in Greece. Some of the biggest rallies in Greek history were held. The squares of Greek cities became for many weeks a meeting point of struggle and resistance. Assemblies, debates and workshops were organised. A public opinion survey estimated that, in June 2011, 2.6 million people took part in some form of protest and demonstration (Public Issue, 2011). These protests were deeply democratic, radical and directed against the political establishment. They represented a strong desire for political change, the demand for safe employment, dignity for labour, authentic democracy, and popular sovereignty against the attempt to implement measures dictated by the EU, the IMF and the ECB. As in the case of the Spanish Indignados/15M Movement and the Occupy! movement in the USA, the demand for democracy acted as a metonym for social justice, expressed the protest and despair against aggressive neoliberal policies and contemporary financialised capitalism, brought forward a demand for decision processes that would take into consideration the actual needs of the citizenry, and opened up a new space for radical anti-capitalist politics (Fernández *et al.*, 2012; Khatib *et al.*, 2012).

The movement united in the same sequence of protests and in the same public space both those people who had been active in various forms of protest since 2009 and those who until then had abstained from protests. The mass presence of voters from both the socialist PASOK and the centre-right New Democracy was a practical manifestation of the breaks in relations of political representation, and of a deeper crisis and inability of the traditional party system to represent social demands and aspirations. This was evident on 15 June 2011, when, during a national strike, Prime Minister G. Papandreou, resigned for some hours and was negotiating a new coalition government with the centre-right New Democracy Party, opting finally for a major government overhaul. Were it not for the pressure of the EU and the IMF, and the demand to

pass the new austerity plan (the 'Mid-term programme') by any means possible, the Greek government would have resigned.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Movement of the Squares was the mass use of Greek flags in the rallies, a practice that some segments of the Left misread as 'nationalism'. In reality it should have been read as an expression of the need for popular sovereignty, social cohesion and collective social dignity. People experienced the austerity programmes, and the way in which these were dictated by the EU and IMF in total disrespect of their protests, as an attack on Greek society and consequently as a form of national humiliation. In a European context where limited monetary and financial sovereignty is the main means through which violent austerity packages and privatisations are going to be imposed, reclaiming sovereignty is not a nationalist or protectionist reaction but a form of defence against the violence of finance capitalism (Douzinas and Papakonstantinou, 2011).

Moreover, these protests brought forward a new wave of politicisation and radicalisation in Greek society. People began to question the dominant policies, especially surrounding the national debt and Greece's participation in the Eurozone. This was accompanied by a feeling of collective refusal of people to pay for a national debt that they felt had not been their responsibility. 'We do not owe – we shall not sell – we shall not pay' was a very popular slogan.

As witnessed in other similar forms of protest, the Movement of the Squares was extremely suspicious of traditional party politics, including the parties of the Left. This should not be judged simply as a manifestation of an 'anti-political' stance but as the result of the crisis of party politics in Greece. For the majority of the citizenry, party politics is associated with unjust neoliberal policies, media manipulation, corruption and close links to big business, and an almost servile stance towards international organisations. Therefore this 'anti-political' stance is in reality the demand for an alternative politics of collective action, direct democracy and radical social change.

That is why in the squares of Greek cities we witnessed a unique experiment in democracy (Douzinas, 2011, 2011a). The mass assemblies, with their very strict rules of equal voicing and collective decision that leave no room for traditional demagogy, offer an alternative paradigm of the collective processing of political demands and strategies. Many assemblies produced demands and political positions going beyond a simple refusal of dominant policies. Huge assemblies discussed the Debt Crisis, the crisis of the Eurozone and the meaning of real democracy. At the

same time they offered a new paradigm of collective self-organisation and solidarity. These forms of self-organisation are not just instrumental in an attempt to coordinate protests; they also represent collective forms of organisation that facilitate the re-emergence of the people as a collective subject, bringing together not only different grievances but also different experiences of struggle, and creating networks of solidarity and counterinformation that are more than necessary. Contrary to a traditional conception of politics as electoral representation, the assemblies at every level can function as a radically anti-systemic form of collective organisation and representation of collective demands. If we believe that the emergence of a new and more participatory democracy in the twenty-first century will be the result of a process of collective inventiveness, then we are experiencing the beginning of such a process.

The Movement of the Squares began as a peaceful movement, and giant gatherings were held without violence of any kind. Yet faced with the potential radicalisation of the movement and the escalation of the protest, exemplified in its willingness to blockade Parliament in order to prevent the passing of the new austerity movement, the Greek government adopted more violent tactics, first on 15 June 2011 and then during the 48-hour general strike on 28–29 June 2011, when Syntagma Square became the target of extremely aggressive police tactics and also the theatre of many hours of street clashes. Although the Greek government managed in the end to pass the measures through Parliament, the assemblies and gatherings in squares persisted and some of the practices associated with the squares, such as 'popular assemblies' were to be instrumental in the next phases of the protest cycle.

Mass disobedience as political practice

An important aspect of the movement since 2010 has been the widespread use of civil disobedience practices. The rising prices of tolls on privatised motorways, increased ticket prices for public transport, additional forms of taxation, supplementary fees for the use of public hospitals, and a new property tax tied to electricity bills – all of these have been targeted by campaigns of civil disobedience (Chrisafis, 2011; Tsakiris and Aranitou, 2010). Based on the real inability of many people to shoulder increased taxation and co-payments in public services, these kinds of mass disobedience not only took the form of a collective practice but also of many forms of collective resistance, such as neighbourhood groups making sure that electric power is reconnected to households that could not pay their electricity bill.

It also led to other forms of collective protest action such as doctors making sure that no patient pays the mandatory fee in public hospitals. Although Greek governments have treated this kind of disobedience as a case of anomie *par excellence*, in reality it has been one of the most legitimised forms of collective action in Greece in recent years.

Open political crisis and a post-modern coup

In the autumn of 2011 there was a new escalation of protest and contention. A new series of measures targeting the public sector in particular, led to strikes in the public sector, and a new form of protest, namely the occupations of ministry buildings. It culminated in a 48-hour General Strike across 19–20 October 2011 that paralysed the country. There was increased participation in Athens and all major Greek cities, and a significant number of shopkeepers closed their shops in protest against the recession. This climate of protest and anger was also expressed in the parades of 28 October that commemorate the Greek government's rejection of Mussolini's ultimatum in 1940. The parades turned into mass demonstrations, especially in Thessaloniki, where protesters interrupted the great military parade in the presence of the President of the Republic Karolos Papoulias. This kind of protest was highly symbolic, linking the resistance to Fascism and Nazism to the resistance towards the conditions imposed on Greece by the Troika. In a powerful analogy, the Greek government was seen as akin to the wartime collaborators (Kouvelakis, 2011). Moreover, the image of a government unable to perform even simple ritualistic practices, such as military parades, accentuated the widespread feeling that the country had entered a phase of open political crisis.

It was then that Prime Minister G. Papandreou decided to propose a referendum on the proposed austerity measures. This was a high-risk move since it was highly probable that the outcome of the referendum would be the rejection of the government's policies. Fearing that such an outcome would jeopardise not only austerity in Greece but also the stability of the Eurozone, the leaders of the EU and especially Germany and France intervened against the referendum. In the end, Papandreou was forced to resign, and the other obvious solution, namely an immediate election, was also ruled out, although it was explicitly demanded by the main opposition party, New Democracy, because it entailed the risk of a delay or challenge to the measures imposed. A new coalition government was imposed with L. Papademos, a former governor of the Bank of

Greece and a former member of the ECB directorate, as Prime Minister. Greece went through what could only be described as a post-modern *coup d'etat* (Sotiris, 2011). This development also exemplified a broader tendency towards limited sovereignty within the EU, exemplified by new forms of economic supervision by the EU (Sotiris, 2012).

However, this development did not lead to reduced protests or anger on the streets. On 12 February 2012 the coalition government under G. Papademos passed through Parliament another aggressive package of austerity measures. Outside Parliament and following days of strike action, there was a massive demonstration that ended in prolonged clashes with the police. It took hours before the police managed to clear Syntagma Square of protesters, and damage from the street clashes was extensive. Particularly impressive was the fact that in contrast to other major days of confrontation, when there was hope that the government would be forced to change course, in February 2012 it was obvious to most protesters that the government would pass the measures through Parliament.

The electoral earthquake of May–June 2012

The extent of the political crisis became more than evident in the May and June 2012 Greek legislative elections. The results were an explosive rejection of the politics of austerity and limited sovereignty in Greece. PASOK and New Democracy, the two parties of the coalition government under Papademos, lost more than three million votes, and from a combined total of more than 76% of the vote in the 2009 elections they scored a little over 32%. PASOK, a party that had been in power longer than any other party in recent Greek history, reached a humiliating 13.2%, its lowest score since 1974. New Democracy did not manage to gain from the fall of PASOK and also had its worst electoral result (18.85%), and it saw the splinter Independent Greeks party gaining more than 10% of the vote. The total share of the vote of all of the pro-austerity parties was less than 42%, clear evidence of the rejection of neoliberal policies. SYRIZA (Coalition of the Radical Left) achieved second position with 16.78% (the last time the Left had such a position was in 1958), and the total percentage of the Left (SYRIZA, the Communist Party and the Anti-capitalist Left) reached almost 27%. The sum of all votes cast for parties that did not reach the minimum 3% threshold required to enter Parliament was greater than the total votes cast for New Democracy. All of these results attested to a political system in open political crisis, the result of social devastation brought about by

austerity policies and extreme unemployment. The inability to form a government made this even more evident. A new election was called for 17 June 2012.

After a highly contested election period, New Democracy managed to get 29.7% of the vote and formed a coalition government with PASOK and the Democratic Left. Despite the signs of relief from EU and IMF representatives, the results of the 17 June election reflected a society that was highly polarised along social and class lines – a society that is still facing an open social and political crisis, and that is still filled with anger. The Left managed to have its strongest electoral showing since the Civil War, with SYRIZA becoming the second Party in Parliament with almost 27% of the vote, reflecting processes of radicalization in a period of intense protest and contention.

The Left is the leading political force among working-age voters (pp. 18–55), among wage-earners, among people from the working and lower middle classes, and among people in urban areas. The Right is the leading force among older age groups (55 plus), among the bourgeois and upper middle classes, and in rural areas (Mavris, 2012). Voters who were reacting to austerity more in terms of anger and collective struggle, tended to vote for the Left. On the other hand, people who were reacting to the deterioration of living standards in more reactionary terms, or were in fear of losing whatever real or imaginary social gains they had, tended to vote more for the Right, which could also benefit from a deep-rooted conservatism, especially in provincial Greece, where the consequences of the crisis have not been felt in the same way as in urban areas.

Another expression of the political crisis was the rise of the neofascist Golden Dawn. It received almost 7% of the vote, despite its openly violent and racist practices. Its electoral success, and the way it attracted voters from the working class and other subaltern social strata in urban areas and conservative rural strongholds, reflect the results of a deep social, political and cultural crisis that turns discontent against a deteriorating social situation into a reactionary and racist display of violence, both symbolic and real.

In light of the above it is obvious that the elections of May and June 2012 can be considered part of the same socio-political sequence of protest and contention that began in 2008–2009. They also present a process of recomposition of the political system, with breaks in traditional relations of representation, and large segments of the electorate – and society in general – moving to political directions that are radically different from the ones that they were accustomed to.

Greece in perspective

Anomie or social revolt?

Much of the mainstream discourse on developments in Greece has centred on violent protest and rioting as an expression of widespread anomie. This was particularly evident in the public debates of December 2008 (Sotiris, 2012a). However, important aspects of reality are missing from such a narrative. First of all, violent street clashes cannot be considered as simply anomic or delinquent practices. Both in December 2008 and in subsequent cases of protests that turned violent, violence was targeted mainly against the police, who are seen as representatives of oppressive state power, along with the symbols of political and economic power, such as government buildings, banks and department stores. There have been relatively fewer cases of indiscriminate damage to property or of looting. In this sense, it is obvious that violence is being seen as part of a necessary repertoire of protest politics. Because of aggressive police tactics, many of the practices traditionally labelled as 'rioting' are in reality forms of resistance to police violence.

Yet the main problem with the anomic paradigm is that it is misplaced in terms of explaining practices and political behaviour. It tends to treat protesters as mindless, anomic rioters. In reality, they are people who are facing a sharp deterioration of their working and living conditions and they are reacting to this development. Greece is facing a prolonged social revolt against socially devastating neoliberal policies, not a collapse of social norms.

Moreover, the repertoire of this kind of collective action cannot be reduced to violent confrontations with the police. As was shown in the preceding section, protest has taken many forms: strikes, occupations, solidarity networks, civil disobedience, extended use of social media and the like, and the creation of an alternative public sphere. Instead of treating them as anomic, it would be much more accurate to consider them as deeply democratic, as expressions of the collective will of a people that demand to be sovereign.

It is also incorrect to treat such social demands and collective resistances and mass movements as backward and conservative, exemplified in recent analyses by proponents of neoliberal reforms that tend to treat trade union and social movement resistance to these reforms as a resistance to progress (Kalyvas *et al.*, 2012). This identification of progress with aggressive neoliberalism is by itself analytically limited, which leads to an inability to understand and explain the social dynamics of collective action.

Hegemonic crisis

In Greece, social crisis has led to a fully fledged political crisis. The rapid erosion of mainstream political representation, the crisis of the party system and the emergence of 'anti-politics' all attest to this. The forms of protest that have been predominant in Greece, especially the mass gatherings in city squares, with their openness and the fact that they looked different from traditional union or party meetings, functioned as an outlet for anger and frustration. The people refused to be governed in the same manner as before, and Greek governments seemed unable to govern them, bringing forward the dynamics of political crisis. In many aspects, Greece reached Antonio Gramsci's definition of an organic crisis or a crisis of hegemony, with social classes detached from their parties, increased political mobilisation and a crisis of parliamentary representation (Gramsci, 1971), which can also account for the authoritarian turn towards governments of 'national unity' which is facilitated by the EU's willingness to impose a condition of limited sovereignty (Kouvélakis, 2011). Apart from open forms of political crisis as the one experienced in Greece, there are signs of a growing distance between citizens and both the EU and national governments all over Europe (Eurobarometer, 2012). To make matters worse, European political elites are acting in complete ignorance of the fact that politics cannot be some form of 'autopilot' which dictates measures out of neoliberal textbooks and which seeks to impose market-driven 'consensus'. This strategy can only exacerbate the current crisis of legitimacy. Politics cannot be reduced to simple 'cosmetic' changes without any space for actual political choices. This 'post-democratic' (Crouch, 2004) and 'post-hegemonic' form of neoliberal governance might appear to be the best conduit for neoliberal 'social engineering', but in reality it opens the way for social explosions and open political crisis.

A new insurrectionary political sequence

In the 'collective imaginary' of this movement, images from Tunisia, Egypt or Argentina and the humiliating departure of Prime Ministers played a very important role. This sense of community with movements in other parts of the world is also combined with an appreciation of the common elements in these protests. If we compare Greece with the Arab Spring of victorious popular insurrections, the new qualities of social contestation exemplified in the UK movement against cuts and high tuition fees, or the Occupy! movement in the USA, then we can see

the first signs of a new historical phase, marked by the possibility of insurrectionary events (Badiou, 2012) in the sense of major sequences of protest and collective action that have the potential to initiate processes of major political transformation.

The potentially insurrectional character of the current phase is evident in the ways in which these movements not only dominate pubic space but also go beyond the simple articulation of particular demands towards deeper political desires for radical change, with the creation of new alliances and new forms of protest that target the centres of economic and political power.

Resistance to austerity and the emergence of a potential historical bloc

To treat resistance to austerity in Greece as simply a series of protests and various forms of contentious politics is not enough. What emerges is a particular configuration of social forces. Through collective practices of struggle and solidarity, and the attempt to reclaim public space for protest and to experiment with new forms of democracy, large segments of the subaltern classes came together. These included important parts of the salaried workforce, large segments of the self-employed, and also young people, including young educated workers facing increased precariousness and unemployment. A broad social alliance is emerging which favours a radically different set of policies. This is also the base of the continuing political crisis.

Both in terms of common aspirations and opposition to austerity, and also of a quest for a radical alternative, one can see the emergence of a potential alliance of the forces of labour, science and culture, in opposition to the world of business and finance. It might be even better to follow Antonio Gramsci in describing this as a potential 'historical bloc' (Gramsci, 1971). Traditionally the concept of the historical bloc has been read as referring simply to the articulation of material practice and ideology. However it would be much better to define it as the description of the social, political and ideological processes and conditions that can lead to a social class – or an alliance of social classes – becoming a historical force of transformation, through the dialectic of ideology, practice and strategy. Yet this would also require not simply articulating grievances and demands but also elaborating an alternative narrative for Greek society, an exit from the embedded neoliberalism of the Eurozone, new forms of democratic participation, and a new economic paradigm of justice and social development.

Conclusion

The social turmoil in Greece, in all its multifarious forms, cannot be described as a simple sequence of violent riots, nor can it be described in terms of an extensive repertoire of protest and contentious politics. It is the result of a highly polarised social and political landscape marked by conflicting social blocs and antagonistic political strategies, the rejection of neoliberal policies and their consequences by important social movements, and the deep divide between the pro-austerity political parties (and mass media) and large segments of the subaltern classes. It is also conditioned by a structural capitalist crisis, both in its global dimension and the more local form of a crisis of a developmental paradigm based upon the alignment with the European Integration project, its embedded neoliberalism, public spending and private consumption founded on debt. The impressive sequence of mass protest is an expression of a deeper political crisis – a crisis of neoliberalism both as economic strategy and as hegemonic ideology. The policies imposed by the international money markets and the international economic organisations, along with the attempt by the forces of capital to strengthen their hand have led to a violent contortion of the dominant economic and social paradigm. In this sense Greece is not an exception, but an extreme case of a broader condition that brings forward the deep contradictions of current neoliberal governance and of the European Integration project and the potential for intense social conflict. The continuing insistence of political elites in Europe on a politics of extreme austerity and an authoritarian disregard of the actual demands of the peoples of Europe can only lead to new waves of social unrest. At the same time, the Greek case exemplifies the potential not only for protest but also for envisaging an alternative future in sharp contrast to the neoliberal orthodoxy. It makes evident the possibility of the reformulation of political representation, and the configuration of new social alliances of the subaltern classes which can challenge the current hegemony of neoliberal policies. It also makes imperative the need to radically rethink social and economic policies, using as guiding principles the values and aspirations expressed in the current cycle of protests in many parts of the world: justice, solidarity, democracy.

References

Adell Argilés, R. (2011). La movilización de los indignados del 15-M. Aportaciones desde la sociología de la protesta. *Sociedad y Utopía*, 38, 141–170.

Badiou, A. (2012). *The Rebirth of History. Time of Riots and Uprisings*. London: Verso.

Bank of Greece (2009). *Governor's Report for 2008*. Athens: Bank of Greece (in Greek).

Bank of Greece (2012). *Annual Report 2011.* Athens: Bank of Greece (in Greek).

Bank of Greece (2012a). *Monetary Policy. Interim Report.* Athens: Bank of Greece (in Greek).

Bank of Greece (2013). *Annual Report 2012.* Athens: Bank of Greece (in Greek).

Basu, S. and Stuckler, D. (2013). *The Body Economic. How Austerity Kills*. London: Allen Lane.

Biddix, P.J. and Woo Park, H. (2008). Online networks of student protest: The case of the living wage campaign. *New Media and Society*, 10(6), 871–891.

Bratsis, P. (2010). Legitimization crisis and the Greek explosion. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 34(1), 190–196.

Castel, R. (2006). Et maintenant, le 'précariat'...*Le Monde*. 29 April 2006. Retrieved from http://www2.univ-paris8.fr/fcastaing/spip.php?article20 (accessed 24 January 2013).

Chrisafis, A. (2011). Greece debt crisis: The 'we won't pay' anti-austerity revolt. *The Guardian* 31 July 2011, Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jul/31/greece-debt-crisis-anti-austerity?CMP=twt_gu (accessed 20 January 2013).

Contra Info. (2011). *The Social Struggle in Keratea-Lavreotiki. A Brief Chronicle* (11 December–22 March). Retrieved from http://en.contrainfo.espiv.net/2011/03/28/the-social-struggle-in-keratea-lavreotiki/ (accessed 20 January 2013).

Crouch, C. (2004). *Post-Democracy*. London: Polity.

De Grauwe, P. (2009). The Euro at ten: Achievements and challenges. *Empirica* 36, 5–20.

Della Porta, D. and Diani, M. (2009). *Social Movements: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Douzinas, C. (2011). In Greece we see democracy in action. *The Guardian*, 15 June 2011.

Douzinas, C. (2011a). *Resistance and Philosophy in Crisis. Politics, Ethics and Syntagma Station*. Athens: Alexandria (in Greek).

Douzinas, C. and Papakonstantinou, P. (2011). Greece is standing up to EU neocolonialism. *The Guardian*, 27 June 2011.

Duménil, G. and Lévy, D. (2004). *Capital Resurgent: Roots of the Neoliberal Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Duménil, G. and Lévy, D. (2011). *The Crisis of Neoliberalism*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Economou M., Madianos, M., Perrou, L.E., Theleritis, C., Patelakis, A., and Stephanis, C. (2013). Suicidal ideation and reported suicide attempts in Greece during the economic crisis. *World Psychiatry*, 13, 53–59.

ELSTAT (Hellenic Statistical Authority). (2012). *Press Release. Fiscal Data for the years 2008–2011.* Retrieved from http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0701/PressReleases/A0701_SEL03_DT_AN_00_2012_02_P_EN.pdf (accessed 20 January 2013).

ELSTAT (Hellenic Statistical Authority). (2012a). *Press Release: Labour Force Survey First Quarter 2013*.

ELSTAT (Hellenic Statistical Authority). (2013). *The Greek Economy*. Retrieved from http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-economy.

Eurobarometer. (2012). *Standard Eurobarometer 78. Autumn 2012. Public Opinion in the European Union.*

Eurostat (2009). *Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)*. Retrieved from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database.

Eurostat (2012). *Eurostat Newsrelease: In 2011, 24% of the Population Were at Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion.*

Eurostat (2013). *Eurostat Newsrelease Eurondicators: May 2013 Euro Area Unemployment Rate at 12.2%*. Retrieved from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-01072013-BP/EN/3-01072013-BP-EN.PDF (accessed 27 July 2013).

Fernández, J., Sevilla C., and Urbán, M. (2012). De la indignación intuitiva a la impugnación estratégica. *Viento Sur*, 123, 81–89.

Fotiou, A., Micha, A., Paraskevis, D., Terzidou, M., Malliori, M.M., and Hatzakis, A. (2012). HIV outbreak among injecting drug users in Greece. *An Updated Report for the EMCDDA on the Recent Outbreak of HIV Infections among Drug Injectors in Greece*. Retrieved from http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_191984_EN_HIV_update_Greece_2012.pdf (accessed 26 July 2013).

Gaitanou, E. (2011). The December explosion. In C. Solomon and T. Palmieri (Eds.), *Springtime. The New Student Rebellions*. London: Verso, 222–226.

Gough, I. (1979). *The Political Economy of the Welfare State*. London: Macmillan.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from Prison Notebooks*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

INE GSEE/ADEDY (2010). *Greek Economy and Employment 2010*. Athens: INE GSEE/ADEDY (in Greek).

INE GSEE/ADEDY (2011). *Greek Economy and Employment 2011*. Athens: INE GSEE/ADEDY (in Greek).

INE GSEE/ADEDY (2012). *Greek Economy and Employment 2012*. Athens: INE GSEE/ADEDY (in Greek).

International Monetary Fund (2010). *Greece: Staff Report on Request for Stand in Agreement*. Retrieved from http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2010/cr10110.pdf (accessed 20 January 2013).

International Monetary Fund (2013). *Greece: First and Second Reviews Under the Extended Arrangement Under the Extended Fund Facility, Request for Waiver of Applicability, Modification of Performance Criteria, and Rephasing of Access – Staff Report; Staff Supplement; Press Release on the Executive Board Discussion; and Statement by the Executive Director for Greece*. Retrieved from http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr1320.pdf (accessed 20 January 2013).

Ioakeimoglou, I. (2012). *Internal Devaluation and Capital Accumulation: A Critical Approach*. Athens: INE GSEE/ADEDY (in Greek).

Ios tis Kyriakis (2010). The dark sea: Scandalous tax-exemptions for ship-owners (in Greek). *Eleytherotypia* 30 May 2010. Retrieved from http://www.iospress.gr/ios2010/ios20100530.htm (accessed 29 October 2010).

Kalyvas S., Pagoulatos, G., and Tsoukas, H. (Eds.) (2012). *From Stagnation to Forced Adjustment. Reforms in Greece 1974–2010*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kaplanis, Y. (2011). An economy that excludes the many and an 'accidental' revolt. In A. Vradis and D. Dalakoglou (Eds.), *Revolt and Crisis in Greece. Between a Present to Pass and a Future Still to Come*. Oakland: AK Press & Occupied London.

Karamesini, M. (2009). Difficulties of youth employment in Greece. (in Greek). *Epochí* 18 January 2009.

Katsikas, C. and Sotiris, P. (2003). *The Restructuring of Greek University* (in Greek). Athens: Savalas.

Kentikelenis A., Karanikolos, M., Papanicolas, I., Basu, S., McKee, M., and Stuckler, D. (2011). Health effects of financial crisis: Omens of a Greek tragedy. *The Lancet*, 378(9801), 1457–1458.

Khatib K., Killjoy, M., and Mcguire, M. (Eds.) (2012). *We Are Many: Reflections on Movement Strategy from Occupation to Liberation*. Oakland: AK Press.

Konings, M. (ed.) (2010). *The Great Credit Crash*. London: Verso.

Kouvélakis, St. (2008). *La Grèce en révolte*. Retrieved from http://www .contretemps.eu/interventions/stathis-kouvelakis-grece-en-revolte (accessed 10 August 2010).

Kouvélakis, St. (2010). Pour une politique de l'insurrection. Réflexions à partir du décembre grec. Notes sur la stratégie 1. Unpublished manuscript.

Kouvélakis, St. (2011). The Greek Cauldron. *New Left Review*, 72, 17–32.

Lapavitsas, C. (2009). Financialised capitalism: Crisis and financial expropriation. *Historical Materialism*, 14(2), 114–148.

Lapavitsas, C. *et al*. (2012). *Crisis in the Eurozone*. London: Verso.

Lefresne, Fl. (2003). *Les jeunes et l'emploi*. Paris: La Découverte/Repères.

Matsas-Michael S. (2001). *The Greek V*olcano. The General Strike of May the 5*th in Greece*. Retrieved from http://www.solidarity-us.org/site/node/2855 (accessed 21 January 2013).

Mavris, Y. (2010). Two rounds of disapproval. *Kathimerini*, 21 November 2010 (in Greek).

Mavris, Y. (2012). Greece's Austerity Election. *New Left Review*, 76, 95–107.

Mavroudeas, St. (2010). *Greece and the EU: Capitalist crisis and imperialist rivalries*. Paper presented at the IIPE and Greek Scientific Association of Political Economy First International Conference in Political Economy, Rethymnon, Crete, September 2010. Retrieved from http://www.iippe.org/wiki/images/b/b4/CONF_GREEKCRISIS_Mavroudeas.pdf (accessed 20 January 2013).

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.

Mitralias, G. (2001). *General Strike Resurrects Workers Movement*. Retrieved from http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article645&var_recherche= recomposition (accessed 21 January 2013).

O'Connor, J. (1973). *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*. New York: Saint Martin's Press.

Panitch, L. and Gindin, S. (2010). Capitalist crises and the crisis this time. *Socialist Register 2011*, 1–20.

Psimitis, M. (2011). Collective identities versus social exclusion: The December 2008 Greek Youth Movement. *The Greek Review of Social Research, special issue 136 C* 111–133.

Public Issue (opinion polling company) (2011). *Political Barometer 92 (July 2011)*. Retrieved from http://www.publicissue.gr/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/varometro-07-2011.pdf (accessed 21 January 2013).

Sakellaropoulos, S.P. (2010). The recent economic crisis in Greece and the strategy of capital. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 28(2), 321–348.

Sakellaropoulos, S.P. and Sotiris, P. (2004). *Restructuring and Modernization. Social and Political transformation in Greece in the 1990s* (in Greek). Athens: Papazisi.

Sotiris, P. (2010). Rebels with a cause: The December 2008 Greek youth movement as the condensation of deeper social and political contradictions. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 34(1), 203–209.

Sotiris, P. (2011). *Greece: Rethinking the notions of 'people' and 'popular sovereignty'*. Retrieved from http://greekleftreview.wordpress.com/2011/11/15/rethinking-the-notions-of-%E2%80%98people%E2%80%99-and-%E2%80%98popular-sovereignty%E2%80%99/ (accessed 21 January 2013).

Sotiris, P. (2012). Griechenland und die dunkle Seite der europäischen Integration. *LuXemburg*, 2, 20–27.

Sotiris, P. (2012a). Revolt or Deviance? Greek intellectuals and the December 2008 revolt of the Greek youth. In S. Gergoulas (Ed.), *The Politics of Criminology: Critical Studies on Deviance and Social Control, Deviance and Social Control, Vol. 1*. Zürich and Berlin: LIT Verlag.

Sowers, J. and Toensig, C. (Eds.) (2012). *The Journey to Tahrir: Revolution, Protest and Social Change in Egypt*. London: Verso.

Stavridis, S. (2010). *Towards the City of Thresholds*. Trento: Professional Dreamers.

Streeck, W. (2011). The crises of Democratic Capitalism. *New Left Review* 71, 5–29.

Tilly, C. (2004). *Social Movements. 1768–2004*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

Tsakiris, A. and Aranitou, V. (2010). *'Can't pay? Don't pay!': Civil Disobedience Movements and Social Protest in Greece during the Memorandum Era*. Retrieved from http://homopolitics.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/tsakiris_aranitou_2011_protest_manchester_final.pdf (accessed 21 January 2013).

Tsimitakis, M. (2009). Revolt and the internet (in Greek). *Sýnchrona Thémata*, 103, 29–33.

11
Unrest and Inequalities: Comparing Welfare States

David Pritchard

Introduction

The stereotype of Scandinavia is of a place of haunting natural beauty, a utopian society, where blonde haired beautiful people lead idyllic lives (Murphy, 2010). The fashionable exterior of Stockholm, Sweden, embodies this. Citizens are imagined as enjoying a life of freedom and prosperity, built on the foundations of the Swedish welfare state – engendering a clean, safe and orderly society. Yet this interpretation of Sweden and the other Nordic countries is not without its critics. By the late 1960s there was certainly a feeling in some quarters that the fabled welfare state designed to use Sweden's post-war prosperity to fund universal health care and benefits had failed to live up to expectations. The social democratic hegemony of Sweden's post-war welfare state was challenged both politically and culturally by the left and the right. That sense of disillusionment prompted two left-wing reporters, Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö, to begin work on their Martin Beck novels, which pioneered the idea that detective fiction could be used to analyse the state of the nation, the template of Scandinavian crime fiction (Forshaw, 2012; Murphy, 2010; Nestingen and Arvas, 2011). The genre soon added a social dimension. In 1965, Sjöwall and Wahlöö began to write crime stories about a unit of the Stockholm police led by the fictional character of Martin Beck. Their work had a hidden agenda that they called 'the project'. The writers sought to create realistic crime novels that would look at society from a critical perspective. In *The Locked Room* (1972, 2011, p. 25) the narrator states that 'For the fact of the matter is that the so-called Welfare State abounds with sick, poor, and lonely people, living at best on dog food, who are left uncared for until they waste away and die in their rat-hole tenements.' Their novels abound

with crimes, but the subtextual crime is the crime of social democracy leaving the working class behind. What is surprising about their work is that they paint a very different image of Sweden from the one of a socialist paradise with progressive taxation and a universal welfare state engendering social solidarity. In another example, the plot of their final novel, *The Terrorists* (1975, 2012), is about a political assassination in Stockholm. This has eery parallels with the murder of the Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme, on the streets of the capital in 1986, a crime that to this day remains unsolved. The Swedish state had always been perceived as a benevolent paternalistic entity. The Prime Minister, regardless of party politics, was a symbol of that state. Thus Palme's unsolved murder represented an attack on the benevolent mainstay of Swedish society. The plots of Scandinavian crime fiction, such as the Martin Beck, Kirt Wallander, Harry Hole and Lisbeth Salander stories, expose a world of racism, misogyny and fascism, and, in part, explore what has gone wrong with the Scandinavian dream of a perfect society.

The week-long disturbances in Stockholm from 19 May 2013 have intensified a questioning of Sweden's reputation for equality and its liberal attitudes towards immigration and asylum. The riots began in the neighbourhood of Husby, nine miles north-west of Stockholm city centre, a week after police shot dead a 69-year-old man who was reportedly roaming the area with a machete. Husby housing estate, completed in 1975 as part of the *Miljonprogrammet* which sought to build a million new homes in ten years, is now one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the Stockholm *län* (Andersson, 2010). Evidently, residential segregation has led to social exclusion, with districts such as Husby becoming the Swedish equivalents of *les banlieues* (Wacquant, 2008). The migrant population comes largely from Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Somalia. The causes of unrest, as in France in 2005 and the UK in 2011, appear to have been high youth unemployment and a breakdown in community relations with the police, frequently sparked by an incident involving a police shooting. The riots in the 12,000-strong neighbourhood, with an 80% immigrant population, spread to 23 other suburbs, with the police calling in reinforcements from the counties of Skåne and Västra Götaland several hundred miles south of the capital. The Scandinavian model of progressive politics, low unemployment and a generous social safety net has once again been called into question.

For much of the twentieth century, Sweden adopted an effective compromise, or a 'Middle Way', between capitalism and socialism (Childs, 1934, 1936, 1938). Sweden had evolved from an agricultural society to an industrialised mixed economy. Companies such as Volvo, Ericsson,

Electrolux and Scania generated the wealth which the Social Democrats' *Folkhemmet* (the people's home) was built upon. The social democratic hegemony from 1932 to 1976 saw the country become the world's fourth richest by 1970 and in third place in terms of per capita Gross Domestic Product. Government spending increased from 43.7% in 1970 to its peak of 71.7% of Swedish national income in 1993 (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2011). While the Social Democrats have been in government for most of the 80-odd years since 1932, Sweden has been moving away from universalism in recent decades. Carl Bildt's Conservative-led coalition of 1991–1994 introduced a universal system of school vouchers and invited private schools to compete with public ones. Private companies have also been contracted to provide state-funded health services, and private care for the elderly has expanded (Blomqvist, 2004, pp. 146–148). Admittedly, much like the French socialists, the German Social Democratic Party and the UK's Labour Party in the 1990s, the Social Democrats embraced a political project which sought to combine market economics with social justice. Nevertheless, the election of the four-party Alliance in 2006 and again in 2012, headed by Fredrik Reinfeldt's Moderate Party in the Riksdag, have led to a centre-right coalition government which has embraced market reform, tax cuts and repudiation of the social democratic welfare model. Taxes on property, corporations, gifts, wealth and inheritance have been either cut or abolished with the Alliance's first budget cutting by kr42 billion (Wooldridge, 2013). Yet, despite widespread privatisation of social service delivery over recent decades, ideological support for the traditional Swedish welfare model (collectively financed and publically organised) has increased from 37% in 1992 to about 58% in 2010 (Edlund and Johansson Sevä, 2013, p. 13).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2011) notes that Sweden is still one of the most equal of the advanced industrial countries, despite a rapid rise in income inequality from the early 1990s. However, the growth of inequality in Sweden between 1985 and the late 2000s was the largest among all OECD countries, increasing by a third. In 2008 the average income of the top 10% of Swedish income earners was more than six times as high as that of the bottom 10% of earners. This has grown from a ratio of around 5:1 in the early 2000s and a ratio of around 4:1 during much of the 1990s.

About 8% of the Swedish population are unemployed (Eurostat, 2013) and living on less generous social benefits than they once did. They are more likely to be immigrants or their children, and to be living in geographically excluded districts, such as Husby, where local services

and infrastructure, such as banks, post offices, youth clubs and community groups, tend to disappear (Richardson and Mumford, 2002). Research by Rädda Barnen in 2011 found that the proportion of children in the country living in families that are unable to afford to provide the most basic items – such as food, clothing and housing – increased to 11.5% in 2008, the highest levels since records began in 1991 (Vinthagen Simpson, 2011). Around one in ten households had an income of less than 60% of the national median in 1991. This has grown to nearly one in three by 2008 (Rädda Barnen, 2012, p. 11). It is evident that Sweden, seized by unrest in May 2013, is becoming polarised and is surrendering more of its universal welfare state. Much like pathologised accounts of the 2005 French rioters as 'scum', the Swedish Prime Minister rejected sociological explanations and instead defined the Husby rioters as 'hooligans'.

Thus the following questions can be asked: If unrest can happen here, what about in other countries? Is social unrest more prevalent in more unequal societies? Do relatively extensive and generous welfare systems lead to social stability? And is a reduction in egalitarism inevitably followed by an increase in social unrest? In this chapter it is hypothesised that countries with greater socio-economic inequalities, commodification and liberal welfare regimes experience greater levels of social unrest.

Worlds of welfare?

The concept of the 'welfare state' is a good example of an essentially contested concept (Gallie, 1956). In his seminal work *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (1990), Gosta Esping-Andersen attempted to establish 'ideal types' as an essential starting point for further theorisation. The research was shaped by the view that 'existing theoretical models of the welfare state are inadequate' with his aim being 'to offer a reconceptualization and re-theorization on the basis of what we consider important' (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 2). He identified three worlds: social democratic, corporatist/Christian-democratic and liberal (Ferragina and Seeleib-Kaiser, 2011, p. 584). The first world of the social democratic welfare state was based on the principles of universalism and equality, with benefits and services linked to social citizenship. Such a welfare state was interpreted as providing a relatively high degree of autonomy, while limiting the reliance on family and the market. The second world of the corporatist welfare state was based on the principle

of subsidiarity and the dominance of Bismarckian-style social insurance schemes, offering social support but a high degree of social stratification. The third world encapsulated the liberal regime, based on the notion of market individualism and residualised state provision.

In his original work, Esping-Andersen (1990) develops his typology across 18 OECD countries. The three worlds of welfare were based on decommodification, social stratification, and the welfare mix of provision from sectors such as the state, the market, the family, and voluntary action. Significantly there is some disagreement as to which countries fell into his distinctive regime types (Bambra, 2006, 2007; Bambra *et al.*, 2010). However, Esping-Andersen (1990, p.52) argued that there were three identifiable regimes which the selected 18 OECD countries clustered around. The liberal regime countries – Australia, United States, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom – were characterised by minimal welfare provision, low benefit payments, and selectivism. The corporatist welfare regime – Italy, Japan, France, Germany, Finland, and Switzerland – was based on social differentiation with benefits linked to earnings and tied to the principle of social insurance through work. The social democratic regime – Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden – was identified through redistributive and generous benefit payments, full employment and income protection, and a strategy of equality based upon a universal welfare system (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 52; Arts and Gelissen, 2002, p. 149).

Importantly, the 'ideal types' are driven by the space for social rights in those societies or what T.H. Marshall (1950) conceptualised as social citizenship. Esping-Andersen views these social rights using Polanyi's (1944) notion of 'decommodification', which constitutes 'the degree to which they permit people to make their living standards independent of pure market forces' (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 3). Therefore, according to Huo, Nelson, and Stephens' (2008) reading of Esping-Andersen's work, social policies which result in decommodification make it easier to maintain a satisfactory material standard of living outside the formal labour market. However, labour can never be totally decommodified. Rather, welfare programmes like unemployment benefits, health care, and pension benefits – particularly those based on universalism – can be said to lead to the partial decommodification of labour.

Through the extensive analysis of comparative data across 18 countries, and especially via the development of an innovative decommodification index that drew on administrative data about social

security systems as a proxy for the strength of social rights, Esping-Andersen identified his three welfare worlds (Hudson and Kühner, 2009). These were not unlike Titmuss' (1974) distinction between 'residual', 'industrial achievement-performance' and 'institutional-redistributive' models of welfare, but Esping-Andersen labelled them the liberal, corporatist and social democratic welfare regimes.

Esping-Andersen's typology has been challenged on three fronts – theoretical, methodological and empirical (Bambra, 2007). Theoretical criticisms surround the selection of countries and the establishment of regimes, the gender-blindness of the original formulation, and perhaps most significantly the illusion of regime types. Methodological critiques are based on his development and use of indices and the employment of regression analysis to statistically arrive at regime clusters. Other studies empirically challenged Esping-Andersen's welfare typology, discovering a number of different worlds based on the selection of different countries, data points and time periods (Powell and Barrientos, 2011). Famously, Scruggs and Allan (2006) replicated and reassessed the decommodification index and identified a number of likely errors in the original formulation. Once these were accounted for there was very limited evidence for the 'three worlds' typology based on the decommodification data.

The comparative analysis of welfare states is now a well-worn road in the study of social policy, with the welfare modelling business (Abrahamson, 1999) incorporating different forms of analysis. There are numerous studies which examine the generalised policy context in different countries (Alcock and Craig, 2001). Specific aspects of social policy across nation states have also been assessed (Barbier, 2004; Bonoli, 2010; Clasen, 2000; Clegg, 2005). Other comparative studies have examined the impact of globalisation, and developments in policy planning and reform (Castles, 1998). Mishra (1999) argues that globalisation impacted upon the ability of the nation state to provide social protection. His thesis explored the dominance of supranational agencies, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the ascendency of neoliberalism, and their impact upon the sovereignty of the nation state and its ability to deliver welfare provision.

However, others have challenged the neoliberal welfare state unsustainability thesis. Pierson (1996, 1998, 2000) attempted to place this into a sociological and historical context. He highlights the politics of social policy and questions the welfare state retrenchment thesis, rejecting the argument that neoliberalism has obliterated welfare states. Instead, he views welfare states as 'far more resilient than other key components of

national political economies and far more durable than existing theories of the welfare state would lead one to expect' (Pierson, 1996, p. 144). Indeed, there is also other evidence implying that some established democracies have resisted the logic of neoliberalism (McBride and Williams, 2001) through the maintenance of expansive welfare states funded by progressive taxation (Korpi and Palme, 2003; Navarro *et al*., 2004). Evident from these and other comparative studies is that the Anglo-Saxon countries have tended to adopt similar sets of market-conforming policies. In this sense, the narrative of state failure has been underpinned and justified, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, by the ascendancy of neoliberalism (Wilks-Heeg *et al*., 2012).

There have been numerous further critiques of Esping-Andersen's (1990) work. Some theorists have identified a fourth southern world encompassing Mediterranean countries, such as Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece (Barlow and Duncan, 1994; Bonoli, 1997; Ferrera, 1996; Leibfried, 1992; Moreno, 2000). This regime type is viewed as rudimentary because it is based on a fragmented welfare system underpinned by reliance on the family and the voluntary sector. In response to criticism of his original typology, Esping-Andersen (1999) formulated a new welfare state regime for the Southern European countries. The Mediterranean welfare state regime was characterised by a low degree of decommodification and a strong degree of familialism (Hoekstra, 2010, p. 149). The latter implied that a relatively large part of welfare provision was delivered through the family rather than through the state or the market.

Other work has drawn attention to the Asian model of welfare identified as a Confucian model. This is characterised by a minimalist approach – low levels of state support and public provision – combined with Confucian social ethics surrounding the importance of familial ties, prudence, assiduousness, hard work and a strong emphasis upon education (Aspalter, 2006; Croissant, 2004; Walker and Wong, 2005). Castles and Mitchell (1993) re-examined the Esping-Andersen 18, exploring their high and low expenditure levels and their degrees of benefit equality. Moreover, they argue that Australia and New Zealand should be viewed as a unique formation distinct from the liberal regime of the UK, Canada and the USA – albeit with the former three welfare systems constituting radical approaches where the goals of poverty and income inequality reduction are pursued through redistributive mechanisms rather than high levels of spending. In a similar vein, Kautto (2002) examined Eurostat social protection expenditure data. Distinct regime types were identified but these were very different from

Esping-Andersen's typology. Adding to the debate, Navarro and Shi (2001) contended that the comparative analysis of political traditions was a rich seam to mine. They asserted that the impact of the major political traditions in the advanced OECD countries during the post-war period (1945–1980) – social democratic, Christian democratic, liberal and ex-fascist – can be used to contextualise socio-economic inequalities. However, Pierson (2000) questions whether it makes sense to talk about regimes or worlds of welfare at all, asserting that 'the crucial issue is whether the distinctions among regimes provide leverage for explaining important variations' (Pierson, 2000, p. 809). Arts and Gelissen (2002) contend that real welfare states are hardly ever pure types and are usually hybrid cases. Yet they conclude 'that there is plenty of reason to continue to work on and with the original or modified typologies' (Arts and Gelissen, 2002, p. 137). In the forthcoming sections we will move to an exploration of the statistical relationships between socio-economic inequalities – which, in part, welfare states were designed to ameliorate – and levels of social unrest across the OECD nations. Additionally, the relationship between decommodification and unrest will be considered along with an examination of whether there are differing levels of social disorder between welfare regimes using Esping-Andersen's original typology.

Conceptualising and measuring unrest

Since 2007 the Institute for Economics and Peace through its annual Global Peace Index (GPI) has sought to rank nations according to their level of peacefulness. In an attempt to measure peacefulness, the GPI investigates the extent to which countries are involved in ongoing international and domestic conflicts. The latter area of interest seeks to evaluate the level of harmony or discord within nation states by assessing safety and security within those societies. The GPI incorporates 22 quantitative and qualitative indicators which measure three broad themes surrounding the level of safety and security in the society, the extent of domestic or international conflict, and the degree of militarisation. All scores for each indicator are normalised on a scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high), whereby qualitative indicators are banded into five groupings and quantitative ones are either banded into ten groupings or rounded up/down to the first decimal point. Seven out of the eight qualitative indicators in the GPI are based on country-by-country analyses by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

The likelihood of violent demonstrations is a qualitative indicator compiled by the EIU. Assessment of the likelihood of violent demonstrations is based on the question: Are violent demonstrations or violent civil/labour unrest likely to pose a threat to property or the conduct of business over the next two years? The indicator contributes 4% to the overall GPI score. Exploring the trends across 2008–2013, the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) (2013, p. 4) notes that the world has gradually become less peaceful over that period. The likelihood of violent demonstrations was one of three indicators that recorded the greatest deterioration over the period 2008–2013. This was in large part due to the events of the Arab Spring, and demonstrations in Europe surrounding the sovereign debt crisis and austerity measures. The original sovereign debt crisis countries of Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain were highlighted in the 2013 GPI. They saw varying declines in peacefulness over the period. The association between recession-hit countries and the change in the GPI is clear. Countries hit by recession have declined in peace at a greater rate than countries not in recession. Among other indicators in these recession hit countries, the likelihood of violent demonstrations has been higher than the global average (IEP, 2013, p. 44).

One of the best-established sources of secondary data on social unrest is Francisco's (2000) European Protest and Coercion Database (EPCD). This provides detailed, valid, and reliable interval data on protest and coercion in 28 European countries from 1980 through to 1995. The data are constructed using the full-text reports from more than 400 newspapers in the Lexis-Nexis database. The Norwegian Social Science Data Services (n.d.) notes that the EPCD is generated from all reported forms of protest and repressive events, such as riots, demonstrations, strikes, occupations and hunger strikes. The date, day, action type, location, target or government agent (police, court, ministry and so on), number of protesters (all, arrested, injured, killed) are shown, the organisational strength of the protesters is estimated and there is a description of each event with the identification of the original source (The Norwegian Social Science Data Services, n.d.). The EPCD provides users with data containing information about protest events in great volume and quality, at least in relation to those that make the news. Nam (2006, p. 282) argues that 'the problem of inconsistency of categorisation is resolved by focusing on an event itself rather than on a category'. Significantly, Ponticelli and Voth (2011) in their research on budget cuts and social unrest in part use Francisco's data by taking the sum of the number

of assassinations, demonstrations, riots, general strikes and attempted revolutions to develop their CHAOS measure of protest events.

Socio-economic inequalities, welfare regimes and the prevalence of unrest

From here an assessment is sought surrounding the relationships between socio-economic inequalities, welfare regimes and the extent of riots, unrest and protest. In part it takes its cue from the work of Wilkinson and Pickett (2009). Their research extended beyond the field of epidemiology and tested the hypothesis that social problems are more common in more unequal societies. They examined 23 advanced industrialised nations and developed a composite Index of Health and Social Problems constructed from internationally comparable data from the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the United Nations, the OECD and other sources. The 20:20 ratio from the United Nations' annual Human Development Reports was used, which measures the income gap between the richest fifth and the poorest fifth within societies. Using statistical regression analysis, a regression line demonstrated the 'best fit' relationship linking income inequality to the composite index, and later in the research to the different individual health and social problems. In other words, their findings implied that health and social problems were more common in countries with greater levels of income inequality. Among many notable findings they found that levels of trust were greater in more equal societies, whereas homicide and imprisonment were more common in more unequal countries.

Data on unrest are drawn from the EIU's (2013) likelihood of violent demonstrations measure and longitudinal analysis undertaken on Francisco's (2000) EPCD. Other internationally comparable secondary data are also used from the World Bank, ASEP/JDS, the OECD, the IMF and Scruggs' (2006) Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset. Comparative analysis is undertaken across the 34 advanced industrialised member states of the OECD. In addition, the EPCD is used in a longitudinal analysis but is limited to European countries.

To prepare the data for analysis it is important that their statistical nature is taken into account. Some statistical techniques are sensitive to outliers, where extreme data can distort the overall picture that is obtained. It is important to guard against this and there are statistical techniques that help. Skewness and kurtosis z-values were calculated, which by convention should fall somewhere in the −1.96 to

+1.96 range. Histograms and box plots were also constructed and they indicated visually that the data were non-normally distributed.

Pallant (2010, p. 65) notes that some statisticians suggest removing all extreme outliers from the data. Others suggest changing the value to a less extreme value, thus including the cases in the analysis but not allowing the scores to distort the statistics. Field (2005, p. 79) recommends several options for changing such scores, including the method of using the mean plus twice the standard deviation. Here the non-normal distributions were also transformed using logarithms. This involves mathematically modifying the scores using various formulas until the distributions look more normal (Pallant, 2010, p. 93). The scores were transformed using a logarithm to better meet the assumptions of parametric statistics. Thus issues of skewness and kurtosis were explored using transformation techniques and by removing/changing extreme outliers. These methods did not significantly alter the distribution of the data. Therefore, and for the purposes of this chapter, non-parametric tests were run on the data. Throughout the remainder of the chapter, reporting attempts to follow convention and Cohen's (1988) criteria.

Income inequality and unrest

Before conducting any kind of correlational analysis it is essential to plot a scatterplot and look at the shape of the data. A scatterplot can illuminate several features of the data, such as the potential relationship between the variables, what this relationship might be and whether there are any outliers (extreme values). A simple scatterplot (Figure 11.1) is used to examine the two variables. There were no data available for Luxembourg. Taken from World Bank data, the Gini coefficient measures the statistical inequality among values of a frequency distribution. It is defined using a Lorentz curve plotting the proportion of total income of a population that is cumulatively earned by the increasing proportions of the population ranked by their earnings. The Gini coefficient is the proportional area difference between this curve and the line of equality that would result if everyone within the population earned the same. Results range from 0, implying perfect income equality, to 100, which implies perfect income inequality. The likelihood of violent demonstrations is a qualitative assessment from analysts at the EIU. For the purposes of this chapter, the EIU ratings on the likelihood of violent demonstrations are analysed as continuous data on a scale ranked 1–5 as the ratings are equally spaced along a continuum and therefore form
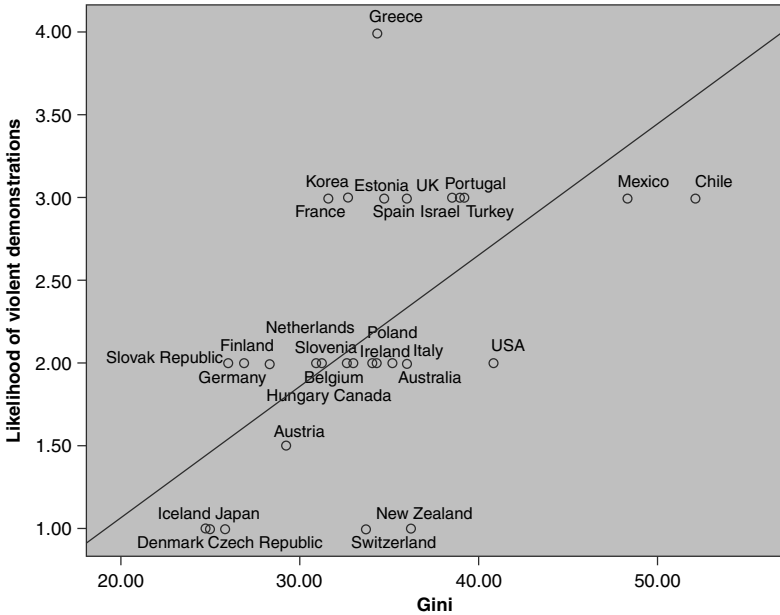
Figure 11.1 Scatterplot: Gini coefficient and likelihood of violent demonstrations

a continuous scale. Indeed the data is also analysed in this way by the Institute for Economics and Peace to produce their overall Global Peace Index scores (IEP, 2013).

The scatterplot shows that the majority of countries cluster around the line of best fit. There also seems to be some general trend in the data which suggests that higher levels of income inequality are associated with higher levels of violent demonstrations. There are several outliers – Greece, Switzerland and New Zealand – which fall outside the vicinity of the other cases. These outliers obviously do not fit the general trend of the data so it is necessary to try to establish if there is good reason why these countries are so different. Greece has a moderate Gini coefficient of 34.3 and a score of 4 on the likelihood of violent demonstrations. This outlier can potentially be explained as Greece is facing prolonged recession (its sixth year in 2013), its national income has collapsed to 76.5% of its 2008 level with over one in four Greeks unemployed, support for far right and hard left political movements has risen, and the country is experiencing draconian cuts to public spending. In contrast, Switzerland

and New Zealand have moderate Gini coefficients of 33.7 and 36.2, respectively, but with scores of 1 on the likelihood of violent demonstrations. These outliers can potentially be explained because both countries have been relatively harmonious societies experiencing very high levels of internal security and safety. Crime and violence have historically been low, with discord and marginalisation channelled through political institutions rather than at the street level.

The relationship between income inequality (as measured by the World Bank's Gini coefficient) and the likelihood of violent demonstrations (as measured by the EIU) was investigated using Spearman Rank Order Correlation (rho). There was a strong positive correlation between the two variables $r_s = .663$, $n = 33$, $p < .001$, with high levels of income inequality associated with a high likelihood of violent demonstrations.

For the purposes of non-parametric testing, the Gini data were recoded into a categorical variable. A Mann–Whitney U Test was run as a non-parametric alternative to the t-test. This revealed a significant difference in the likelihood of violent demonstrations between countries with levels of income inequality below the OECD average ($Md = 2$, $n = 17$) and countries with levels of income inequality above the OECD average ($Md = 3$, $n = 16$), $U = 66$, $z = -2.662$, $p = .008$, $r = .46$. It appears that countries which are above the OECD average on the Gini measure of income inequality have a greater likelihood of violent demonstrations.

Trust, distrust and unrest

An important component of social solidarity is the level of trust within societies. Drawing upon the traditions of Social Contract Theory and the Durkheimian school of thought, Hutton (2002, p. 21) argues that it is only when there is strong social solidarity and a powerful collective conscience that individuals can flourish. Otherwise individuals are at risk of being lost in the modern market economy, resulting in alienation and what Durkheim called anomie, or a state of normlessness. Significantly, Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) have shown that inequality is divisive and damages the social fabric. It weakens social cohesion, trust and the sense of community, and it increases crime and violence. Levels of trust and social capital tend to be higher in more equal countries.

While social capital explores the relationships between individuals within families and communities (Putnam, 2000), levels of trust are an important barometer for the acceptance of the existing social order. Importantly, Uslaner (2002) notes that the kind of trust which is measured in surveys such as the European Values Survey and the World

Values Survey is trust of strangers, of people we do not know, people who are often thought to be not like us.

The relationship between levels of trust and the likelihood of violent demonstrations is examined. Data on levels of interpersonal trust are taken from ASEP/JDS. The Trust Index is based on the most recent waves available from the Latinobarómetro, the European Values Survey and the World Values Survey. The index is based on the formula T = 100 + CBT – CNBT (where T = trust; CBT = percentage of population who think most people can be trusted; CNBT = percentage of population who think you can never be too careful when dealing with others). Scores over 100 correspond to countries where the majority of people trust others, while scores of less than 100 corresponds to countries where the majority of people think one can never be too careful when dealing with others. Thus a score of 0 implies no trust within a society whereas a score of 200 suggests maximum trust.

A scatterplot (Figure 11.2) shows that the majority of countries cluster around the line of best fit. There also seems to be some general trend in the data which suggests that higher levels of trust are associated with lower levels of violent demonstrations. Greece and the Czech Republic
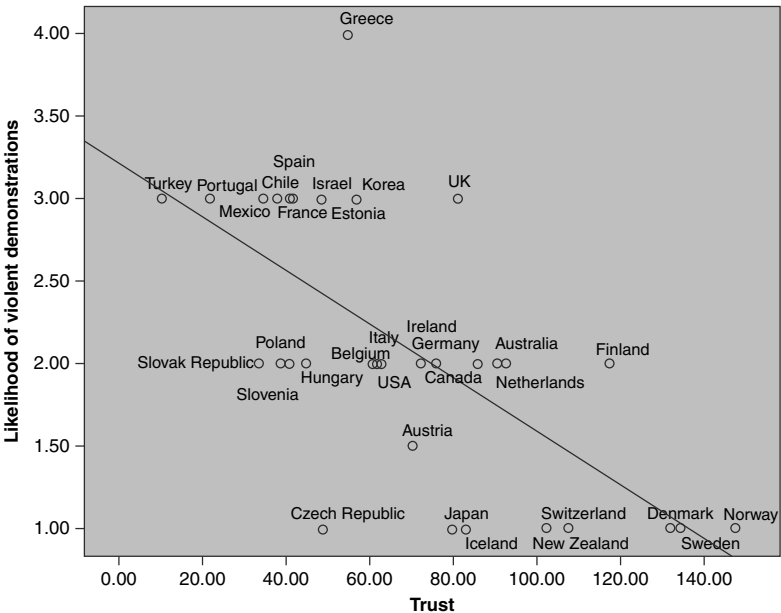
Figure 11.2   Scatterplot: levels of trust and likelihood of violent demonstrations

are outliers, with the former scoring 54.6 on the Trust Index and 4 regarding the likelihood of violent demonstrations, while the latter scores 48.8 on the Trust Index and 1 regarding the likelihood of violent demonstrations. Greece can potentially be explained by its current problems. However, the Czech Republic is more problematic but perhaps can be explained given factors surrounding the Velvet Revolution and the transition from a command economy to a market-driven economy.

The relationship between levels of interpersonal trust (as measured by ASEP/JDS) and the likelihood of violent demonstrations was investigated using Spearman's rho. There was a strong negative correlation between the two variables, $r_s = -.666$, $n = 33$, $p < .001$, with low levels of interpersonal trust associated with a high likelihood of violent demonstrations.

A Mann–Whitney U Test revealed a significant difference in the likelihood of violent demonstrations between countries with levels of trust below the OECD average ($Md = 3$, $n = 18$) and countries with levels of trust above the OECD average ($Md = 1.5$, $n = 15$), $U = 44$, $z = -3.473$, $p < .001$, $r = .60$. The result implies that countries with higher levels of trust above the OECD average have a lesser likelihood of violent demonstrations when compared with those countries where levels of interpersonal trust are lower.

Unemployment, poverty and unrest

Socio-economic problems, such as unemployment and poverty, are often seen as important motivating factors during periods of unrest (Benyon, 1987; Benyon, 2012; Singleton, 2011; Waddington, 1992). Some interpretations of unrest reject sociological explanations and instead view violent disorder as irresponsible and criminal (Benyon, 2012). Others, however, acknowledge that unrest is inevitable given certain social circumstances, such as high unemployment and widespread poverty (Benyon and Solomos, 1987; Jobard, 2009; Scarman, 1981; Waddington and King, 2009). The relationship between unemployment and the likelihood of violent demonstrations is examined (Figure 11.3).

The scatterplot shows that some countries cluster around the line of best fit. However, there are many more outliers which fall either side of this line. These are difficult to explain. Nevertheless, there appears to be a general trend in the data which implies a positive relationship.

The relationship between levels of unemployment (as measured by the OECD) and the likelihood of violent demonstrations was investigated using Spearman's rho. There was a moderate, positive correlation between the two variables, $r_s = .419$, $n = 33$, $p = .015$, with
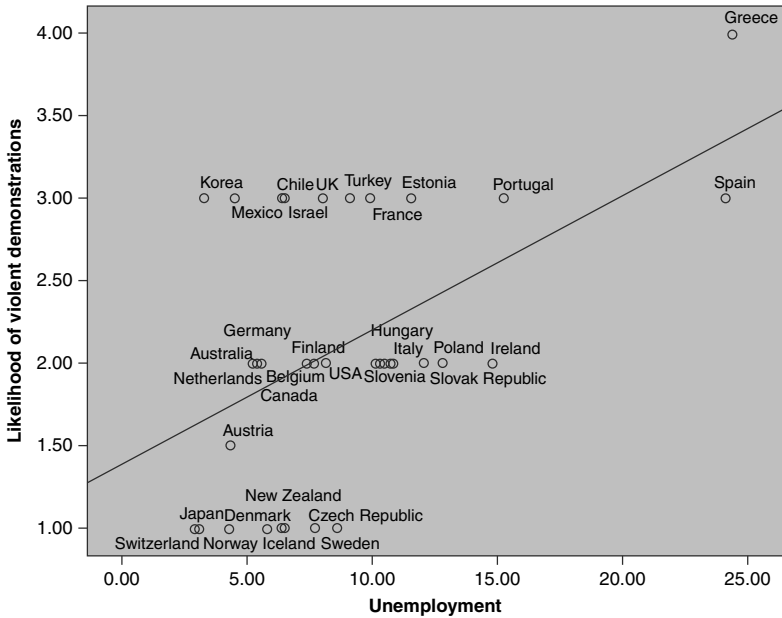
Figure 11.3 Scatterplot: unemployment   and   likelihood   of   violent demonstrations

unemployment moderately associated with the likelihood of violent demonstrations.

A Mann–Whitney U Test revealed a significant difference in the likelihood of violent demonstrations between countries with levels of unemployment below the OECD average ($Md = 2$, $n = 21$) and countries with levels of unemployment above the OECD average ($Md = 2.5$, $n = 12$), $U = 63.5$, $z = -2.469$, $p = .014$, $r = .43$. This suggests that there is some difference in the likelihood of violent demonstrations between countries which are above and below the OECD average of unemployment.

The OECD (2013) defines poverty rates as the percentage of the population living in households with less than 60% of the median equivalised income. The relationship between poverty rates from the OECD's (2013) Economic Outlook and the likelihood of violent demonstrations across the 34 OECD countries is also examined. A simple scatterplot (Figure 11.4) is used to examine these two variables.

The scatterplot shows that some countries cluster around the line of best fit. However, most countries fall either side of this line with two outliers: Japan and Greece. Japan as an outlier – with high rates of
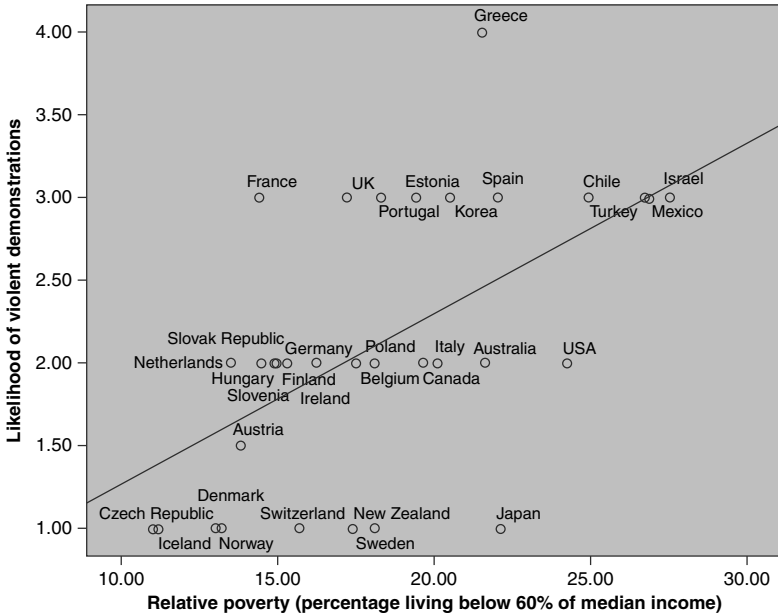
Figure 11.4 Scatterplot: relative poverty rates and likelihood of violent demonstrations

poverty but a low score on the likelihood of violent demonstrations – can potentially be explained by its traditions of social order underpinned by Confucian values, whereas explanations surrounding Greece as an outlier were explored earlier in the chapter. Nevertheless, there appears to be a general trend in the data which implies a positive relationship. It can be contended that an increase in poverty is associated with an increase in the likelihood of violent demonstrations.

The relationship between levels of relative poverty (as measured by the OECD) and the likelihood of violent demonstrations was investigated using Spearman's rho. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables, $r_s = .566$, $n = 33$, $p < .001$, with high levels of relative poverty associated with high likelihood of violent demonstrations.

A Mann–Whitney U Test revealed a significant difference in the likelihood of violent demonstrations between countries with levels of relative poverty below the OECD average ($Md = 2$, $n = 17$) and those with levels of relative poverty above the OECD average ($Md = 3$, $n = 16$), $U = 66$, $z = -2.662$, $p = .008$, $r = .46$. It appears that those countries

which are above the OECD average on relative poverty, when compared with those below the OECD average, have a higher likelihood of violent demonstrations.

Government spending, social protection and unrest

It is often assumed that the Scandinavian model of high government expenditure and extensive social protection is linked to the relative harmoniousness of those societies in comparison with the limited government and more extensive social problems of Anglo-Saxon countries such as the UK and the USA. Thus the relationship between general government expenditure and the likelihood of violent demonstrations is assessed.

A scatterplot (Figure 11.5) shows that there is an inverse relationship but no other obvious trends are apparent. There are many outliers beyond the line of best fit which are difficult to explain. The relationship between levels of general government total expenditure (as measured by the IMF) and the likelihood of violent demonstrations was investigated
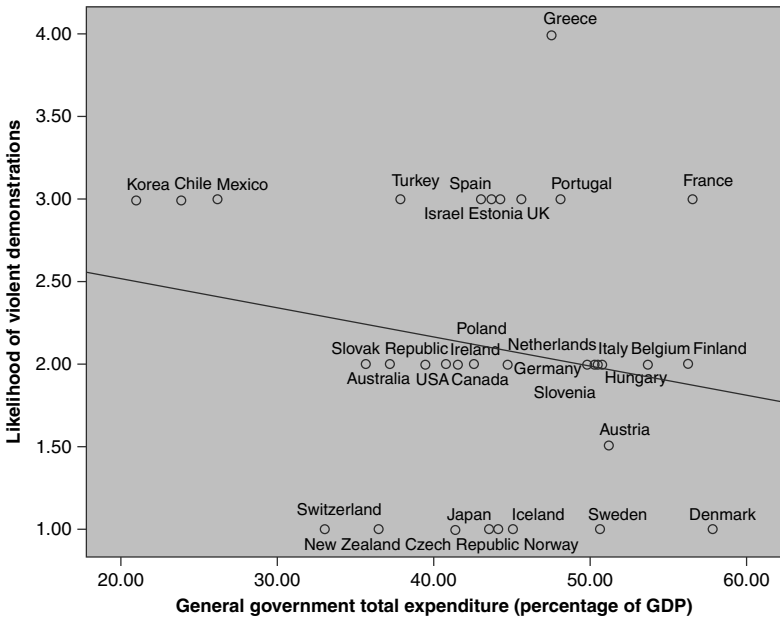
Figure 11.5   Scatterplot: general government total expenditure and likelihood of violent demonstrations

using Spearman's rho. There was no statistical significance between the two variables, $r_s = -.117$, $n = 33$, $p = .516$.

A Mann–Whitney U Test also revealed no significant difference in the likelihood of violent demonstrations between countries with levels of general government spending below the OECD average ($Md = 2$, $n = 14$) and those with levels of general government spending above the OECD average ($Md = 2$, $n = 19$), $U = 124$, $z = -.346$, $p = .729$, $r = .06$.

The relationship between levels of social expenditure from the OECD's (2013) Economic Outlook and the likelihood of violent demonstrations from the EIU across the 34 OECD countries is also examined. A simple scatterplot (Figure 11.6) is used to examine these two variables. The OECD's data provide reliable and internationally comparable statistics on publicly funded social expenditure. The main social policy areas include old age, survivors, incapacity-related benefits, health, family, active labour market programmes, unemployment and housing (Adema and Ladaique, 2009).

The relationship between levels of social expenditure (as measured by the OECD) and the likelihood of violent demonstrations was investigated using Spearman's rho. There was no statistical significance between the two variables, $r_s = -.203$, $n = 33$, $p = .256$.
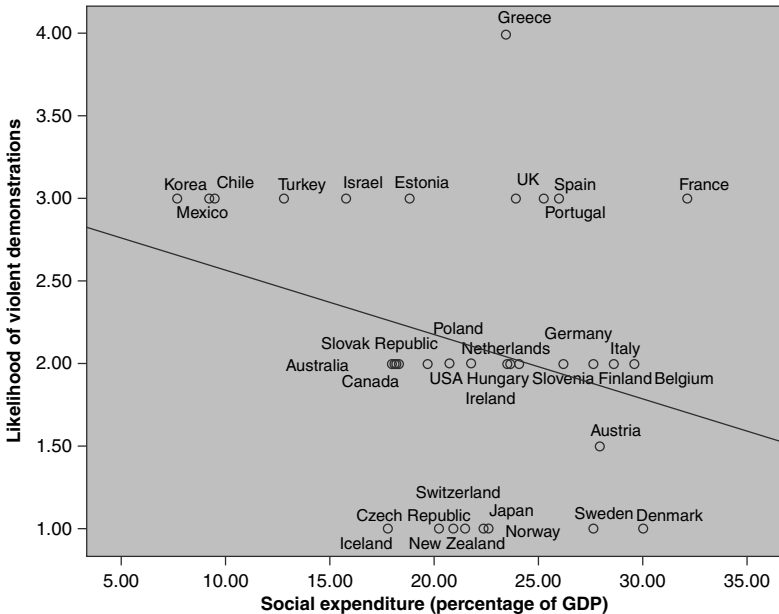
Figure 11.6 Scatterplot: social expenditure and likelihood of violent demonstrations

Again, a Mann–Whitney U Test revealed no significant difference in the likelihood of violent demonstrations between countries with levels of social spending below the OECD average ($Md = 2$, $n = 15$) and those with levels of social spending above the OECD average ($Md = 2$, $n = 18$, $U = 127$, $z = -.035$, $p = .76$, $r = .05$.

One has to be careful in drawing direct conclusions from statistical testing, particularly with regard to causality. Nevertheless, some of the findings support results from other research surrounding social unrest (ILO, 2012, 2013). High levels of income inequality and poverty were strongly correlated with a high likelihood of violent demonstrations. Surprisingly there was a weaker correlation between unemployment and the likelihood of violent demonstrations. In keeping with research into trust (Putnam, 2000; Uslaner, 2002; Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009), there was a strong inverse relationship between high levels of inter-personal trust and a low likelihood of violent demonstrations. Results from the respective Mann–Whitney Tests supported the various trends and these general conclusions. Cautiously, it can be inferred from the Mann–Whitney Tests that countries below the OECD averages on income inequality, lack of trust, poverty and unemployment had a lesser likelihood of violent demonstrations when compared with those which were above the OECD averages on these dimensions. It is apparent that there are some statistically significant relationships between socio-economic inequalities, levels of trust and the likelihood of violent demonstrations. However, there were no statistically significant relationships between levels of general government and social expenditures and the likelihood of violent demonstrations. Both are used as proxies, with the former representing political economies and the latter welfare economies. As we have already seen, comparative analyses of welfare states are contested areas, with much disagreement about welfare modelling and appropriate typologies. With those caveats in mind, and using longitudinal analysis, the next section asks whether there is a difference in the levels of riots, unrest and protest between different welfare state types.

Longitudinal analysis: Decommodification and unrest

Using Scruggs and Allan's (2006) publicly available data on decommodification scores and Francisco's (2000) EPCD, the relationship between decommodification and unrest is assessed over time. Some 13 countries are examined from 1980 to 1995. In his original work, Esping-Andersen (1990, p. 22) regards the decommodification

of labour as the situation in which 'a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market'. Nevertheless, the cash nexus remains as labour is only partially decommodified through welfare state provision. There are varying degrees of decommodification. Esping-Andersen differentiates between those welfare regimes that are highly decommodifying, such as the Scandinavian countries, and those in which workers are still much more dependent on the market. The decommodification aspect of Esping-Andersen's analysis created and combined three individual decommodification indexes relating to pensions, unemployment and sickness benefits. The three decommodification indexes were combined to give an overall decommodification score for each country. As we have already seen, there have been many criticisms of Esping-Andersen's original welfare regime typology. Powell and Barriantos (2011, p. 79) note that at the risk of oversimplifying many complex issues, Esping-Andersen and many subsequent writers almost exclusively define welfare regimes on the basis of indexes of decommodification and their subsequent scores. Among others, Room (2000) challenges the notion of decommodification seeking instead to define it as self-development, while Scruggs and Allan (2006) through replication and reassessment question Esping-Andersen's formulation of regime types.

Longitudinal data on unrest is taken from the EPCD developed by Francisco (2000). The EPCD project coded daily data on all reported protest events in 28 European countries between 1980 and 1995. The database was constructed using the full-text reports from more than 400 newspapers in the Lexis-Nexis database. The methods of Ponticelli and Voth (2011) are replicated here, employing the same types of protest event covered in the long-term data – riots, demonstrations, political assassinations, general strikes and attempted revolutions. CHAOS is the sum of these five protest events in a single year in each country taken from the EPCD.

The relationship between decommodification scores and CHAOS scores across 13 European countries from 1980 and 1995 is assessed. However, it should be noted that decommodification scores are not available for all of the 28 EPCD countries. Additionally, the decommodification and CHAOS scores are non-normally distributed. As alluded to earlier, issues of skewness and kurtosis were explored using transformation techniques or by removing/changing extreme outliers. These methods did not alter the distribution of the data significantly. Thus, again, non-parametric tests were run on the data.

A scatterplot (Figure 11.7) shows that many countries cluster around the line of best fit, but with several outliers, such as France and Germany. These are difficult to explain. Nevertheless, there appears to be a general trend in the data which implies an inverse relationship.

The relationship between CHAOS scores (summed data via the EPCD) and decommodification scores (as measured by the Scruggs data) was investigated using Spearman's rho. There was a moderate, inverse correlation between the two variables, $r_s = -.476$, $n = 208$, $p < .001$, with lower CHAOS scores associated with higher decommodification scores. This means that there is a moderate inverse correlation between lower levels of protest events and higher levels of decommodification across these countries during the period 1980–1995.

As was explored earlier, the 'three worlds' typology of regimes which underpinned Esping-Andersen's (1990) work has been questioned on numerous grounds. In later work, Esping-Andersen (1999, p. 73) acknowledged that the bases for his typology construction were welfare regimes, not welfare states, nor individual social policies. He noted that regime type 'refers to the ways in which welfare production is allocated
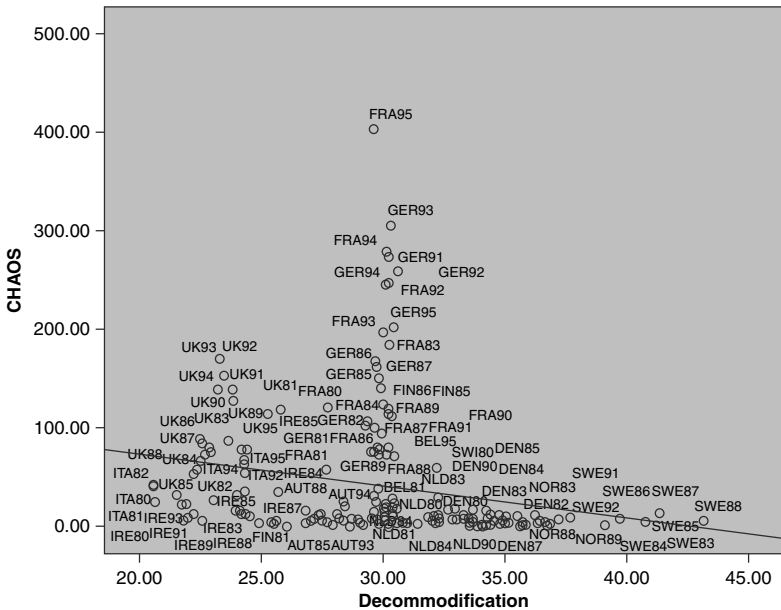
Figure 11.7   Scatterplot: decommodification and CHAOS

between state, market, and households' (Esping-Andersen, 1999, p. 73). Thus the private–public mix underpinned his typology, defined by the dimensions of decommodification and stratification. The regime labels of liberal, corporatist and social democratic were derived from classical European political economy. These regimes therefore reflected the political and ideological thrust that was dominant in their historical development, climaxing with the mature welfare states in the last three or so decades of the twentieth century.

Yet an important question remains about social unrest in different welfare regimes. Is there a difference in CHAOS scores for social democratic, corporatist and liberal countries? Using Esping-Andersen's (1990) original typology, CHAOS scores are examined across the regime types using the 13 EPCD countries. The Kruskal–Wallis Test is run to assess the relationships between welfare regimes and the levels of CHAOS.

A Kruskal–Wallis test was conducted to evaluate differences between the three different welfare regime types (social democratic, corporatist and liberal) on median number of protest events (CHAOS). The test indicated a statistically significant difference, $\chi^2(2, 208) = 47.5$, $p < .001$.

Mann–Whitney U tests were conducted as follow-up tests to evaluate pairwise differences among the three groups. A Bonferroni correction was applied and so all effects are reported at a .017 level of significance. Results showed significant differences between the social democratic countries and corporatist countries, $z = -5.57$, $p < .001$ and social democratic countries and liberal countries, $z = -5.88$, $p < .001$ but not between the liberal and corporatist countries, $z = -.651$, $p = .515$.

Figures showed that the social democratic regime group had a mean rank of 73.9, the corporatist regime group had a mean rank of 126.6 and the liberal regime group, a mean rank of 141. It is important to add several caveats about the EPCD. Across the 16 year period, the number of protest events in any one year ranged from 0–80 in social democratic countries, 0–403 in corporatist countries, and 3–169 in liberal countries. It is also important to highlight protests events at different time points and within countries. For instance, in the UK there are spikes in protest events in the early 1980s and early 1990s surrounding the 'summers of discontent' in 1981 and 1991, on-going opposition to Thatcherism, and the continuation of 'The Troubles'. In France, throughout the 16 year period, there are high levels of protest events. These relate to the powerful collective organisational abilities of its trade unions and professional bodies, the fractured relationship between French North Africans and the Gendarmerie, and the political clout of the French

agricultural sector. In Germany, there are several spikes in protest events in the late 1980s and 1990s which relate to the continued American military deployment, the growth in green/ecological protest politics, reunification, powerful organised labour movements, clashes between the far right and hard left, and opposition to the common agricultural policy. In contrast, there are significantly fewer protest events in the Benelux and Nordic countries across the 16 year period. These protest events were largely confined to demands for nuclear disarmament, calls for regional autonomy and secession, opposition to constitutional monarchy, public sector disputes, and street protest movements on the political extremes.

Though simple frequency data demonstrates the number of protest events to be highest in corporatist countries, over the 16 year period of interest, ($n = 5,670$) compared with liberal countries ($n = 1,919$) and social democratic countries ($n = 927$), the results of these tests demonstrate a statistically significant difference in the median number of protest events suggesting the rejection of the null hypothesis. However, caution is needed in making such inferences and further research is required in this area. Nevertheless, it can be implied from these results that Esping-Andersen's social democratic countries, characterised by universal welfare arrangements, were less likely to experience protest events in comparison with their corporatist and liberal counterparts.

Conclusion

The opening section to this chapter ended with a contention that countries with greater socio-economic inequalities, commodification and liberal welfare regimes experience greater levels of social unrest. There appears to be some evidence which suggests that there are strong statistical relationships between income inequality, poverty and the likelihood of violent demonstrations across the OECD countries. Additionally there appears to be a strong inverse relationship between the levels of interpersonal trust and the likelihood of violent demonstrations. High unemployment was only moderately related to a high likelihood of violent demonstrations. Results from further statistical testing suggest that there are no meaningful relationships between either levels of general government expenditure or expenditure on social programmes and the likelihood of violent demonstrations.

The second tranche of analysis explored the relationship between decommodification and social unrest scores (Ponticelli and Voth, 2011).

There was a statistically significant moderate correlation between the two variables. Using Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology, social unrest appeared to be greater within the liberal and corporatist regimes, when compared with the social democratic regime across 1980–1995.

Existing research converges around several important findings. Spontaneous and disorganised outbursts of violent social unrest are linked to socio-economic inequalities. It is not by chance that these social phenomena have re-emerged in advanced industrialised countries in recent years. Almost without exception, the 2008 global financial crisis – the Great Recession – has impacted upon all of the OECD nations. Admittedly there are different degrees of unrest, often driven by internal and external responses to that crisis, but culminating in expression through either legitimate protest or the street theatre of violence. Furthermore, and within each country, it is those who are least capable of dealing with the aftershocks and their communities who turn to the 'ballot box of the poor'. For many, dashed hopes of rising living standards are compounded by widespread distrust in politicians and with mainstream politics which is perceived as broken or failing.

However, socio-economic inequalities, disadvantage and marginalisation do not constitute the entire explanation. It would be churlish to imply that they did. Socio-economic stresses are more or less permanent features for many citizens within OECD countries, and particularly for certain individuals and social groups within those territories. Nevertheless, episodes of social unrest remain uncommon events. Structural explanations are the flipside of a double-sided coin; individuals also have agency. Other research shows that feelings of hopelessness, frustration and social injustice from interactions and confrontations with state actors can lead to violent actions.

Yet the macro-narrative of welfare economies seems to be an overlooked dimension. Embryonic social protection was, after all, introduced to pacify the industrial working class in several European countries in the late nineteenth century. This was later extended into the grand bargain between capital and labour from the mid-twentieth century. The current financial crisis is often misrepresented as a fiscal crisis – public spending (more specifically welfare spending) is assumed to have led to the Great Recession. The analogy, although misplaced, returns us to O'Connor's (1973) fiscal crisis thesis. He argued that in order to pacify the populace, the state spends more on welfare than the capitalist system can afford. Thus the need for legitimation and the need for capital accumulation come into conflict. However, and from a non-Marxian interpretation, the need for legitimation in

terms of social order seems imperative for a functioning market economy. Indeed, indirectly, and using Esping-Andersen's (1990) regimes, episodes of social disorder – albeit in the last 20 years of the twentieth century – appear to be less extensive within the more wide-ranging welfare-capitalist states.

Famously, Garland (2001) explored the culture of control in late modern society. He put forward an interrelated historical account of the welfare state and the modern criminal justice state, of how social order is constructed in contemporary societies. Drawing upon Foucault's (1977) analysis, crime control and welfare were viewed as two sides of the same coin. Thus the 'penal-welfare state' engenders security, regulation, control and punishment. Moreover, it is contended here that universal welfare states may informally bring about social order, whereas more limited ones rely on more punitive forms of control. Titmuss (1970) viewed welfare states as expressions of altruism, but also as forms of collective protection against man-made risks. Beck (1992, p. 21) developed the notion of the risk society wherein 'a systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities induced and introduced by modernisation itself' was sought. The findings here suggest that there are rich seams to mine from the fields of social policy and criminology surrounding welfare economies and the management of risk and social (dis)order.

We need to be careful in not overattributing causality and also caution taken in not overstating these relationships. Nevertheless, the findings point towards the contention that those countries whose policies may lead to growing socio-economic inequalities, and whose conduct leads to lower levels of social trust, should expect the likelihood of violent demonstrations and protest events to increase. In this regard, much neoliberal reform brings about the structural conditions for the 'ballot box of the poor' to do what it does.

References

Abrahamson, P. (1999). The welfare modelling business. *Social Policy & Administration,* 33(4), 394–415.

Adema, W. and Ladaique, M. (2009). *How Expensive Is the Welfare State? Gross and Net Indicators in the OECD Social Expenditure Database (SOCX): OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers No. 92*. Paris: OECD.

Alcock, P. and Craig, G. (Eds.). (2001). *International Social Policy: Welfare Regimes in the Developed World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Andersson, R. (2010). *Clustered, Trapped and Excluded? Exploring Immigrants' Social and Geographical Trajectories in Swedish Metropolitan Areas 1990–2008*. Seminar Paper to The Nordic Council of Ministers and Inkluderingsutvalgets. Oslo.

Arts and Gelissen (2002). Three worlds of welfare capitalism or more? A state-of-the-art report. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 12(2), 137–158.

ASEP/JDS (2013). *Interpersonal Trust*. Retrieved from http://www.jdsurvey.net/jds/jdsurveyMaps.jsp?Idioma=I&SeccionTexto=0404&NOID=104.

Aspalter, C. (2006). The East Asian welfare model. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 15(4), 290–301.

Bambra, C. (2006). Research note: Decommodification and the worlds of welfare revisited. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16(1), 73–80.

Bambra, C. (2007). Going beyond the three worlds of welfare capitalism: Regime theory and public health research. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 61(12), 1098–1102.

Bambra, C., Netuveli, G., and Eikemo, T. (2010). Welfare state regime life courses: The development of Western European welfare state regimes and age related patterns of educational inequalities in self-reported health. *International Journal of Health Services*, 40(3), 399–420.

Barbier, J.C. (2004). Systems of social protection in Europe: Two contrasted paths to activation, and maybe a third. In J. Lind, H. Knudsen and H. Jørgensen (Eds.), *Labour and Employment Regulations in Europe*. Brussels: Peter Lang.

Barlow, J. and Duncan, S. (1994). *Success and Failure in Housing Provision: European Systems Compared*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Beck, U. (1992). *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: Sage.

Benyon, J. (1987). Interpretations of civil disorder. In J. Benyon and J. Solomos (Eds.), *The Roots of Urban Unrest*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Benyon, J. (2012). England's urban disorder: The 2011 riots. *Political Insight*, 3(1), 12–17.

Benyon, J. and Solomos, J. (Eds.). (1987). *The Roots of Urban Unrest*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Blomqvist, P. (2004). The choice revolution: Privatization of Swedish welfare services in the 1990s. *Social Policy & Administration*, 38(2), 139–155.

Bonoli, G. (1997). Classifying welfare states: A two-dimension approach. *Journal of Social Policy*, 26(3), 351–372.

Bonoli, G. (2010). *The Political Economy of Active Labour Market Policy* (RECWOWE Working Paper 01/2010). Edinburgh: RECWOWE.

Castles, F.G. (1998). *Comparative Public Policy: Patterns of Post-war Transformation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Castles, F.G. and Mitchell, D. (1993). Worlds of welfare and families of nations. In F.G. Castles (Ed.), *Families of Nations: Patterns of Public Policy in Western Democracies*. Aldershot: Dartmouth.

Childs, M.J. (1934). *Sweden: Where Capitalism Is Controlled*. New York: John Day Company.

Childs, M.J. (1936). *Sweden: The Middle Way*. Yale: Yale University Press.

Childs, M.J. (1938). *This is Democracy: Collective Bargaining in Scandinavia*. Yale: Yale University Press.

Clasen, J. (2000). Motives, means and opportunities: Reforming unemployment compensation in the 1990s. *West European Politics*, 23(2), 89–112.

Clegg, D. (2005). *Activating the Multi-tiered Welfare State: Social Governance, Welfare Politics and Unemployment Policies in France and the United Kingdom*. PhD thesis, Florence: European University Institute.

Cohen, J.W. (1988). *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Croissant, A. (2004). Changing welfare regimes in East and Southeast Asia: Crisis, change and challenge. *Social Policy & Administration*, 38(5), 504–524.

Edlund, J. and Johansson Sevä, I. (2013). Is Sweden being torn apart? Privatization and old and new patterns of welfare state support. *Social Policy & Administration*, 47(5), 542–564.

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Esping-Andersen, G. (1999). *Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eurostat (2013). *Unemployment – LFS Adjusted Series*. Retrieved from http://epp .eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en& pcode=tsdec450&plugin=1.

Ferragina, E. and Seeleib-Kaiser, M. (2011). Thematic review: Welfare regime debate: Past, present, futures? *Policy and Politics*, 39(4), 583–611.

Ferrera, M. (1996). The 'Southern Model' of welfare in social Europe. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 6(1), 17–37.

Field, A. (2005). *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. London: Sage.

Forshaw, B. (2012). *Death in a Cold Climate: A Guide to Scandinavian Crime Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Allen Lane.

Francisco, R.A. (2000). *Codebook for European Protest and Coercion Data, 1980 through 1995*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas.

Gallie, W.B. (1956). Essentially Contested Concepts. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* 56, 167–198.

Garland, D. (2001). *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hoekstra, J.S.C.M. (Ed.). (2010). *Divergence in European Welfare and Housing Systems*. Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Hudson, J. and Kühner, S. (2009). Towards productive welfare? A comparative analysis of 23 OECD countries. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 19(1), 34–46.

Huo, J., Nelson, M., and Stephens, J.D. (2008). Social democracy and the labour market: Activation or decommodification? *Journal of European Social Policy*, 18(1), 5–20.

Hutton, W. (2002). *The World We're In*. London: Abacus.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2013). *Global Peace Index 2013: Measuring the State of Global Peace*. Retrieved from http://www.visionofhumanity.org/pdf/gpi/ 2013_Global_Peace_Index_Report.pdf.

Institute for Fiscal Studies (2011). *Public Finances: Industrialised Country Comparisons*. Retrieved from http://www.ifs.org.uk/fiscalFacts/fiscalAggregates.

International Labour Organization (2012). *World of Work Report 2012: Better Jobs for a Better Economy*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.

International Labour Organization (2013). *World of Work Report 2013: Repairing the Economic and Social Fabric*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.

International Monetary Fund (2013). *World Economic Outlook Database: October 2013 Edition*. Retrieved from http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2013/02/weodata/index.aspx.

Jobard, F. (2009). Rioting as a political tool: The 2005 riots in France. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 48(3), 235–244.

Kautto, M. (2002). Investing in services in West European welfare states. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 12(1) 53–65.

Korpi, W. and Palme, J. (2003). New politics and class politics in the context of austerity and globalization: Welfare state regress in 18 countries, 1975–95. *American Political Science Review*, 97(3), 425–446.

Leibfried, S. (1992). Towards a European welfare state? On integrating poverty regimes into the European community. In Z. Ferge and J.E. Kolberg (Eds.), *Social Policy in a Changing Europe.* Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.

Marshall, T.H. (1950). *Citizenship and Social Class and Other Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McBride, S. and Williams, R.A. (2001). Globalization, the restructuring of labour markets and policy convergence: The OECD 'Jobs Strategy'. *Global Social Policy*, 1(3), 281–309.

Mishra, R. (1999). *Globalization and the Welfare State*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Moreno, L. (2000). The Spanish development of southern welfare. In S. Khunle (Ed.), *Survival of the European Welfare State*. London: Routledge.

Murphy, R. (2010). (Director and Producer). (2010). Nordic Noir: The Story of Scandinavian Crime Fiction [Television Series Episode]. In N. Massoumi (Assistant Producer), M. Poole (Executive Producer), and B. Southwell (Series Producer), *Timeshift*. London: BBC4.

Nam, T. (2006). What you use matters: Coding protest data. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 39(2), 281–287.

Navarro, V. and Shi, L. (2001). The political context of social inequalities and health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 52(3), 481–491.

Navarro, V., Schmitt, J., and Astudillo, J. (2004). Is globalisation undermining the welfare state? *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 28(1), 133–152.

Nestingen, A. and Arvas, P. (Eds.). (2011). *Scandinavian Crime Fiction*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

O'Connor, J. (1973). *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation (2013). *OECD Statistics Database*. Retrieved from http://stats.oecd.org/.

Pallant, J. (2010). *SPSS Survival Manual: A Step by Step Guide to Data Analysis using SPSS*. Maidenhead: McGraw Hill.

Pierson, P. (1996). The new politics of the welfare state. *World Politics*, 48(2), 143–179.

Pierson, P. (1998). Irresistible forces, immovable objects: Post-industrial welfare states confront permanent austerity. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 5(4), 539–560.

Pierson, P. (2000). *The New Politics of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Polanyi, K. (1944). *The Great Transformation*. New York: Rinehart.

Ponticelli, J. and Voth, H. (2011). *Austerity and Anarchy: Budget Cuts and Social Unrest in Europe, 1919–2009* (Centre for Economic Policy Research No. 8513). London: Centre for Economic Policy Research.

Powell, M. and Barrientos, A. (2011). An audit of the welfare modelling business. *Social Policy & Administration*, 45(1), 69–84.

Putnam, R.D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rädda Barnen (2012). *Annual Report 2012: Children's Economic Vulnerability*. Retrieved from http://a3.mndcdn.com/image/upload/xi7k037juxdst4c4l73k.pdf.

Richardson, L. and Mumford, K. (2002). Community, neighbourhood, and social infrastructure. In J. Hills, J. Le Grand and D. Piachaud (Eds.), *Understanding Social Exclusion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Room, G. (2000). Commodification and decommodification: A developmental critique. *Policy & Politics*, 28(3), 331–351.

Scarman, L.G. (1981). *The Brixton Disorders 10–12 April 1981: Report of an Inquiry*. London: HMSO.

Scruggs, L. (2006). *Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset*. Retrieved from http://sp.uconn.edu/~scruggs/.

Scruggs, L. and Allan, J. (2006). Welfare-state decommodification in 18 OECD countries: A replication and revision. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 16(1), 55–72.

Singleton, A. (2011). *What are the Neighbourhood Conditions of those Appearing on Riot-related Charges?* Retrieved from http://www.alex-singleton.com/what-are-the-neighbourhood-conditions-of-those-appearing-on-riot-related-charges/.

Sjöwall, M. and Wahlöö, P. (1972). *Det slutna rummet*. Stockholm: Norstedts Förlag.

Sjöwall, M. and Wahlöö, P. (1975). *Terroristerna*. Stockholm: Norstedts Förlag.

Sjöwall, M. and Wahlöö, P. (2011). *The Locked Room*. London: Fourth Estate.

Sjöwall, M. and Wahlöö, P. (2012). *The Terrorists*. London: Fourth Estate.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (2013). *Risk Briefing*. Retrieved from http://www.eiu.com/.

The Norwegian Social Science Data Services (n.d.). *The Macro Data Guide: European Protest and Coercion Data*. Retrieved from http://www.nsd.uib.no/macrodataguide/set.html?id=52&sub=1.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2011). *Divided We Stand: Why Inequality Keeps Rising (Country Note: Sweden)*. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/sweden/49564868.pdf.

The World Bank (2013). *Gini Index*. Retrieved from http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/.

Titmuss, R. (1970). *The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Titmuss, R. (1974). *Social Policy: An Introduction*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Uslaner, E.M. (2002). *The Moral Foundations of Trust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vinthagen Simpson, P. (2011). *Child Poverty Increases in Sweden: Report*. Retrieved from http://www.thelocal.se/20110201/31762.

Wacquant, L. (2008). *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Cambridge: Polity.

Waddington, D. (1992). *Contemporary Issues in Public Disorder: A Comparative and Historical Approach*. London: Routledge.

Waddington, D. and King, M. (2009). Theoretical orientations: Lessons of the UK riots of the 1980s and 1990s. In D. Waddington, F. Jobard and M. King (Eds.), *Rioting in the UK and France: A Comparative Analysis*. Cullompton: Willan.

Walker, A. and Wong, C.K. (Ed.). (2005). *East Asian Welfare Regimes in Transition*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Wilkinson, R.G. and Pickett, K. (2009). *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*. London: Allen Lane.

Wilks-Heeg, S., Blick, A., and Crone S. (2012). *How Democratic is the UK? The 2012 Audit*. Liverpool: Democratic Audit.

Wooldridge, A. (2013). *Northern Lights*. Retrieved from http://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21570840-nordic-countries-are-reinventing-their-model-capitalism-says-adrian.

12
The Criminalisation of Zuccotti Park and Its Lessons for the UK Riots

David C. Brotherton

Zuccotti Square and the cleansing of society

Zuccotti Square started after a blog by Adbusters under the domain name #occupywallstreet called for a protest on 17 September 2011 where 20,000 people were asked to flood the infamous banking zone of New York, 'setting up tents' and calling for 'democracy and not corporatocracy'. It was called in solidarity with the Arab Spring and with the occupiers in Madrid and Barcelona (Castells, 2012). At first the response was relatively tepid with 3,000-plus participants but soon, once space was secured at the private/public park and protestors set up their encampment the example of this other, non-corporatised convivial environment, founded on enlightened self-organisation and conspicuous opposition to the business-as-usual of the 1% attracted increasing attention from tens of thousands of sympathisers in and around the city. It was the place to be if you wanted to experience that other world that before you could only imagine (Pleyers, 2010). As live web feeds showed hundreds attending daily assemblies engaging some of the most important key issues of the day and word spread of the drumming circles, the communal kitchens, the free clothing banks, the multiple zones for the practice of every kind of activism, theatre, art and poetry and the endless realms and spaces for making friends and being exposed to the multiple social worlds of this vast metropolis the protest became a vast organism, an intricate and complexly ordered life-world exemplifying to millions an alternative to the bureaucratic, corporate, market-driven existing social order. As Castells (2012, p. 246) puts it,

> And so, from the depth of despair, everywhere, a dream and a project have surged: to reinvent democracy, to find ways for humans to manage collectively their lives according to principles that are largely shared in their minds and usually disregarded in their everyday experience.

In a democracy that purports to prize civil society and is founded on a constitution that boasts 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' as a principle of its existence, what could be more emblematic of an active democratic citizenry, especially its youth who are often dismissed as depoliticised, apolitical and apathetic? Yet the response to Occupy Wall Street (OWS) was at best benign tolerance but nothing approaching outright support by any historic bloc of the state and its so-called liberal political class.

President Obama incorporated some of the rhetoric of the occupation into his re-election campaign speeches and issued a statement early on that he was 'working for the 99%'. The *New York Times* editorialised in favour of the action, while the New York City Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, said that he supported the right to protest as long as it was within the law. Nonetheless, few from the liberal establishment meaningfully embraced the movement or their criticisms of the current social and economic order, despite the extraordinary opportunity it gave to connect with the country's youth and to re-energise a liberal democracy enfeebled by massive attacks on the public purse and undermined by an endless hostility to government, except in the theatres of war, corporate welfare and social control of the dangerous classes.

While it was a perfect time to declare solidarity with these activist idealists with the mounting evidence of a democracy deficit implicit in the details of ruling-class corruption, fiscal manipulation, outright theft and eventual impunity bequeathed to us by the financial and economic debacle of 2008 (Will *et al.*, 2012), this was not to be. Despite a mainstream political culture that is supposedly fuelled and determined by opinion surveys, we saw little real incorporation of the movement's anti-corporate *zeitgeist*, even though substantial sections of the US population agreed with the protesters' values. For instance, in October 2011, a CBS/*New York Times* poll found that 43% of the population agreed with OWS views and 27% disagreed, while in the same month a Reuters poll found that 51% of the population identified strongly or somewhat with the OWS ideals (Castells, 2012).

At the other more reactionary end of the political spectrum there was no such ambivalence towards OWS but an immediate impatience

with these petulant, unruly urban communards who wanted nothing less than class war even if they had no inkling of what such a critique of society would entail. Thus it was not long before ultraconservative news dailies, corporate television and a myriad of radio shock jocks were focusing on the internal and external conflicts of the occupation, paying particular attention to the space that it had created for uncontrolled deviance – that is, self-determination. The *New York Post* with its penchant for vicious character assassination and salacious hyperbole led the way, reporting a few weeks after Zuccotti Park's initiation:

> The criminals are crashing the party. Lured by cheap drugs and free food, creepy thugs have infiltrated the crowd of protesters camped out in Zuccotti Park for Occupy Wall Street, The Post has learned. 'I got warrants. I'm running from the law', boasted Dave, 24, a scrawny, unshaven miscreant in filthy clothes from Stamford, Conn. 'I'm not even supposed to be here, but it's as good a spot as any to hide.'
>
> (*New York Post*, 10 October 2011)

Rush Limbaugh, that doyen of the 'silent majority', opined a day later:

> Now, obviously there are a lot of people at these protests, but you know what's happened down there, Mayor Bloomberg has basically invited everybody to show up and stay for as long as they want, no matter what. And they're rolling cigarettes, they're smoking tobacco, including other things, and Mayor 'Doomberg' is not saying anything about it. They're eating trans fat. They are destroying restrooms in nearby fast food joints and other establishments. And Doomberg says as long as you come and obey the law you are more than welcome, just sit tight, do whatever you want. It's absolutely stunning.
>
> (11 October 2011)

For the reactionary class the occupation was not a site of earnest idealism, youthful exuberance and collective creativity but one of deviant enablement that had to be stamped out, eradicated and terrorised such that it did not dare reappear. Thus it was not surprising that so many criticisms of OWS pointed to it providing a ready home to an assortment of 'others' characterised by their criminality, use of drugs, uncivilised behaviour, violence and dirt, with the latter claim of particular significance for rationales of eventual expulsion. It was the anthropologist Mary Douglas (1966) who long ago drew our attention to the need

of certain societies to purge themselves of filth and guard themselves against pollution as a way to erect symbolic boundaries. This same animus to cleanse and purge OWS by the revanchist state (Smith, 1996) was repeated across the nation with over 7,700 OWS participants being arrested between September 2011 and June 2013.

'Yes we can' was the Obama's borrowed mantra (from Cesar Chavez) during his 2008 election campaign, as the future first black President adorned himself in the cloak of liberal icons past, such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. Yet it was not long before the symbol of hope went on to bail out the banks (Barak, 2012), set up worldwide assassination squads (Scahill, 2013), maintain Guantanamo and systematic practices of torture (Rejali, 2009), continue to warehouse 25% of the world's prisoners (Alexander, 2010). It did little to limit the social harm to hundreds of thousands of bankrupted working- and middle-class homeowners (Harvey, 2011) and now allowed the extraordinary anti-constitutional work of the little known National Security Agency to continue unimpeded. The lessons to the hopeful in Zuccotti Park were unambiguous: the state was not going to reform itself and the democratic project begun in 1776 would not further democratise with the current social order in place. In fact, the project probably ended in the 1960s and it would not return.

The Orwellian state takes revenge

If we are indeed in a warfare state that is engaged routinely in 'dirty wars' at home and around the globe (Scahill, 2013), then it should come as no surprise that all of the accoutrements of such an entity are not far removed from that envisioned by Orwell. Spies, *agents provocateurs*, statist brute force and terror, disappearances, targeted killings, global surveillance, securitisation and privatisation of space, mass dehumanisation and stigmatisation – all are part of the interlocking social control doxa, apparatuses and praxes on daily display if we care to look and not to deny these uncomfortable 'truths'. Such agents, systems, processes and both judicial and extrajudicial arrangements have simply become normative in the daily life of the US nation, signalling that a veritable hegemony of invasive social controls has been reached such that it is difficult to measure how far we have drifted into a new world of tyranny or simply continued with the old. In the latest revelation over state-sanctioned eavesdropping into both our telephone conversations and our email accounts by the National Security Agency (through outsourced private contractors), many US denizens simply shrug with the

complacent response that 'If we have done nothing we have nothing to fear.' (Many others, of course, are shocked by the incursions into our most private spheres and see a frightening level of 'system overreach' by the government.)

These traits of the paramilitarised security state where punishment and hard masculinity are key features were vividly on display throughout much of the occupation. Thus OWS, in time, became constructed as the problem itself, the enemy within, even gaining the most deviant of contemporary folk devil descriptions – low-level terrorists. Like communists were treated during the dark days of McCarthyism (a penchant for anti-communism has never left the US shores), OWS subjects/objects found themselves among the panoply of 'others', not quite on a par with deviant Muslims but certainly worthy of infiltration and intelligence-gathering. (It should not be forgotten that until recently the New York Police Department still had its 'red squad' on hand for any suspected subversive group wishing to disrupt the US equilibrium. This bit of forgotten history was handily remembered during the mass round-ups of peaceful demonstrators during the Republican Convention of 2004.)

As the Zuccotti occupation continued week after week, this purifying ethos and compulsion of the dominant society became more and more urgent, and soon it was left to the local forces of the state, its 'bodies of armed men', to do the final clean-up.

The *New York Times* reported that

> A surprise police raid that began at about 1 a.m. Tuesday had emptied the park. Officers not only removed the protesters who had camped there for almost two months, but they also removed their tents, tarps and belongings. As the morning unfolded, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg defended the decision to clear the park, saying 'health and safety conditions became intolerable.' . . .
>
> The operation in and around the park was a blow to the Occupy Wall Street movement, which saw the park as its spiritual heart. The sweep was intended to empty the birthplace of a protest movement that has inspired hundreds of tent cities from coast to coast. Participants criticize a financial system that they say favors the rich and corporations at the expense of ordinary citizens. On Monday, hundreds of police officers raided the main encampment in Oakland, Calif., arresting 33 people. Protesters returned later in the day. But the Oakland police said no one would be allowed to sleep there anymore, and promised to clear a second camp nearby.
>
> (Barron and Moynihan, *New York Times*, 2011)

Furthermore the *Huffington Post* (2011) noted:

> Hundreds of police officers in riot gear raided the Occupy Wall Street encampment in New York City in the pre-dawn darkness Tuesday, evicted hundreds of demonstrators and demolished the tent city that was the epicenter of a movement protesting what participants call corporate greed and economic inequality.
>
> The police action began around 1 a.m. and lasted several hours as officers with plastic shields and batons pushed the protesters from their base at Zuccotti Park. Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said around 200 people were arrested, including dozens who tried to resist the eviction by linking arms in a tight circle at the center of the park. A member of the City Council was among those arrested during the sweep.
>
> (Long and Dobnik, *Huffington Post*, 2011)

The cleaning and purging of the area (often led by middle-aged men in crisp white shirts during daytime operations) are brought into sharp focus by the accounts of both the *New York Times* and the *Huffington Post*. The language used speaks volumes. 'Police officers in riot gear' carrying out 'a surprise raid' in the 'pre-dawn darkness' delivering 'a blow,' arresting 'around 200 people' and hitting at the 'epicenter'. These are all battle-related terms and descriptions, a lexicon adopted to describe a hardened conflict between two entrenched sides – not the image of daily life in the encampment of myriad idealistic young peaceniks, anarchists and civil dissenters who wanted little more than to experiment with their democratic upbringing and make good on their civic education classes. They were closer to Henry Thoreau than to Che Guevara.

However, none of this could be allowed within the present societal space designated for political discourse and action. The protesters were never to return and, despite efforts at other encampments, the momentum was lost. Hundreds of occupiers had already been arrested, many spending their first time in the hands of the criminal justice system, and they were no doubt chastened by the experience. The American Civil Liberties Union attempted to defend the rights of the occupiers to continue their protest but the rights of private property won out over the desperate pleas of the nation's disenchanted crying out for a bit of freedom, a semblance of self-determination, a glimpse of the dream deferred.

It was also obvious that there was a systematic strategy to eject occupiers from all of their locations across the USA, such was the rapidity

and coordination of the cleansing forces. Many of the stated rationales to act against the occupiers were based on 'health issues' and the need to return the occupied space to the public. Ironically there was little mention of the injuries to the occupiers caused by state agents who frequently engaged in vindictive acts of punishment in the name of crowd control, causing serious harm to the protestors and in one instance the death of a veteran in Oakland, California.

The protest was often portrayed as a series of events, an ongoing spectacle of unusual mass proportions, which clearly tapped into the deep frustration, social harm and moral indignity felt and experienced by large numbers of the population throughout the working and middle classes. At the same time the preponderance of so many white, middle-class youth on the frontlines of the occupation somewhat masked the more normative repressive activities of New York's 'finest' who were busy every day 'stopping and frisking' tens of thousands of black and brown youth in the poorest sections of the city. When the discovery of this particularly egregious practice of population management finally burst onto the headlines, the police response to the charges of racial profiling was predictable. In their eyes they were doing nothing more than executing rational policing strategies to prevent crime before it happens – that is, before a window gets broken – and look at the results: a staggering decrease in crime over a decade! This is precisely how hegemony works by making everyday life seem common-sensical and, as a matter of course, like a social theatre of the 'banality of evil'.

Now, however, the youth of the middle classes were exposed to the same maltreatment and misrecognition of their propensity for danger as the scions of the lower orders. It was no surprise that a large number of erstwhile occupiers became active in the anti-stop-and-frisk movement that recently led to not only a New York City judge finding the practice unconstitutional but also to two pieces of legislation being passed by the New York City Council to tighten police oversight in the face of highly public pressure from the police establishment and a veto threat by the mayor. In the end the council withstood the bullying and collectively saw it as its obligation to reign in these armed public servants on behalf of the public that they were supposed to protect.

Lessons for and from the UK riots

As we stated in our analysis of the massive social disorder in the UK during 2010,

The disturbances are deeply shocking events. They present us with a clear and sharp reminder that all is not well in British society. Taken together with the other crises that have engulfed Britain in recent years; from the avarice and corruption of its ruling classes; to the financial crisis its financiers have bequeathed as their legacy; it would not be an underestimate to suggest that Britain is facing a deep organic crisis.

(Hallsworth and Brotherton, 2011, p. 5)

Yet could the state in the UK, unlike its counterpart in the USA, face up to the deeper meanings of the social discord? How would the UK political system respond to this extraordinary set of challenges that given the deepening levels of relative deprivation and disenchantment may herald a long period of spirited discontent?

The usual story of lost opportunities

The shaking of England to its knees through the disturbances was a long time coming. Thus the privatisation and commodification of almost every sphere of social and economic life, sustained attacks on the trade unions, and a virtual end to the old notions of a 'good society' (as Thatcher would infamously intone 'there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families . . . ' (*Woman's Own*, 1987)) had to see a vast societal reaction at some point.

It was especially notable that the riots were almost entirely in England with few comparable acts occurring in Scotland, where the government had resisted the mantra of privatisation, austerity and reduced government investment in its citizens. Yet, like the USA, the UK chose not to look long and hard at itself, at the state of its economy, the increasing stratification of society, the declining standards of public education, the enormous cynicism among youth, the rising prison population, the deleterious impact of consumerist and celebrity culture, the large swathes of the country now virtually criminalised, and the increasing feelings of precariousness among the working- and middle-class population (Standing, 2011). Rather than face such issues, which the mass disturbances all mirrored in some way or another (Roberts *et al*., 2011), the government's response was to settle for the tried and tested strategy of scapegoating 'others', using timeless folk devils to blame for the mass law-breaking (e.g. the gang, the broken family, the undersocialised youth). Such tropes were used repeatedly and unsparingly, shortcutting or truncating discussions that might have had a profound educational

and political effect on a society going through and recovering from a social trauma. Here is how the UK Conservative Prime Minister summed up the social disorder several days after the process began:

> At the heart of all the violence sits the issue of the gangs. Territorial, hierarchical and incredibly violent, they are mostly composed of young boys, mainly from dysfunctional homes. They earn money through crime, particularly drugs, and are bound together by an imposed loyalty to an authoritarian gang leader. They have blighted life on their estates with gang-on-gang murders and unprovoked attacks on innocent bystanders. In the last few days there is some evidence that they have been behind the coordination of the attacks on the police and the looting that has followed.
>
> (*Hansard*, 11 August 2011 col 1054)

Contrast these kneejerk reactions of leading politicians and pundits to the Scarman Inquiry of 1981 after London's Brixton riots or the Kerner Commission after widespread disturbances throughout the USA from 1965 to 1967. The authors of the latter began:

> This is our basic conclusion: Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal.
>
> Reaction to last summer's disorders has quickened the movement and deepened the division. Discrimination and segregation have long permeated much of American life; they now threaten the future of every American.
>
> (US Government 1968, p. 1)

The Scarman Report (1981, p. 2) warned that 'Complex political, social and economic factors' have created a 'disposition towards violent protest ... [and] urgent action' was needed to prevent racial disadvantage becoming an 'endemic, ineradicable disease threatening the very survival of our society'.

   Despite their failings, both reports sought a more holistic and compassionate understanding of mass rebellion and the kinds of reforms that society should look towards. What a difference a few decades make. In both cases we see a certain societal 'will' to begin a discussion aimed at eradicating the structural impediments to a more harmonious and equal society. There was at least an enlightened assumption that rioting and rebellion had deep social causes, much like the West viewed the Arab Spring, which showed the need for 'democracy' and 'openness',

and concepts like 'transparency' and 'accountability' have been bandied about to compare what 'we' have and what 'they' lack.

Yet far be it for the political class to turn its gaze to the brutish authoritarianism of the financial, industrial and propertied classes whose rules of disengagement from adequate taxation ensures a culture of impunity, profligacy and wanton destruction of the social and physical environment. By comparison the destruction and damage caused by the UK rioters is minimal, its direct violence quite inconsequential compared with the indirect violence of the governing elites. It means that while there are high levels of reflexivity among the dominant class, there is little capacity for self-reflection – a situation that is quite comparable on both sides of the Atlantic.

What happened to the liberal bloc?

The liberal bloc of the state of course pointed to the structural problems of society as the chief causes of the riots. Tory policies had championed the market as the solution to virtually all social problems and the 'nanny state' would never return in their estimation as long as the invisible hand of capitalism was believed to exist. Consequently, high levels of stratification in society should be tolerated and even encouraged if it means that the UK can get back on track economically through supplyside policies that include curbing deficit spending and improving the rate of profit and the investment climate for all of those entrepreneurs supposedly waiting to invest in the right opportunity. Working-class and poor youth are very much outside the picture in this view of a consumer-investor based society still very much made up of individuals and families rather than social classes.

The liberal bloc therefore condemned the senseless violence but not the system that produced it. For them what was needed was a tinkering with capitalism to make it more humane and responsible, and to ignore the fundamental contradictions of a profit-based, winner-takes-all socioeconomic environment awash with hyperconsumeristic messages but little by way of any collectivist, cooperative ethos that might bring society together and work to integrate those who are most marginal and disenchanted. The sheer desperation of many of those who engaged in the rioting, and the fact that their anti-politics was a form of politics, were ignored, as if branding them as nihilistic was sufficient. The areas that they came from, the lives that they lead, the hopes that they still held on to – all of these factors of the unequal social equation that led them into that 'resistance' moment when business as usual was not

going to happen and a week of spectacular, adrenalin-fuelled social turmoil would result were largely left unaddressed. As one of the rioters responded when asked if this was the best way to accomplish their objectives: 'Yes, because if we weren't rioting you wouldn't be talking to us' (Democracy Now, 2011).

Who articulated a different vision of societal ordering during the crisis? Who among the liberal bloc put forward the obvious need for a different way of thinking and doing in late modernity, rejecting the fear that such claims smacked of that old socialist way of rendering the world? Who risked publicly reclaiming that idealistic legacy of labour politics in which 'we' once proudly imagined a new Jerusalem being built on 'this green and pleasant land'?

Thus within the vacuum left by the left-liberal bloc, the latter-day Thatcherites, who now unashamedly take up their natural leadership places from the country's most elite and pretentious schools and universities, noisily proclaim their hatred for the youth of the dangerous classes unreservedly. This new so-called 'precariat', seemingly so different from the marginals of the past, was treated to a heightened level of opprobrium presumably to match their advanced state of marginality. The class from which many of the participants derived were treated to the same dismissiveness as a century earlier. No holds barred here, no pseudower conservatism of the hug-a-hoody kind – just the rediscovery of the pathological properties of the urban post-colonial primitives.

Depoliticised space and the kids are not alright

Space in both of these cases is of course a critical factor as both cause and effect. As we saw with OWS it was about reclaiming space and reimagining its use in a moment of exuberant resistance that swept through the USA and many other parts of the world. The social use of space, its political economy, and its reconceptualisation and control were all up for grabs in discussions among the protestors who were doing it. They were actually taking space collectively and reusing it in ways that they had previously never thought possible. In a certain respect it resembled those university occupations of yore when students would contest the hierarchical production of knowledge, the role of the intellectual in society, the importance of building non-institutional forums for free and open discourse, the danger of a corporatised education that is now a simple fact and the cheapening of the labour pool deemed necessary to reinvigorate our cultural heritage. All such societal conflicts over the

use versus the exchange value of space were deemed irrelevant to the UK events but they were far from such.

For a time, the 'rioters' occupied the streets, claiming whole areas where they fought for the control of space against the state. In general they seemed to attack commercial space, hitting at the showrooms, looting the displays of items whose production goes a long way to control their lives and on various levels humiliates them. Moreover, social media are a form of space that participants occupied to great effect which, of course, received a good deal of attention, with several criminal cases in which users were charged with incitement and were sentenced to terms that were clearly meant to deter such behaviour in the future.

In the aftermath of the disturbances, what space has been set aside to reflect on these tumultuous times? More than 3,000 were arrested – a scale similar to that of the USA. Some 48,000 businesses and properties were damaged, but there were relatively few deaths (five seems to be the number most cited), which would seem to indicate how property was the preferred target of most participants. Still, how are we to define what happened? Clearly riots are not simply things in themselves, for there are always triggering events, in this case the police killing of Mark Duggan in Tottenham, followed by complex social processes sometimes referred to as 'conflict spirals'. Symbolically and existentially, the initial event had a profound effect on a local population, so wearied by the travails of marginality, so tired of the practices and rituals of criminalisation, much like the victims of stop-and-frisk in New York City. After the initial protests, which quickly escalated to full-on confrontations with the police, the spark was lit for dozens of similar expressions of outrage and spontaneous disorder because all of the conditions were there. The social, psychological, political, economic and cultural factors were all present, and they demand that we should look beyond any facile notion of 'criminal opportunism,' as averred by the Home Secretary, Theresa May, and supported somewhat by the London School of Economics study 'Reading the Riots' (Roberts *et al.*, 2011) – a contribution to a discourse that has gone nowhere, as intended.

Consequently, as far as the dominant order is concerned, we are supposed to move on and learn the lessons of this unfortunate rupture which are basically how better to keep order in the future, from above. This is an opposite conclusion to that drawn by adherents of the Chicago School of Sociology and Criminology so many years ago when they maintained that internal self-regulation (based on the collective conscience) was the most legitimate and stable mode of social control. But this begs another question: in a hyperindividualistic

dystopic capitalism, what core values provide the social glue necessary for a modicum of community solidarity? It should come as no surprise therefore that the space reserved for such a discourse is purely instrumentalist, not reserved for any serious hermeneutic inquiry to be followed by reasoned action but rather filled by the various practices of a restored social order, complete with a series of rituals including investigative 'commissions', 'findings', public shamings and, finally, the much awaited white paper to forestall the fire next time.

Some commentators wanted to refer to the disturbances as the 'British/English Spring'. This might have been so had the participants united with their occupier counterparts, and a moment of reflection and conscious political action had ensued in the wake of the more than 100 sites of civil disturbance. Yet this was not and has not been the case, though the intense conflict over space continues, especially as global cities like London and New York become sites of deepening relative deprivation with no signs of abatement, little recognition of the consequences for social order and decreasing hope that the tide could be turned without more disturbances of a much more lethal kind.

Conclusion

What do we make of this tidal wave of contestation that rises and assumes such vivacious forms for short and long periods then descends and flattens? Where do the protesters go in the post-occupation and post-disturbance era, after the status quo is somehow restored albeit not without prostituting some of the key terms of the resistors or denying their souls? How do the resistors melt back into their everyday lives forever changed having lived in a new world of 'experience', in a world of conviviality set against the cultural grain of the hegemonic order and/or having broken through the norms of self and coercive social control to reveal a fragile state (of affairs)? Is this what liquid modernity is about?

I argue that the state's efforts to inflict control once more on behalf of discredited and delegitimised ruling elites simply compounds the spirit of resistance that is inextinguishable, particularly in the social network age, as long as the roots of the crisis remain unaddressed. The radical social imagination cannot be truncated by coercive action, nor can it be successfully corrupted by consumerism and empty promises of individual advancement. We are not at the so-called 'end of history' but rather, in large measure, at the beginning as long as the surplus capital can be more ethically produced, and equitably controlled and distributed.

However, the neoliberal agenda of many societies brings with it a punishing, prowling, intolerant state of social control that cannot allow contestation of society's dominant social and economic values and trajectories. It cannot abide inquiries into the massive contradictions that we face globally, from the horrendous social distortions caused by mass poverty at one end and hyperconcentrated wealth at the other, to the apocalyptical futures increasingly promised by out-of-control climate change. In other words, neoliberal social control cannot accommodate those who think another world is possible (Pleyers, 2010). Instead of reasoned action in addressing the felt contradictions, we are treated to a series of criminalising practices and rituals that are a natural artefact of the neoliberal age, a particular period in late capitalism in which capital accumulation by the world's ruling classes takes precedence over all others forms of life and culture (Harvey, 2011). It is a political economic era that Giroux (2012) says is complemented by a 'culture of cruelty', a set of practices, rituals and norms that focus particularly on the young, the poor and 'minorities' – all those who are handy subjects and objects for deep, vindictive processes of 'othering' (Young, 2011). As I write these words in New York City, demonstrations are happening in different parts of the metropolis in reaction to the Trayvon Martin excuse for a trial, and the foregone conclusion that unarmed black youth are fair game in many of the nation's states in accordance with 'stand your ground' rules. President Obama appeals for calm and asks the aggrieved population to respect the law and its outcomes. It was Frederick Douglas who said that 'power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.' I think that is probably where Zuccotti Park will meet the UK riots on the road to new forms of power as we enter not the end of history but rather its remaking. Surely we cannot settle for what we have now?

References

Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press.

Barak, G. (2012). *Theft of a Nation: Wall Street Looting and Federal Regulatory Colluding*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Barron, J and Moynihan, C. (2011). *City Reopens Park after Protesters are Evicted*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/16/nyregion/police-begin-clearing-zuccotti-park-of-protesters.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

Castells, M. (2012). *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.

Giroux, H. (2012). *Disposable Youth: Racialized Memories and the Culture of Cruelty*. New York: Routledge.

Gitlin, T. (2012). *The Occupy Spring*. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9m2X0GM38bY.

Hallsworth, S. and Brotherton, D. (2011). *Urban Disorder and Gangs: A Critique and a Warning*. London: Runnymede Trust.

Hansard HC Deb vol 531 col 1054 (11 August 2011) [Electronic version].

Harvey, D. (2011). *Rebel Cities*. New York: Verso.

Kerner Commission (1968). *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*. Washington, DC: US Government.

Long, C. and Dobnik, V. (2011). *Zuccotti Park Eviction: Police Arrest 200 Occupy Wall Street Protesters*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/11/15/zuccotti-park-eviction-po_n_1094306.html.

Pleyers, G. (2010). *Alter-Globalization: Becoming Actors in the Global Age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Rejali, D. (2009). *Torture and Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Roberts, D., Lewis, P., and Newburn, T. (2011). *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Disorder*. London: Guardian Shorts.

Scahill, J. (2013). *Dirty Wars: The World Is a Battlefield*. New York: Nation Books.

Scarman, L.G. (1981). *The Brixton Disorders 10–12 April 1981: Report of an Inquiry*. London: HMSO.

Smith, N. (1996). *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. New York: Routledge.

Standing G. (2011). *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Will, S., Handelman, S., and Brotherton, D. (Eds.) (2012). *How They Got Away With It: White Collar Criminals and the Financial Meltdown*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Young, J. (2011). *The Criminological Imagination*. Cambridge: Polity.

13
A Political Economy
of the Food Riot*

Raj Patel and Philip McMichael

Introduction

In 2007 and 2008, the world witnessed the return of one of the oldest forms of collective action, the food riot. Countries where protests occurred ranged from Italy, where 'Pasta Protests' in September 2007 were directed at the failure of the Prodi government to prevent a 30% rise in the price of pasta, to Haiti, where protesters railed against President Préval's impassive response to the doubling in the price of rice over the course of a single week. Other countries in which riots were reported included Uzbekistan, Morocco, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal, India, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Yemen, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Mexico, and Argentina, and some commentators have estimated that 30 countries experienced some sort of food protest over this period (Jafri, 2008).

The most obvious cause of these protests was the sudden and steep global rise in commodity prices, increases that were passed on directly to consumers, particularly those in urban areas. In developing an interpretation of these events, it is worth recalling the range of protests that erupted in the Global South nearly 20 years ago, which earned the moniker 'IMF riots' (Walton and Seddon, 1994), and which were likewise linked to steep price rises for urban consumers. Between 1976 and 1982, there were at least 146 such protests, with a peak at the beginning of the widespread imposition of monetarist economic policy between 1983 and 1985. The consequences of the adoption of this monetary policy

---

*A version of this paper has appeared as: Patel, R. and McMichael, P. (2009). A Political Economy of the Food Riot. *Review: A Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center*, 32(1), 9–35.

were to dismantle elements of state entitlement and macroeconomic protection that shielded citizens from the fluctuations of the international market. As a result, price fluctuations were, as today, much more rapidly communicated to the urban residents of the Global South. Based on this, Walton and Seddon derive a definition that austerity protests be defined as 'large-scale collective actions including political demonstrations, general strikes, and riots, which are animated by grievances over state policies of economic liberalization, implemented in response to the debt crisis and market reforms urged by international agencies' (1994, p. 39). They further suggest that because the economic policies that mandated austerity were often authored by multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), such protests have come to be called 'IMF riots.'

We question such terminology because it suggests that the ire of the crowds was directed exclusively at a Bretton Woods institution rather than at a suite of context-specific policies and individuals, domestic and international. Indeed, the strength of the link between actual IMF involvement in economic policy management and subsequent riots has been disputed. Despite strong claims for an association between the two (Walton and Ragin, 1990), some scholars have seen a more complex relationship, in which IMF riots occur either at the beginning or several years after a structural adjustment policy (Auvinen, 1996). It is safe, however, to conclude that the presence in an economy of the IMF (or other Bretton Woods institutions) is necessary, but not sufficient, to precipitate an 'IMF riot'.

In this chapter we suggest that food riots today are an outcome of the policies embodied in the Bretton Woods Institutions' economic doctrine, insofar as they dismantled public capacity (specifically food reserves), and deepened food dependency across much of the Global South through the liberalisation of trade in foodstuffs. This economic policy was justified in the name of increasing 'food security,' a term with a range of meanings (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2003), but which converge on there being sufficient food available and accessible to any given population. Omitted from the various definitions of food security are notions of power and control, questions about how a population will earn money to be able to purchase the food that has been made available, or whether indeed a country will be permitted to produce within its borders the food that will be fed to its population (Patel, 2009). In 1986 the then-US Secretary for Agriculture, John Block, said at the beginning of the Uruguay Round of Negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade that '[the] idea that developing countries should feed themselves is an anachronism from a

bygone era. They could better ensure their food security by relying on US agricultural products, which are available, in most cases, at much lower cos' (quoted in Schaeffer, 1995, p. 268). The ultimate mechanism for compliance with the demands of food security was the free market, as instituted through the development project (McMichael, 2003). It is no small irony, then, that food riots are the consequence of a set of policies that were licensed by the supposed virtues of food security.

Our argument is that the food riot is not simply about the price and accessibility of staple foods but that it is a more complex phenomenon, and it concerns the political economy of food provisioning. From a world-historical perspective, the food riot has always been about more than food – its appearance has usually signalled significant transitions in political-economic arrangements. Further, we suggest that, like famine, food rioting often registers a long process leading up to a signal crisis, a process of structural deprivation and erosion of entitlement (cf George, 1977). Food riots are, in other words, political, and therefore their interpretation needs to be threaded through endogenous political debates and power struggles. The term 'IMF riot' does violence to the need to contextualise food riots and, used carelessly, it eliminates the need to see the articulation of international economic elements behind protests to local struggles and organised alternatives to existing structures of power. This is why we argue that while food riots may stem from the political economy of food security, the protests themselves are agential moments that can, in some cases, be understood as a movement towards an alternative that is best captured in the term 'food sovereignty'. Food sovereignty was a term generated by the Vía Campesina peasant movement in 1996 as a way of specifically addressing the political lacunae of 'food security', and as a way of bringing questions and struggles over power back into thinking about food policy (Desmarais, 2007). Food riots, we argue, can be just such moments. Such protests are not always and necessarily expressions of food sovereignty, insofar as their outcome may not be what its constituents may wish for. But whether or not the level of democratic control over the food system increases as a result of the protests, the spread of food riots invariably has much to do with a specific kind of rebellion against the political economy of neoliberalism, as expressed in local and national settings.

Food rioting in history

The phenomenon of people taking to the streets to protest about hunger has a very long history. Cicero (106–43 BC) witnessed it first hand when his house was attacked by a hungry and angry mob. The first major

study of the food riot as a political phenomenon was conducted by E.P. Thompson (1971). Thompson's aim was to tease apart the term 'riot', situating the events surrounding this form of protest in a broader political context. Key to this was his idea that food riots were not a direct function of food shortage in the material economy but a sign of contest over the rules of how the economy worked. He used the term 'moral economy' to point to the cluster of political and prepolitical ideas circulating within society that governed the natural and desirable means of the distribution of common wealth. This moral economy was not only manifest in times of protest, but a fixture of social life and governance in the eighteenth century. 'The word "riot" is,' Thompson observed, 'too small to encompass all this' (1971, p. 79). His analysis offered a means to understand some of the more spectacular food riots of the eighteenth century, which were not to be found in England, but in France.

Linking French food riots to the idea of moral economy, Louise Tilly (1971) points to two key features spawning food protest. First she suggests that the formation of a national market in grain eroded the kinds of local control over the economy that peasants and the urban poor were able to exercise in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Second, the French government's withdrawal from strong market regulation and price-setting ended the varieties of paternalism and *noblesse oblige* on which large swathes of the working poor depended in times of crisis. The notion of entitlements has been used to interpret the French Revolution. It was, of course, about more than simply food, but the sentiment 'let them eat cake' – mistakenly attributed to Marie Antoinette rather than, more plausibly, to Maria Theresa of Spain, the wife of Louis XIV – points to the tenor of the protests. Tilly notes that the Sans Culottes had explicit food-related demands: 'During the French revolution, the Maximum . . . [a] Jacobin version of 'war communism' was a response to entitlement loss' (1983, p. 339).

It is the dynamics of the moral economy and the perception of injustice, not a simple shortage of food, which best explains the emergence of mass protest preceding, and in the 50 years after, the French Revolution. Food riots continued in France well into the 1850s. This can again be explained with respect to shifts within the moral economy, for the shift from paternalism to *laissez-faire* was protracted; the replacement of one set of entitlements with another was not smooth or swift, but fragmentary, disjointed, and sometimes violent. Theorists attribute the end of protests, however, to the successful completion of the bourgeois project. Protests end when markets in food have successfully been instituted and, similarly, when other forms of protest (such as a strike for higher

wages to afford better or more food) become predominant. Karl Polanyi (1957) conceptualised this process as the 'discovery of society', meaning that pre-industrial conceptions of moral economy were progressively replaced, through social pressure, by rationalised notions of civil rights and social protections in the Western welfare state that emerged in the mid-twentieth century.

Part of this social pressure included food rioting. At the end of the First World War a number of instances of food riots registered particularly in North America. They broke out in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Toronto and, most notably New York (Frank, 1985, p. 264). The price of food in North America had, after 1916, started to rise dramatically. Increasing quantities of North American grain were being diverted to Europe, still in the throes of the First World War. This drain on the grain markets, while welcomed by farmers, caused tremendous hardship in urban areas. Given the general spread of this suffering, however, a further cause is needed to explain why some areas saw protest, and others did not. Beyond being in urban areas, the protests had two key common features: first, they were usually linked to radical (usually socialist or communist) organisations, and, second, the majority of participants and organisers were women. The idea of a moral economy works well here. In its original formulation, the idea of a moral economy pointed to the distance between the traditional paternal modes of support for social reproduction and the arrangements for the poor under the new capitalist order. The protests that emerged point to the rupture between the expectation of order under one regime, and that of order under another. This logic can be applied to the case of the food riots in early twentieth-century America. The gap between expectations and reality were fuelled, on the one hand, by food-price inflation, which made food less attainable, and on the other by revolutionary organising, which suggested an economic logic at variance with capitalism. There were, furthermore, no ready alternative means for women to register their protest. In the USA the 19th amendment to the constitution, recognising women's right to vote, was only passed in 1920, about five years later (with some variation across provinces) than in Canada. The streets were the only place where women could make their voices heard. Food riots were also a means through which organising to win the vote was carried out. As a contemporary New York magazine reported, 'the need of votes for women, to strengthen this new woman's movement, will be emphasized at every anti-high price meeting' (Frank, 1985, p. 279).

It was no accident that women found themselves in the frontline; the gendered division of labour laid the duties of domestic reproduction

at their door. The language of protest in 1917 still rings true. Consider this quote: 'With $14 a week we used to just make a living. With prices as they are now, we could not even live on $2 a day. We would just exist.' The woman who said this was interviewed in New York on the frontlines of an East Side Jewish Women's protest, but she might have come from any of the developing countries that have, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, experienced agricultural inflation-related riots.

The gap between peoples' sense of moral economy and their experience of poverty within the material economy has been parsed by development economist Amartya Sen as an 'entitlement failure'. Sen's seminal work on hunger and famine serves as a helpful corollary to Thompson – if the latter's work made use of the term 'riot' problematic, Sen (1981) did the same for the term 'famine'. His work on the 1943 Bengal Famine, in which between 1.5 Million and 3 Million people died, pointed to a key problem in food economics, which is confirmed by Davis' (2001) research on the synchronised El Niño famines across India, China and Brazil in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In times of modern famine, food has always been available. Famine is, in other words, not a result of a food shortage. The reason that people died in Bengal was that they lacked the means to buy food on the open market, which, in turn, was exporting food. Noting that this was not, then, a problem of inadequate supply or want of demand, Sen theorised this crisis as an 'entitlement failure'.

The development, and corporate, food regimes

Decolonisation movements, and the ever-present threat of food rioting, was a central justification for the mid-twentieth-century project of 'development' elaborated in powerful corridors of Washington, London and Paris after the Second World War, and at the Bretton Woods conference of 1944, where the World Bank and the IMF were created. This was the age of 'hunger amidst scarcity' (Araghi, 2000), and development discourses formed around the problem of Third World poverty and hunger as a political threat (Escobar, 1995). President Truman's Four Point Declaration of 1948 noted: 'The economic life of the poor is primitive and stagnant . . . Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas' (quoted in Saldaña-Portillo, 2003, p. 22).

The vision of 'feeding the world' emerged through Cold War politics, addressing post-war and colonial deprivations via the politics of containment, as communist movements in Europe and the non-European

world threatened Western interests (Perkins, 1997). With food shortages and famines in the early 1940s, the establishment of the United Nations FAO included a mandate of stabilising world agriculture and establishing global food security, through food trade management.

The overrule by President Truman of the proposal for a World Food Board by the FAO and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration signalled the significance of the food weapon via bilateral US aid programmes. The US food aid, or development, regime, formalised in 1954 as Public Law 480, came to dominate the food trade landscape over the next two decades. US-managed food surpluses were distributed strategically as concessional food aid to states on the geopolitical frontline, and to those regarded as future customers of American agro-exports once they transitioned from aid to trade. This food aid regime reshaped, indeed Westernised, the social diets of newly urbanised consumers in regions of the Third World that were being industrialised, at the same time as its low-priced cereals undermined local farmers (Friedmann, 1982, 1987). The managed construction of the consumer paralleled the decimation of peasant agriculture. Each confirmed the simple truths of the development vision: that the Western consumption pattern was a universal desire and that peasants were historical residuals, destined to disappear into a modern urban labour force.

Post-colonial states sought to implement this development model in the name of modernity, commercialising public goods (land, forest, water, genetic resources and indigenous knowledge) and extending cash-cropping systems to pay for rising imports of technology and luxury consumer goods. Subsistence cultures experienced a sustained assault from cheap food imports and expanding commodity relations. Peasant dispossession intensified with the deepening of colonial mechanisms of primitive accumulation by post-colonial states. From 1950 to 1997, the world's rural population decreased by some 25%, and now 63% of the world's urban population dwells in, and on the margins of, sprawling cities of the Global South (Davis, 2006).

Commercial monocropping transformed rural landscapes, as the American model of capital/energy-intensive agriculture was universalised through the European Marshall Plan, agribusiness deployment of counterpart funds from the food aid programme, and green revolution technologies. Post-war American-style consumption transformed food from its nineteenth-century role of cheapening labour costs to its additional twentieth-century role of opening up a new source of profit. The fast-food industry, grossing $110 billion a year in the USA, exemplifies

this movement by serving low-cost convenience foods, based on the expropriation of home-cooking crafts. In the Global South, this extends to displacing urban street vendors, paralleling the displacement of peasant communities by feed grain monocultures and cattle pastures for export beef, and by increasingly tenuous farming under contract for an expanding global supermarket system (Reardon *et al.*, 2003).

The food empire is not simply a set of new commodity flows. It involves a transformation, and integration, of quite contradictory conditions of social reproduction across national borders – whether the integrating mechanism is an imperial state, a world price or a corporate empire. Producers of global commodities are subject to the competitive relationships that drive corporate accumulation strategies, which both create and exploit an expanding global reserve army of casual labour.

These mechanisms, together, form the corporate food regime: an ordering of the world food economy that combines state power, the price weapon and corporate sourcing strategies (McMichael, 2005). The World Trade Organization's (WTO's) Agreement on Agriculture outlawed artificial price support through trade restrictions, production controls and state trading boards. While countries of the Global South were instructed to open up their farm sectors, those of the Global North retained their huge subsidies. Decoupling subsidies from prices removed the price floor, establishing an artificially low 'world price' for agricultural commodities, which were dumped in Southern markets. Prices for the major commodities in world trade have fallen by 30% or more since 1994, and they were at an all-time low for the last century and a half by 1999 (Ritchie, 1999).

The price weapon is enabled by a WTO rule that eliminates the right to a national strategy of self-sufficiency. This is the minimum market access rule, which guaranteed food importing, and therefore food exports, thus privileging Northern agribusinesses. At the Seattle Ministerial in 1999, a Honduran farmer observed: 'Today, we cannot sell our own farm products on the markets because of . . . imports . . . of cheap food produce from Europe, Canada and the US . . . Free trade is for multi-nationals; it is not for the small peasant farmers' (quoted in Madeley, 2000, p. 81). In the latter half of the 1990s, food deficit states experienced a 20% rise in food bills, despite record low prices (Murphy, 1999, p. 3), and since the post-war 'development era', Africa has moved from food self-reliance to importing 25% of its food needs (Holt-Giménez, 2008). After 9,000 years of food security, Mexico, the home of maize, was transformed by liberalisation and the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) into a food deficit country and forced to import

yellow corn from the United States at the expense of almost 2 Million *campesinos* (Carlsen, 2003). The chairman of Cargill observed: 'There is a mistaken belief that the greatest agricultural need in the developing world is to develop the capacity to grow food for local consumption. This is misguided. Countries should produce what they produce best – and trade' (quoted in Lynas, 2001).

The corporate food regime is premised on the displacement of staple foods with exports – whether dumped on the world market, or installed locally as a measure of 'development.' Across the world, 20–30 million people have lost their land under the impact of trade liberalisation and export agriculture (Madeley, 2000, p. 75), and this process is currently intensifying through state-sanctioned corporate 'energy and food security' land grabs (GRAIN, 2007). Dispossessed peasants enter new, global circuits where they produce food for spatially and socially distant consumers, under corporate control. What affluent consumers might experience as a cornucopia of world foods, and what some analysts might view as a world of commodity chains, involves a more far-reaching transformation in the conditions of social reproduction of the corporate empire, characterised by a burgeoning casualisation of the labour of displaced rural producers.

The food regime, however, is not simply a corporate affair. It is embedded within the governing orthodoxy of neoliberalism, and its institutional arsenal, which privileges private over public rights. Structural adjustment loans routinely demand exports as a solution to debt repayment. In Southern Africa, structural adjustment policies promoted export agriculture and replaced state marketing boards with private buyers. Producers were at the mercy of speculators. This fundamental contradiction, whereby 'free markets' exclude and/or starve populations that are dispossessed by their very implementation, characterises the corporate food regime and is, as we argue below, the source of today's food riots. The so-called era of globalisation has been premised on the food regime's generation of cheap labour for manufacturing, service and industrial agricultural sectors, and its supply of relatively cheap industrial foods to subsidise labour costs (McMichael, 2005).

Agflation in the twenty-first century

Having outlined the origins and political economy of the food system in which the most recent riots have occurred, we now move to interpret the recent and precipitous fluctuations in food prices, a phenomenon that has been dubbed 'agflation'. Orthodox economists explain the

fluctuation using notions of supply and demand, pointing, for instance, to the production dips that are caused by poor weather in Australia and North America, and the spread of diseases affecting cereals in Central Asia, leading to reduced supply and higher prices. While these phenomena certainly have some explanatory power, they beg questions about how economies were vulnerable to these shocks (bad weather and disease are hardly new phenomena). We can explain this by knowing that the food system is one in which the buffers shielding consumers have been removed. But to understand the deeper processes at work, it is important to acknowledge what we might call the 'neoliberal climax': the conjunction of crises of labour, energy and finance. Contributing to the 2007–2008 period of agflation, a rapid switch of agribusiness into biofuels (aided by subsidies and short-term politics of the energy/climate crisis) and of investors into commodity futures (for want of more secure investments) fuelled the spike in food prices (Berthelot, 2008; Holt-Giménez and Kenfield, 2008). As one reporter from Mozambique noted:

> From the savannahs of west Africa to the rainforests of Congo, the plains of Tanzania and the wilderness of Ethiopia, governments are handing over huge tracts of fertile land to private companies aiming to convert biomass grown on large plantations into liquid fuels for export markets. African leaders like Senegal's Abdoulaye Wade are predicting a 'green revolution' and looking eagerly to lucrative exports.
>
> (Howden, 2008, p. 34)

The 'food crisis' also registers a long process of construction of a relative surplus labour force, which was dispossessed by the aforementioned crisis of low prices. This labour force has fuelled accumulation effected through webs of outsourcing across North and South, which have exerted downward pressure on (social) wage expectations. The resulting casualisation of labour has rendered the working poor vulnerable to food price increases, and is manifest in growing public disorder as food price inflation further devalues wages, and even devastates subsistence producers who are dependent on cooking oil purchases. Thus a *New York Times* report noted:

> Governments in many poor countries have tried to respond by stepping up food subsidies, imposing or tightening price controls, restricting exports and cutting food import duties...No category of food prices has risen as quickly this winter as so-called edible

oils ... Cooking oil may seem a trifling expense in the West. But in the developing world, cooking oil is an important source of calories and represents one of the biggest cash outlays for poor families, which grow much of their own food but have to buy oil in which to cook it.

Few crops illustrate the emerging problems in the global food chain as well as palm oil, a vital commodity in much of the world and particularly Asia. From jungles and street markets in Southeast Asia to food companies in the United States and biodiesel factories in Europe, soaring prices for the oil are drawing environmentalists, energy companies, consumers, indigenous peoples and governments into acrimonious disputes.

(Bradsher, 2008, p. A9)

Not only does this report draw attention to the integration of energy and food prices, through the direct connection between oil and its palm oil substitute, but also it speaks to the crisis of social reproduction associated with agflation. That is, the 'food crisis' represents the moment when the contradictory relations of the food regime become visible, after a long process of dispossession, slum expansion, immiseration and underconsumption. In effect, the relationship of the food regime to the reproduction of labour power is less about a historical process of producing cheap food to reduce labour costs and more about combining the (subsidised) assault with cheap food on small producers (predominantly women) with an assault on vulnerable consumers of wage-foods (Hansen-Kuhn, 2007).

More than the question of cheapening labour costs is then the question of social reproduction on the margins of capitalist economy. As Vía Campesina noted during the crisis of low prices: 'the massive movement of food around the world is forcing the increased movement of people' (2000). The cheapening of food to reduce wage costs also, through cycles of dispossession, generates a labour reserve. Thus neoliberal policies institutionalised a public disregard for social reproduction at large, at the same time as capital has cycled disposable generations of labour through casualised, flexible and runaway jobs. This is the historic basis for underconsumption and a social reproduction crisis, now exacerbated by rising food prices.

Having already been enlisted in the neoliberal project, governments are absorbing responsibility for rising food costs and therefore for subsidising capital. Privatisation rolled back food subsidies for labour under the debt regime, but the consequences of two decades of 'accumulation

by dispossession' (Harvey, 2003) are now materialising in rising food prices and rolling food riots. State responses to riots include food price stabilisation measures through various makeshift policies (e.g. Egyptian army baking bread) as prices rise beyond their citizen-consumers' means. It is too early to tell how this latter process will unfold, but it intensifies the degradation of social reproduction, beyond the deepening reliance on women's informal labour and the general impoverishment of vulnerable classes to absorb the austerity of structural adjustment – to such an extent that urban rebellions threaten public order, such as it is.

Contemporary food riots

Over the year between mid-2007 and mid-2008, there was a 130% increase in the global price of maize and a 75% increase in the price of rice, with similar increases in the price of soybeans, corn and many other major food commodities. Overall the aggregate global price of food doubled in real terms from 2000, and it is set to increase in real terms by up to 50% in the next decade, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the FAO. Yet, over the last decade, income for many of the world's poorer people fell. For the lowest-paid workers, their income has fallen in real terms since the mid-1980s in a range of countries. In Haiti, for example, one of the countries hardest hit by the food price increases, by 2003, wages for menial and sweatshop jobs had plummeted to just 20% of their 1981 level (United Nations, 2005; Economist Intelligence Unit, *Haiti: Country Profile 2003*, p. 24). In early 2008 the current director of the FAO, Jacques Diouf, warned of 'hunger riots' unless grain prices were lowered. He reported that 37 countries faced food crises, and that the affected will react (Harsch, 2008).

There are two important dimensions to this response. First, Northern officials view the food crisis as a security issue, with food riots as 'stark reminders that food insecurity threatens not only the hungry but peace and stability itself' (Hoyos and Blas, 2008, p. 2). Second, embedded in this 'reminder' is the implicit recognition that food riots politicise hunger. Senegal has been a relatively stable multiparty democracy, never having experienced a *coup d'état*. Even so, Dakar food rioters, organised by opposition parties, unions and civil society groups, carried empty rice bags, tomato tins and other items, symbolising their desire for President Wade to relinquish office (Harsch, 2008; Sy, 2008). As reported, in Senegal and in about a dozen other African countries, protesters

poured into the streets as food-price inflation further depleted their living conditions because 'many people still feel they have little voice in influencing policy – unless they go out into the streets' (Harsch, 2008).

In Dakar, food inflation added to rising prices of transport, electricity and other essentials. The combination of rising food and fuel prices was routinely attributed to the international trade system by rulers besieged by anti-government demonstrations – from Maputo, Mozambique, where bread and bus fare rises sparked protests in February 2008, through three cities in Burkina Faso, where food prices and state taxation were the object of urban protests, to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where 1,500 demonstrated against food and general cost of living increases, underlined by rising fuel prices. Ernest Harsch reports: 'In most demonstrations, protesters have expressed anger not only over high food and fuel prices, but also towards the governments they hold responsible. The linking of political and economic grievances has been most evident where the same presidents and ruling parties have been in power for many years' (2008). While Senegal's President Wade declared in April 2008 that 'There is no hunger in Senegal and there will be no hunger in Senegal', the *Daily Nation* reported: 'President Wade was elected on the promise that he would improve the living conditions that seriously deteriorated in the 80's and 90's' (Sy, 2008). In addition, in the middle of the food crisis, Wade's embrace of the conversion of Africa to a 'Green OPEC' through the wide-scale planting of crops not for food but for fuel, through 'biofuels', prompted calls for a moratorium on what Nigerian Nnimmo Bassey of the African Biodiversity Network views as 'a flashback to colonial plantations'. An alliance of African civil society groups claims: 'We need to protect food security, forests, water, land rights, farmers and indigenous peoples from the aggressive march of agrofuel developments' (quoted in Howden, 2008).

Across the African continent, it appears that food inflation is the fuse to a combustible 'awakening of the people's conscience', as claimed by the secretary-general of Guinea's National Confederation of Workers. Thus not only is the food riot one of the oldest forms of collective action but it is also the moment when economic and political injustice reaches a tipping point – arguably because food is the most elemental material symbol of the social contract. The measure of this is the rapid repression meted out by governments, responding with force against the protesters. In Burkina Faso, hundreds were arrested and sentenced; in Cameroon, 40 people died and at least 1,500 were arrested; 100 were injured in Egypt and about 250 arrested; and in Senegal, Cameroon and Morocco, journalists were beaten and governments shut down media

outlets. Nevertheless, in the same countries, as well as in Guinea and Mauritania, the same governments steadied prices and 'initiated consultations with trade unions, merchants' associations and consumers' organizations' (Harsch, 2008). In other words, the moment of conflagration stimulated recognition of the 'moral economy' underlying food provisioning, a moral economy asserted by collective action at the same time as it informs the technologies of rule.

As a technology of rule, food provisioning serves as a lightning rod of contention over perceptions of just governance. We make three observations about the FAO director's warning of hunger riots over grain prices. First is an implicit point that the world is not short of food; rather, food is unevenly available, which in turn is a political-economic question. States are clearly identified by rioters as responsible for immiseration and underconsumption, but at the same time as lacking democratic structures, even beyond electoral systems. Governments are quick to attribute their shortcomings to external forces beyond their control. The development literature to date has conflated these relationships into a single concept: the 'IMF riot'. While this was intended to be shorthand for a more complex concatenation of events and relationships, it is important to distinguish these relationships. Second, the people rioting are labourers, the working poor and the unemployed, whose ranks are continually rising as urbanisation outstrips industrialisation. Indeed in Africa, 'slums are growing at twice the speed of the continent's exploding cities' (Davis, 2006, p. 18). And, third, our overall point is that food rioting is in varied ways a direct challenge to local and national political relations, and an indirect politicisation of the policies and power relations underlying the neoliberal rhetoric of 'food security', institutionalised as a method of food provisioning through the world market by transnational firms trading agroindustrial commodities produced under near-monopoly conditions (McMichael, 2003).

It is important to observe the poetics of 'security' in food security', conjuring as it does the spectre of order and force. To restate, the irony here is that the development project was premised on the eradication of food insecurity', which was understood as the emergence of political demands for control over the means of production. Mere hunger, recall, was happily tolerated by the ruling classes – it was when those protests took to public space, or plausibly threatened to, that change emerged. Yet because of the contradictions that are inherent within the food system, the accelerations of capital, the detachment of use and exchange values, the need to accumulate by dispossession, and the need to remove impediments to profitability that allowed the reproduction of labour,

the modern food system has eaten itself out of a home. It has become the architect not of a solution to 'food insecurity' but to an edifice that makes poverty and hunger more likely.

Yet, again, mere exposure to high prices through reworked market forces is not sufficient to invoke rioting – this is why the 'IMF riot' moniker is unsatisfactory. Poverty may lead to hunger, but not necessarily to protest. The world's poorest areas are rural, not urban, and if there was some automatic connection between poverty and protest, large parts of the rural world would be in flames. Riots express something other, or more, than the depth of poverty. Following Thompson's work, two relationships appear to be central. The first is a sudden and severe entitlement gap – a gap between what people believe to be their entitlement and what they can in fact achieve. Food inflation has meant that people believe that they ought to be able to feed their families at a certain level, which is significantly lowered when food inflation hits.

Consider the case of Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, where three quarters of the population lives on less than two dollars a day. Haiti has, of course, suffered centuries of intervention and installation of neocolonial regimes. The fact that Haiti produced more rice in 1984 than it does now is no accident, nor is the fact that the bags of rice to be found in Haiti have US flags stamped on them. The reversal of food sourcing is one key component of what Paul Farmer (an advocate for Haitian justice) calls 'structural violence' – the impact of global power inequality. Some claim that the first reversal in food relations began with the United States Agency for International Development's eradication of the pig population in Haiti, in response to a swine fever outbreak. Pigs represented peasants' 'savings accounts', and this action contributed to President Duvalier's replacement in 1986 by a military junta, backed by the USA, and ushering in a neoliberal project of currency devaluation, trade liberalisation and opening up Haiti's agricultural markets to US producers. In the early 1990s the USA introduced food aid, via PL-480, which undercut peasant production with heavily subsidised US rice, and completed the process of instituting food dependency in the guise of 'food security'. In Haiti today, as elsewhere, dirt cookies (a concoction of mud, salt, sugar and oil) have become the new 'level'. The existence and spread of this entitlement expectation gap is one substantial contribution to food riots.

The second trigger is that riots tend to occur where citizens have no voice or power to gain the ear of the government. This is a sign, in other words, of the conjunction of food inflation and autocracy, or the exhaustion of democratic politics. Haiti has long been beset by

political instability, and now it has a US-backed President – René Préval – installed. This instability has been compounded by a further factor: inequality. As Schuller (2008) reported:

> Missing from most media accounts is that while Haiti is the 'poorest country in the hemisphere' by economic measures – 80% live on less than US$2 per day, and around half have an income of $1 or less – it is also the most unequal. It is second only to Namibia in income inequality, and has the most millionaires per capita in the region. Margarethe Thenusla, a 34-year-old factory worker and mother of two said, 'When they ask for aid for the needy, you hear that they release thousands of dollars for aid in Haiti. But when it comes you can't see anything that they did with the food aid. You see it in the market, they're selling it. Us poor people don't see it.'

Again, inequality isn't new to Haiti – it has consistently had one of the highest Gini coefficients in the World Bank's World Development Indicator database. Nonetheless, with the price increases, riots broke out in April 2008 in Les Cayes, with five people killed in street battles with police and United Nations troops. This uprising ignited protests in the capital, Port-au-Prince, and in other parts of Haiti, prompting the Senate to fire the Prime Minister, Edouard Alexis. One demonstrator put it this way: 'Political parties and lawmakers are fighting over who should control the next cabinet. But they don't seem to care for the population that is starving' (Delva, 2008). Schuller found similar sentiments echoed by protesters in Port-au-Prince. One, named Linda asked pointedly, 'Did the cost of living go up for the government? Because the people, we are suffering and the government isn't. They act like the cost of living hasn't gone up'... [quoting] the demands of Cavaillon community organizer Frantz Thelusma, 'First, we demand the government get rid of its neoliberal plan. We will not accept this death plan. Second, the government needs to regulate the market and lower the price of basic goods' (Schuller, 2008).

In addition, then, to the sudden fluctuation and the entitlement gap, a further factor, both cause and consequence of the neoliberal food system, presents itself. At the same time as the current food regime immiserates many, it has enriched a few. Were hardship to be equally distributed through the economy (think of stories of national solidarity on the home front in the Second World War, for instance) one might imagine that protest could be avoided. But the existence of a neoliberal political caste – that group of people who, despite hardship are able

to continue their conspicuous consumption – can provide an obvious focus for political dissatisfaction (cf Veblen, 1973). In order for this contradiction to be maintained, the dominant bloc so insulates itself from engagement with the public that there are no means by which the poor can effectively articulate their political dissatisfaction. Again, in Haiti, there were widespread reports of disengagement by the political class. Indeed, as Schuller (2008) notes, the aloof quality of the Préval administration might have contributed to its longevity:

> [B]ehind closed doors people from all classes I spoke with – day laborers, street vendors, factory workers, NGO employees, and other middle-class professionals – complained about his apparent lack of leadership and unwillingness to address the public. To many observers, while his relative silence may have contributed to keeping his 'unity government' together, government inaction led to the return of violence and *lavi chè a*. (high cost of living).

It was the combination of inequality and disenfranchisement combined with a sudden entitlement gap, that summoned forth the moral economy in which continued disengagement by Préval became grounds for protest. These dynamics are not those of Haiti alone. Egypt presents another case in which we might observe the necessary conditions that anticipate food riots. Thus Joel Beinin (2008) reported:

> Between 2005 and 2008 food prices rose by 33% for meat and as much as 146% for chicken, and this March inflation reached 15.8%. Severe shortages of subsidised bread, the main source of calories for most Egyptians, have made things worse – low-paid government inspectors often sell subsidised flour on the black market. Rows in long bread lines caused injuries and even deaths. The cost of unsubsidised bread has nearly doubled in the past two years.

In the context of a broadening social movement, with unprecedented strikes and collective action since 2004, spreading across private and public sectors, in April 2008 security officers thwarted a strike planned by workers at the Misr Spinning and Weaving Plant in the textile town of Mahalla el-Kobra to protest against increased prices of food, mostly bread, and to demand an increase in the minimum wage. Though the strike was called off, some workers took to the streets in peaceful protest, upon which security officers fired tear-gas into the crowd

and beat protesters with batons. Protesters responded by burning banners of ruling National Democratic Party candidates for the upcoming municipal elections. Further protests, with several thousand people, led to the defacing of a large poster of President Mubarak, which was followed by over 300 arrests, and a firefight that resulted in nine people being critically wounded and a 15-year-old boy shot to death while watching from the balcony of his family's flat (Beinin, 2008). The call for a general strike following the Mahalla intifada was endorsed by the Egyptian Movement for Change (Kifaya), the Islamist Labour Party, the Nasserist Karama Party and the Bar Association. But with the mass arrest of almost 100 political activists, the plan was abandoned (Beinin, 2008). Nevertheless, el-Hamalawy (2008) suggests,

> These strikes will continue because the economic conditions that sparked them still exist. And the strikes are not just about bread and butter issues. They include a great level of political sophistication. When you strike in a dictatorship, against state owned management, you know you will be confronted by state backed trade unions, that your factory will be surrounded by state security troops who might kill or kidnap you afterwards, and torture you or abuse your family. So to strike at all is a political decision. But you can see the economic consciousness turning into political consciousness. Mahalla strikers carried banners saying 'Down with the government' while chanting against the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Compare this with a report in the *New York Times:*

> [W]hat has turned the demands of individual workers into a potential mass movement, officials and political analysts said, has been inflation of food prices, mostly bread and cooking oil. The rising cost of wheat, coupled with widespread corruption in the production and distribution of subsidized bread in Egypt, has prompted the … government to resolve the problem … 'People in Egypt don't care about democracy and the transfer of power' [Belal Fadl, a script writer and satirist in Cairo] said. 'They don't believe in it because they didn't grow up with it in the first place … Their problem is limited to their ability to survive, and if that is threatened then they will stand up'.
>
> (Slackman, 2008, p. A6)

The lesson here is that food riots express elemental struggles around the conditions of social reproduction, but those conditions are

always political. The precise contours of that politicisation cannot be discovered *a priori*. We suggest that the reaching for modes of politics that offer popular control over food policy and, indeed, the wider economy, are moments in which those disenfranchised by the food regime seek to become sovereign. Mexico is a prime example, with scattered protests across the country as corn and beans, sugar and milk import protections ended on 1 January 2008, under the NAFTA. *Campesinos* blocked a border crossing, carrying signs reading 'Without Corn There Is No Country' (Tobar, 2008). Thousands of *campesinos* converged on Mexico City on 31 January 2008, demanding renegotiation of the treaty to protect corn and beans. One of the leaders of the Mexican peasant movement declared: 'The free trade agreement is like an open wound for the Mexican countryside. You can give the patient medical attention but if you don't stop the hemorrhaging first, the patient dies' (quoted in Rosenberg, 2008). The Mexican government's response, with price caps, food subsidies and encouragement of urban agriculture, however limited, mirrors the food sovereignty claims from the demonstrators.

In Peru, where on 30 April more than 1,000 women (who run food kitchens for the poor) protested against the government's response to rising food prices outside Peru's Congress (Arce and Wade, 2008), two months later the protests escalated to address the root causes of food inflation in neoliberal policies. On 9 July about 30,000 members of the General Confederation of Workers joined a nationwide protest against rising food prices. In Lima, 6,000 people banged pots in protest in a central plaza. Protesters also set fire to a government building in Puerto Maldonado. The General Confederation of Workers, the umbrella union in Peru, argued that food price hikes were the result of free-market policies adopted by President Alan Garcia (Salazar, 2008).

The notion of food sovereignty speaks to these protests rather directly. We are not, however, suggesting that the demand for control and rights over food and food policy actually leads to the fulfilment of those rights. The eruption of protest is a sign of the hegemonic crisis of a food regime, but there is no progressive teleology in describing the protests as moments of food sovereignty. Consider, finally, an example of food riots not in the Global South but in the Global North.

The European Union is the world's second largest importer of wheat, and therefore one might expect its members to have suffered from the high price of the grain. Yet food riots have only happened in one country – Italy. According to the FAO, Italians consume more wheat than any other country in the European Union (414g/person/day). This stylised fact prompts the question of whether the Italians' higher consumer exposure to wheat prices increases than the rest of Europe

experienced is what led to the protests. While a tantalising possible explanation, it cannot do: the quantity consumed by Italians is less than, say, Syria (416g/person/day) and only a little more than Armenia (400g/person/day). Average income in both countries is substantially less than in Italy, meaning that a price rise would have meant a proportionally higher portion of household budgets would be diverted to wheat consumption, yet while governments in both countries were concerned at the price increases, neither country experienced a protest.

In Italy at the time of the pasta protests, the centre-left Prodi government was in the final throes of its brief tenure. A detailed analysis of the situation in that country is beyond the scope of this chapter (see Ginsborg (2005) for an important insight into contemporary Italian political economy). But in stylised form, the facts of the Italian food riots look similar to those in Egypt or Haiti – they represent a rebellion against both the high price of food, and a political class that has proven itself unable to convince the *demos* of its ability to assure food security, and indeed, as the publishing sensation of the book *The Caste* suggests (Rizzo and Stella, 2007), a class utterly unable to convince the *demos* of its sensitivity to the concerns of working families. Partly as a result of these protests, the Prodi government fell, and elections were held in which a coalition headed by Silvio Berlusconi won power.

The answer to the peoples' call for food sovereignty turned out to be the brazen return of corporate power under the guise of national sovereignty. Street protests for food sovereignty do not automatically result in that sovereignty – the political rupture occasioned by food riots is an always-contested space, from which resultant political configurations appear as a matter of political contingency, not necessity. (See, of course, Marx (1964) for the clearest example of this analytic.) This realisation is important, lest the widespread emergence of food sovereignty protests should be interpreted as a sufficient harbinger of a transformation in food system politics.

Conclusion

We have argued that, under the aegis of preventing urban disturbance, the development project was geared to assuring food supplies as a matter of national and geopolitical security. The shifting geopolitical configuration toward the end of the twentieth century spawned the disciplines of structural adjustment. Under their rule, governments have rolled back state-based entitlements, particularly in the domain of social welfare, including support for smallholder agriculture on which much

of the Southern population depends. There has been, as a result of the economic contradictions within the neoliberal food regime, a degradation of social reproduction. In particular, there has been an erosion of entitlements like access to education, health care and basic needs, even if they are not eroded uniformly (Tilly, 1983).

The food system also produced a structurally unsound economic system that communicated price fluctuations far more directly into the heart of poor communities. The disproportionate burden borne by the poor, and by poor women in particular, has resulted in political organising. This has been central to the increasing incidence of food riots (Daines and Seddon, 1994). E.P. Thompson's concept of moral economy continues to be useful in explaining these phenomena. Again, the incidence of protest is not correlated with material indicators of deprivation, but with the gap between expected and actual entitlements, and the available repertoire of forms of protest. Pre-existing political organising, whether in unions, Islamic brotherhoods, churches or housewives' clubs, raises expectations and expands the repertoire of protest. Insofar as these political spaces offer sovereignty, we interpret food riots as a consequence of the development paradigm of food security, and a cry for food sovereignty. We are not, however, so naïve as to mistake the demand for sovereignty over the food system for that sovereignty itself. The current neoliberal order is maintained through active hegemony. Indeed, Gramsci's notion of hegemony was forged in circumstances in which cries for sovereignty were channelled not into the socialism which he advocated, but into the fascism that imprisoned him. Neoliberal hegemony is not to be underestimated, even though its contradictions are every day becoming more acute. We imagine that there will be many more food riots to come, as this hegemony is transformed. It appears that the food riot is not quite yet ready for the dustbin of history.

References

Araghi, F. (2000). The great global enclosure of our times: Peasants and the agrarian question at the end of the Twentieth Century. In F. Magdoff, J.B. Foster and F.H. Buttel (Eds.), *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food and the Environment*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 145–160.

Araghi, F. (2003). Food regimes and the production of value: Some methodological issues. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, XXX, 2, 41–70.

Arce, J.L. and Wade, T. (2008). More than 1,000 protest over national football team food prices in Peru. *Reuters*, 30 April. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-Agflation/idUSN30545 42920080430.

Auvinen, J. Y. (1996). IMF intervention and political protest in the Third World: A conventional wisdom refined. *Third World Quarterly*, XVII, 377–400.

Beinin, J. (2008). Egypt: Bread riots and mill strikes. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May. Retrieved from http://intellibriefs.blogspot.com/2008/05/egypt-bread-riots-and-mill-strikes.html.

Berthelot, J. (2008). Sorting the truth out from the lies about the explosion of World agricultural prices. *Solidarité*, 18 May. Retrieved from http://solidarite.asso.fr.

Bradsher, K. (2008). A new, global oil quandary: Costly fuel means costly calories. *The New York Times*, 19 January, A1, A19.

Carlsen, L. (2003). The Mexican farmers' movement: Exposing the myths of free trade. *Americas Program Policy Report*, 26 February. Silver City (NM): Interhemispheric Resource Center. www.americaspolicy.org. http://americas.irc-online.org/am/1884.

Daines, V. and Seddon, D. (1994). Fighting for survival: Women's responses to austerity programs. In J. Walton and D. Seddon (Eds.), *Free Markets & Food Riots: The Politics of Global Adjustment*. Oxford: Blackwell, 57–96.

Davis, M. (2001). *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*. London: Verso.

Davis, M. (2006). *Planet of Slums*. London: Verso.

Delva, J. G. (2008). Haiti Hit with New Protests over Food Costs. *Reuters*, 25 August. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/GCAAgflation/idUSN2525843120080825.

Desmarais, A. A. (2007). *La Vía Campesina: Globalization and the Power of Peasants*. London: Pluto Press.

el-Hamalawy, H. (2008). Egyptian strikes: More than bread and butter. *Socialist Review*, May. Retrieved from http://www.socialistreview.org.uk/article.php?articlenumber=10388.

Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2003). *Trade Reforms and Food Security: Conceptualising the Linkages. Rome: FAO Commodity Policy & Projections Service, Commodities & Trade Division*. Retrieved from http://www.fao.org.

Frank, D. (1985). Housewives, socialists, and the politics of food: The 1917 New York cost-of-living protests. *Feminist Studies*, XI, 255–285.

Friedmann, H. (1982). The political economy of food: The rise and fall of the postwar international food order. *American Journal of Sociology*, LXXXVIII Suppl., 248–286.

Friedmann, H. (1987). International regimes of food and agriculture since 1870. In T. Shanin (Ed.), *Peasants and Peasant Societies*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 258–276.

George, S. (1977). *How the Other Half Dies: The Real Reasons for World Hunger*. Montclair, NJ: Allenheld, Osmun.

Ginsborg, P. (2005). *Silvio Berlusconi: Television, Power and Patrimony*. London: Verso.

GRAIN. (2007). *Seedling, July, Agrofuels Special Issue*. Retrieved from http://www.grain.org/publications.

Hansen-Kuhn, K. (2007). Women and food crises: How US food aid policies can better support their struggles. A discussion paper. Washington, DC: Action Aid USA, Retrieved from http://actionaidusa.org/news/publications/food_rights.

Harsch, Ernest. (2008) Price protests expose state faults: Rioting and repression reflect problems of African governance. *African Renewal*, XX, 2, 15–17. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol22no2/222-price-protests.html.

Harvey, D. (2003). *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Holt-Giménez, E. and Kenfield, Isabella. (2008). When 'Renewable Isn't Sustainable': agrofuels and the inconvenient truths behind the 2007 U.S. energy independence and security act. *Food First Policy Brief No. 13*. Oakland, CA: Institute for Food & Development Policy. Retrieved from http://www.foodfirst.org/en/node/2064.

Holt-Giménez, Eric and Patel, Raj (with A. Shattuck). (2009). Food rebellions! Crisis and the hunger for justice. *Cape Town, South Africa*, Oxford, UK: Pambazuka Press; Oakland, CA: Food First; Boston, MA: Grassroots International. Retrieved from http://www.foodfirst.org/en/node/2387.

Howden, Daniel. (2008). Africans unite in calling for immediate moratorium on switch from food to fuel. *Independent*, 16 February. Retrieved from http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/africans-unite-in-calling-for-immediate-moratorium-on-switch-from-food-to-fuel-783011.html.

Hoyos, Carola and Blas, Javier. (2008). West rethinks strategic threats. *Financial Times*, 21/22 June, 2.

Jafri, Afsar. (2008). Food crisis exposes failings of India's economic reforms. *Focus on Trade, No. 140, May*. Bangkok: Focus on the Global South. Retrieved from http://focusweb.org/focus-on-trade-number-140-may-2008.html?Itemid=106.http://focusweb.org/food-crisis-exposes-failings-of-indias-economic-eforms.html?Itemid=161.

Lynas, M. (2001). Selling starvation. *Corporate Watch, VII*, Spring. Retrieved from http://archive.corporatewatch.org/magazine/issue7/cw7cont.html.

Madeley, John. (2000). *Hungry for Trade*. London: Zed Books.

Marx, Karl. (1964). *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. New York: International Publishers.

McMichael, Philip. (2003). Food security and social reproduction: Issues and contradictions. In I. Bakker and S. Gill (Eds.), *Power, Production and Social Reproduction*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 169–189.

McMichael, Philip. (2005). Global development and the corporate food regime. In F.H. Buttel and P. McMichael (Eds.), *New Directions in the Sociology of Global Development*. Oxford: Elsevier, 265–300.

Murphy, Sophia. (1999). WTO, agricultural deregulation and food security. *Foreign Policy in Focus*, IV, 34, 1–4. Retrieved from http://www.fpif.org/pdf/vol4/34ifag.pdf.

Patel, Raj. (2009). What would food sovereignty look like? *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(3), 663–706.

Perkins, John H. (1997). *Geopolitics and the Green Revolution: Wheat, Genes and the Cold War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Polanyi, Karl. (1957). *The Great Transformation*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Reardon, Thomas, Timmer, C. Peter, Barrett, Christopher B., and Berdegue, Julio. (2003). The rise of supermarkets in Africa, Asia and Latin America. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, LXXXV, 5, 1140–1146.

Ritchie, Mark. (1999). The World Trade Organization and the Human Right to Food Security. presentation to the International Cooperative Agricultural Organization General Assembly, Quebec City, 29 August. Retrieved from http://www.wtowatch.org. http:// www.agricoop.org/activities/mark_ritchie.htm.

Rizzo, Sergio and Stella, Gian Antonio. (2007). *La Casta: così i politici italiani sono diventati intoccabili*. Milan: Rizzoli.

Rosenberg, Mica. (2008). Mexican farmers stage protest over US imports. *Reuters*, 31 January. Retrieved from http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id_article= 11050.

Salazar, Carla. (2008). Thousands protest economic policy in Peru. *Associated Press*, 9 July. Retrieved from http://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view_all&address=367x12493; http://www.thefreelibrary.com/CARLA+SALAZAR-a11079.

Saldaña-Portillo, María-Josefina. (2003). *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Schaeffer, Robert. (1995). Free trade agreements: Their impact on agriculture and the environment. In P. McMichael (Ed.), *Food and Agrarian Orders in the World-Economy*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 255–275.

Schuller, Mark. (2008). Haitian food riots unnerving but not surprising. *Americas Program Special Report*, 25 April. Retrieved from http://americas.irc-online.org/am/5186.

Sen, Amartya. (1981). *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Slackman, M. (2008). In Egypt, technology helps spread discontent of workers *New York Times*, 7 April, A6.

Sy, Hamadou Tidiane. (2008). Senegal: Debate rages over whether country faces famine. *AllAfrica.com*, 30 April. Retrieved from http://allafrica.com/stories/200804300061.html (accessed 8 July 2008).

Thompson, Edward P. (1971). The moral economy of the English crowd in the eighteenth century. *Past and Present*, L, 76–136.

Tilly, Louise A. (1971). The food riot as a form of political conflict in France. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, II, 23–57.

Tilly, Louise A. (1983). Food entitlement, famine, and conflict. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, XIV, 333–349.

Tobar, Hector. (2008) Mexican famers protest NAFTA: The last tariffs on U.S. produce end, raising fears of a glut of cheap corn and beans wiping out local agriculture. *Los Angeles Times*, 3 January. Retrieved from http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2008/01/03/6144/.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2005). *The Inequality Predicament: Report on the World Social Situation 2005 [A/60/117/Rev.1 ST/ESA/299]*. New York: United Nations.

Veblen, Thorstein. (1973). *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Vía Campesina. (2000). Bangalore declaration. 6 October, Vía Campesina Third International Conference, Bangalore, India, 3–6 October 2000. Retrieved

from http://viacampesina.org/main_en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53&Itemid=28.

Walton, John and Ragin, Charles. (1990). Global and national sources of political protest: Third world responses to the debt crisis. *American Sociological Review*, LV, 876–890.

Walton, John and Seddon, David. (1994). *Free Markets & Food Riots: The Politics of Global Adjustment.* Oxford: Blackwell.

14
Enter the Land-Grab Riot?

Francis Pakes

Introduction

In their seminal piece *A Political Economy of the Food Riot*, Patel and McMichael (2009) noted a recent reoccurrence of the age-old phenomenon of the food riot. They documented food riots in over 30 countries in 2007 and 2008, including Italy, India, Egypt and Haiti, and they considered both their manifestations and their deeper causes. An obvious proximate cause for these riots was the steep increase in food and other commodity prices that occurred around that time. These increases were passed on to customers and that put in particular the urban global poor under pressure. Patel and McMichael likened these protests to the infamous International Monetary Fund (IMF) riots that took place in the 1970s and 1980s. Walton and Seddon (1994) documented at least 146 of those, in particular in the Global South and in response to austerity programmes adopted by struggling national governments under pressure from the IMF and the World Bank. Patel and McMichael argue that the food riots from around 2007/2008 also find their origin in the influence of these global institutions on developing economies (Patel and McMichael, 2009). These institutions can be, and have been, accused of causing global harm by imposing austerity measures, and the removing wage structures and trade barriers, which eats away at the securities of much of the populations of these developing nations (Friedrich, 2012; Friedrichs and Rothe 2012; Klein, 2007). Patel and McMichael conclude that riots can be framed as important signs of resistance against these institutions and the policies that they impose.

At present, only a few years later, we are witnessing another disturbing transformation of our rural world, something that did not escape Patel and McMichael's attention either. It refers to the large-scale selling

(or long-term lease) of agricultural land to multinationals or other agents. Multinational corporations, foreign governments and, on occasion, other actors are frantically scouring the globe looking for arable land (Pearce, 2012). Typically the land is in the developing world, often but not limited to Africa and South East Asia. Arable land is thought to offer securities when it comes to food production, in particular for finance-rich but resource-poor countries, such as those in the Middle East. Arable land can also be utilised for the cultivation of crops for biofuel, such as palm oil or rapeseed. These crops, grown not for food but to satisfy energy demands, are referred to as 'cash crops'. Land may be acquired for other purposes as well, such as tourism. This can adopt various guises, such as coastal tourist developments, or areas for safaris and/or hunting. Land may be bought or leased because of other riches, such as for the mining of precious metals. Finally, land may be of interest to foreign investors simply for the purposes of financial speculation, rather than to cultivate it. However, the typical scenario is for large areas of land – often tens of thousands of acres – to be leased or bought, after which people are removed, dwellings destroyed and vegetation cleared to make way for monoculture crops, often rice, maize or palm oil. This intensification land use tends to come with increased demands for water and pesticides. Land is frequently fenced off and little use is made of local labour, with farming being industrialised and upscaled.

Oxfam (2012a) has documented the alarming rate at which this occurs. Referring to it as the 'global land rush', it claims that an area the size of London is being sold or leased every six days. Two thirds of these transactions are carried out with the intention of exporting all of the goods produced, be it rice, maize, or palm oil. By now the scale of completed transactions is immense. For example, 30% of Liberia's land has been sold or leased; and in Cambodia, about 60% of all arable land has come into the hands of international developers. Between 2007 and 2010 in South Sudan, more than 26,000 km^2 was sought or acquired, 10% of the country's land mass. In total this land totals the whole of north-western Europe. The Land Matrix Partnership has estimated that 227 million hectares of land has been sold, leased or licensed, a process that has accelerated since the hike in food prices in 2008. The partnership that includes Oxfam and universities in Germany and Switzerland is currently scrutinising over 2,000 separate land deals.

The status of such deals is subject to controversy. To some, the intensification of cultivation is part of a necessary transformation of farming to secure food for a growing global population. From this perspective,

large land deals represent part of the solution. Such transactions are framed as a 'win-win-win' scenario: good for investors, good for locals and good for the world. Certainly within hegemonic organisations such as the World Bank, this is the dominant discourse. On the other hand, many activist organisations operating in the localities where these transactions take place speak of dispossession and displacement, of ecological devastation and loss of biodiversity (De Schutter, 2011; GRAIN, 2007; Oxfam, 2012a, 2012b). Here the discourse is one of neocolonial oppression and of untold social and environmental harm. It is here where these practices are referred to as 'land grabs'.

Land grabs and globalisation

'Land grab' is obviously an emotive term, denouncing the practice as much as labelling it. Oxfam (2012b) lists a number of characteristics that make the term applicable. In the organisation's definition, land acquisitions become land grabs when one or more of the following apply: they violate human rights, particularly the equal rights of women; they flout the principle of free, prior and informed consent; they are not based on a thorough assessment of, or disregard, social, economic and environmental impacts; they avoid transparent contracts with clear and binding commitments on employment and benefit-sharing; they eschew democratic planning, independent oversight and meaningful participation.

Land grabs epitomise some of the contradictions of globalisation, hence global contradictions abound. The aim of many land grabs is for foodstuffs to be transported thousands of miles, frequently to feed a population that already has plenty, whereas little or none of the produce will feed the local, much needier population. In this way, land grabs may enhance global inequalities to systematically deprive local populations from food and take away an ability to be self-sufficient. Land grabs are the result of the neoliberalisation of land. Land is sold or leased to the highest bidder with the least regulated areas being most at risk. Land is increasingly valuable – nature as a source of profit (Fairhead *et al.*, 2012). There are obvious ecological concerns involving issues of biodiversity. Developments in Brazil and Paraguay, for instance, may well eradicate unique ecosystems (Pearce, 2012). Land grabs frequently involve the destruction of biodiversity to make way for monoculture, with an increased need for irrigation, which puts pressure on water supplies and relies heavily on pesticides. Hence the feared negative effects of land grabs stretch well beyond the specific areas that are sold or leased.

There are obvious further threats, such as to traditional ways of life, and rural culture and identity. After all, land represents more than livelihood. Land is a source of identity as usage of, identification with and (custom) ownership of land may go back for generations. Land features in stories of belonging and in fact in many cultures is a protagonist in that. Through storytelling and community events, people's relationship with land is frequently reinforced as it serves to 'root' their identity into the land that the community may have occupied since living memory (Scroggie, 2009). Land represents holy places, burial grounds, and sites of community remembrance and celebration. Unfortunately, land grabs tend to bulldoze, often literally, over such sentiments and over any claim to the land. Thus land grabs do not simply cause displacement but also annihilate significant historical and cultural meanings along the way.

Land grab, appropriation and protest

Although such concerns deserve our full attention on their own accord, the focus of this chapter is on protest. It may be surmised that protests against land grabs will be difficult to discern. There are a number of reasons for this. First, land grabs are on the surface clouded in ambiguity and secrecy, and as such are frequently hardly visible outside the immediate locality. They may be ostensibly legal. This does in fact represent a major problem with land rights frequently being uncodified, unclear or contested (Alden Wily, 2011). National governments in fact frequently actively invite lucrative land deals as a way of generating income. Local governments may have been co-opted into such deals. Local farmers or land dwellers may sign deals, either via coercion or further to promises that may or may not be fulfilled. These deals may involve gagging orders. In addition, as land deals frequently involve large multinational companies or foreign governments, public relations machineries are usually set in operation to soften locals up and to throw critical media and non-governmental organisations off the scent (De Schutter, 2011). In addition, land grabs often involve remote areas with small populations with little access to resources or powerful allies. Thus land grabs, despite the fact that they often involve thousands and thousands of acres, are in fact very easily ignored.

This secrecy therefore allows key protagonists to get away with this practice with less than a minimum of scrutiny. Governments in developing nations can come into some money and justify their actions by pointing to the argument that the transactions will in fact generate both

food and local employment, even though both are frequently demonstrated not to be the outcome at all (Borras and Franco, 2010; Oxfam, 2012a, 2012b). Companies and investing governments will claim to do well by their shareholders and populations, respectively, and point to a narrative of increased food production and of the necessary modernisation of ancient and ostensibly ineffective farming methods. That way, any harm (Bowling, 2011) can easily be swept under the global carpet (De Schutter, 2011).

Rowden (2011) indeed lists a number of countries that actively solicit land deals to take place, aimed at investors from India. They include Mongolia and South Sudan. The latter is offering particularly enticing deals with a promise of no taxes or duties in the first four years. Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya are similarly open for land-grabbing business. With governments soliciting land deals, the probability that those who live on and/or use the land are perceived to be no more than obstacles to be removed increases. They become another example of 'human waste' (Bauman, 2007) or economic refugees – the collateral damage of the neoliberalisation of land.

Slightly to the side of this we can position issues involving so-called 'green-grabbing' (Vidal, 2008). This refers to the sale or lease (in other words the alienation) of land with reference to environmental agendas that may or may not be spurious. As is the case with land grabs, it involves

> extraordinary new range of actors and alliances – as pension funds and venture capitalists, commodity traders and consultants, GIS [Geographic Information Systems] service providers and business entrepreneurs, ecotourism companies and the military, green activists and anxious consumers.
>
> <div align="right">(Fairhead et al., 2012, p. 237)</div>

Fairhead *et al.* (2012) argue that land appropriation with reference to concepts such as conservation and ecology is accelerating, and they refer to new political economies in which the commodification of land in general and that of nature and ecosystems in particular play an increasing role. They and others question how agendas of justice and equity can emerge in such a neoliberally charged context.

These sets of circumstances make systematic scrutiny of what can tentatively be called 'the land grab riot' inherently problematic. Only at the local level in often remote locations does the full scale of the devastation become clear when bulldozers violate burial sites, and state officials

destroy crops and cattle, and burn dwellings to the ground. How is protest enacted in such circumstances?

Interestingly, Patel and McMichael (2009, p. 31) discuss this in light of 'the available repertoire of protest'. It is here where land-grab riots differ from food riots. Food riots mainly concern poor urban consumers of food. Land-grab riots in contrast concern would-be producers of food in rural settings. Rural protests are rather limited by repertoire. Bush (2010), in looking at rural riots in Egypt, argues that we need to know more about the shape that rural protests take, as the more dramatic rioting occurred in cities. Bush argues that rural dissent can be conceptualised as the 'quiet encroachment of the ordinary' (Bayat, 2002; see also Tingay, 2007). Scott (1990) has called this 'infrapolitics', where 'footdragging' and gossip may be used by farmers to counter surveillance and authoritarianism. From this we can conclude that in order to 'see' land-grab protests we need a finely tuned lens.

At any rate, it is clear that land-grab riots – if they exist – have not captured the imagination in a way that food riots and IMF riots have. However, that does not mean that there is no protest. Journalist Pearce (2012) describes some interesting examples, among which the case of an American entrepreneur in Kenya is particularly striking. In the Yala Valley a 45-year lease was signed on 17,000 acres of swamp land for the cultivation of rice and other crops. Locals argue that it has led to their displacement, floods and contamination of water due to farm chemicals. There is also fear for the further disappearance of local livelihoods due to the loss of a swamp that is in use by locals, whereas the ecological damage may be untold. Pearce (2012) reports evictions of villagers from disputed areas and when the entrepreneur, an American man with reputed evangelical zeal turned up, he was allegedly chased away by villagers holding knives.

In Indonesia the story of a land deal involving Dayak communities in 11 villages in Sanggau in West Kalimantan shows the intractable nature of some of these deals. Villagers were encouraged to sign letters of release to surrender their land for a 35-years lease to the company Menara Alfa Semesta. The company intends to use the land for palm oil plantations. Families transferred 7.5 hectares. Of these, 2.0 planted hectares would be returned to the family for oil palm cultivation. Reports now say that the families received no more than 1.2 hectares on average, which is hardly a sustainable amount for a family (Oxfam, note 83). It has also transpired that after the 35-year lease the ownership of the land does not return to those who signed the lease but to the Indonesian state. To put it bluntly, it suddenly emerged that the villagers in fact had

signed away rather more than they bargained for. After seeking ways to address their grievances, local people blockaded the plantation road and demonstrated outside the companies' offices. Several arrests were made and five farmers ended up in jail.

In Cambodia, two stretches of land, both over 9,000 hectares, in Omlaing commune in Kampong Speu were allocated to the Phnom Penh Sugar Company and the Kampong Speu Sugar Company, both owned by Cambodian business tycoon Ly Yong Phat, through a 99-year lease. It led to the displacement of villagers living on and working the land. They were given $25 compensation and were moved to a reset-tlement location. Those with a farm on the land were offered $100. Most, however, refused to abandon their farms but to no avail as the clearing of land took place regardless. According to the Transnational Institute, they did resort to protest but in doing so revealed their limited prowess or repertoire. GRAIN (2007) reports that villagers engaged in arson, throwing stones at drivers of the company's clearing equipment and the barricading of roads. Inevitably, it seems, numerous arrests were made and several of the protesters ended up in prison.

In Maasailand in Tanzania we witness land-grabbing with a different objective: to clear an area for hunting and, to that end, some 20,000 Maasai people were evicted in a rather unceremonious fashion. United Nations rapporteur James Anaya (2010) reported the burning-down of properties, the destruction of crops, the use of tear-gas and a case of rape. He reports:

> Violence was used against village inhabitants. Specifically, one woman was repeatedly raped by a police officer during the eviction process and four others who were pregnant suffered miscarriages, reportedly as a result of the violence which took place during the eviction. Men were chained, beaten, and humiliated in front of their families and fellow village residents. Some individuals, including 16 youth, were detained. In the chaos that ensued, many family members, including children, were separated from one another. At least three children remain missing. The Government has denied that any violence or rape resulted from the evictions and has accused both village residents and journalists of inventing facts related to the evictions.
>
> . . . Despite a sustained campaign on the part of villagers them-selves requesting that the Government address the issues surround-ing the evictions. Additionally, the Government has taken steps to

suppress the efforts of nongovernmental organizations, journalists, and Maasai leaders and villagers to investigate and protect the rights of the Maasai villagers, both with regards to the recent evictions and with regards to the situation of Maasai pastoralists generally. This suppression has taken the form of threats of violence; repression of peaceful protest by women, youth, and elders; and the restriction of journalists' and nongovernmental organizations' entry into the area to investigate the situation.

These cases clearly document protest of sorts. Patel and McMicheal's (2009) argument that protest is limited by the available repertoire clearly applies, with those dispossessed or evicted resorting to a motley array of behaviour in order to make their point, and the impression is that police action usually follows swiftly. The Maasailand example further highlights the relative invisibility of these land grabs as well as the protests against them. As they occur in remote and sparsely populated locations, access to the areas for independent observers and the media can relatively easily be restricted. As a result, popular support for protest is difficult to gain – these are the protests of the have-nots, taking place in the middle of nowhere. In plenty of other places, protest is effectively prevented by regimes simply through fear of punitive action, as has been argued is the case in Ethiopia (Rowden, 2011).

   However, there are signs that protests are gathering force. In Uganda, for example, in 2007, massive protests forced the government to cancel a deal to sell hectares of rainforest to investors for the purposes of palm oil cultivation. The protests disrupted life in the capital of Kampala and involved the looting of Asian shops, Asian companies being seen to be the instigators of the negotiations (GRAIN, 2007). Perhaps where protests become urban, as was the case in Uganda, their visibility and potency grows. Filer (2011) argues that the current land grab involving convoluted leasing arrangements may well produce further rural social unrest and civil disorder. He already sees that the state police have been involved in enforcing the rights of companies operating in rural areas against dissident customary landowners.

   Probably the globally most visible land deal involved the company Daewoo Logistics, which was seeking to obtain land in Madagascar. In 2008 the company announced that it was to secure a 99-year lease on 3.2 million acres (1.3 million hectares) of farmland in the tropical African island state, which was estimated to be almost half of all of the country's arable land (Walt, 2008). The deals particularly involve coastal regions due to their relative flatness and their favourable geographical

position for shipping. It led to widespread protest, not least fuelled by comments attributed to Daewoo representatives that it did not expect to pay for the lease as it argued that the deal should benefit both Madagascar and South Korea (Jung-a *et al.*, 2008). Although the biggest and most eye-catching of such developments, at the same time a company called Varun International based in India also sought to secure over 200,000 hectares of land. However, these developments were vehemently denounced by the opposition. President Ravalomanana's regime was accused of selling off the nation's heritage to foreigners and large-scale protests ensued. Dozens of people lost their lives, with a good number being killed by pro-Ravalomanana forces. In the end a change in government was forced with new man Andry Rajoelina, former DJ and media entrepreneur, taking the presidency in March 2009, with support from substantial factions of the military. The new President soon reneged on these deals (Ploch and Cook, 2012).

Perhaps the land deals did prompt the previous government's demise. Perhaps they didn't, as tensions in the capital were already running high after Rajoelina was elected mayor of Antananarivo in December 2007 and soon the entrepreneur started to emerge as a political rival to Ravalomanana. In 2008, Ravalomanana ordered the closure of a television station owned by Rajoelina after it broadcast an interview with exiled former President Ratsiraka. Rajoelina upped the ante and called for protests after failing to get his television station back on air. A rally in an Antananarivo venue dubbed 'Democracy Square' attracted 20,000 protesters. The protests turned violent in 2008. The state radio building was set on fire, and shops and warehouses were ransacked. By March 2009, Rajoelina had seized power. The subsequently exiled Ravalomanana was sentenced in 2010 *in absentia* for corruption-type charges.

The subsequent period in Madagascar has been characterised by awkward negotiations towards a settlement with the previous regime, and it seems that one or two coup attempts have been suppressed. Both the USA and the European Union called the Rajoelina takeover a *coup d'etat* and suspended aid programmes, as did the IMF, although the World Bank and the African Development Bank continue to provide a degree of assistance. Chronic food insecurity continues to affect much of the population. In fact the country needs to import basic foodstuffs, such as maize and rice. The per capita income is estimated at $460 per year and the country's economy has largely stalled under Rajoelina. It is likely to have missed out on approximately $400 million of foreign assistance since the coup (Ploch and Cook, 2012).

A point to make is that it is impossible to tell whether it was his enthusiasm for handing land to foreign investors that undid Ravalomanana. Either way, the mere fact that land grabs are now at least associated with more powerful protests might just make them more visible and their endorsement therefore politically more risky. So there is a question as to whether the events in Madagascar represent a turning point – at the very least it offers a counternarrative that the tide of land grabs can be stemmed and that popular support can be garnered against them. It seems that appealing to nationalist sentiments can be effective. In the Philippines, a potential land deal involving land on the northernmost island of Luzon that was actively sought by central government was much campaigned against: 'it is prostituting the patrimonial and sovereign rights of all Filipinos,' argued Fernando Hicap, national chairman of Pamalakaya (an action group focused on fishing and other matters). He added: 'This is very, very ridiculous, preposterous and totally insulting to the collective sentiment and national interest of the Filipino public.' All too often, however, these deals are characterised by shady collusions between host nations and investors, where every effort is taken to keep such deals out of the public eye (De Schutter, 2011).

One potential way for individual states to gain a measure of control, at least temporarily is to declare a moratorium on large land deals. Arezki *et al.* (2012) argue that such measures are contemplated or implemented in Argentina, Brazil and Ukraine. While by no means a solution it may buy time to take measures to avoid the wilful squandering of the livelihoods of the peasantry in developing countries. For instance in Papua New Guinea a country where the vast majority of land remains under customary ownership, a moratorium is advocated for large-scale land deals. The question however is what is to be achieved during a moratorium so that land grabs are less likely once the moratorium is lifted.

Within hegemonic institutions, the preferred way forward seems to be to 'tidy up' the realm of land grabs through a code of conduct. In fact the World Bank did recently produce an influential report, *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* (World Bank, 2010). This sets out the hegemonic discourse involving large-scale land acquisitions. The argument is that they should bring both economic and social benefits to all parties (Deininger, Byerlee, Lindsay, Norton, Selod and Stickler, 2011). Although the report acknowledges the risk involved in land deals from a social, cultural and ecological perspective, and it is also clear on the fact that land deals frequently

fail to deliver, the point remains that land deals are presented as the way forward. A conglomerate including the World Bank did suggest seven 'Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment that Respects Rights, Livelihood and Resources' (World Bank, 2010). These include recognition of existing land rights; investment to strengthen not jeopardize food security; transparent processes; prior consultation; respect for rule of law; investments to generate positive social and distributional impacts; and environmental impacts to be quantified and negative impacts mitigated.

Although some advocates for a code of conduct can be identified (Von Braun and Meinzen-Dick, 2009), both the code of conduct approach and the 2011 report have been widely criticised. Murray Li (2011, p. 281) argues that typically such land deals fail to yield local employment and therefore 'any program that robs rural people of their foothold on the land must be firmly rejected'. Zoomer (2010) and Borras and Franco (2010) also argue that a stronger and more powerful pro-poor and human rights-based approach is required. Oliver de Schutter lucidly argues that we do not need to 'discipline' the current land grab. Instead we need to consider alternatives (De Schutter, 2011). McMichael (2009) dismisses the World Bank approach as 'business-as-usual' and argues that global institutional mechanisms will fail to provide sustainable solutions. They will have to come from elsewhere. De Schutter (2011) in fact identifies that codes of conduct cannot possibly achieve this, for several reasons. One is that host nations, and foreign nations and investors, too often share an interest in these deals and also in keeping them from public scrutiny. Furthermore, many host nations, such as Pakistan, South Sudan and Tanzania, even if willing, are unlikely to be able to enforce any restrictions or limitations on land-grabbing due to issues of the state of governance in these states. It therefore remains likely that codes of conduct will struggle to have an impact. De Schutter (2009, p. 275) even dismisses them with a heavy dose of cynicism as 'a checklist of how to destroy the global peasantry responsibly'.

Critique of 'business as usual' is justifiably vehement and lucid. Otto Friedrichs and Rothe, 2012, for instance, talk about the metaphorical rape of developing countries by the global financial institutions, which are more interested in the free flow of money and commodities than in the wellbeing of the population. The biting critique of Naomi Klein in *The Shock Doctrine* (2007) of structural adjustments insisted on by hegemonic global institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, certainly resonates here and reinforces De Schutter's (2009) argument that

codes of conduct are vacuous and no doubt insufficient as instruments for change.

Due to their visibility, importance and global reach, global financial institutions are an obvious and appropriate target for criticism. In addition, however, it is important to look beyond them. In 2011, Chinese lenders overtook the World Bank in investments in Africa. China's lending has been called 'condition-lite' as it does not tend to insist on structural reform. However, it has also been argued that where China finances projects, these are carried out by Chinese companies employing Chinese migrant workers. In that way the 'trickle-down effect' might be close to zero. In addition, there is talk of tensions that the Chinese model of finance and construction has brought. How responsive these lenders would be to enforcing any sort of code of conduct is yet to be seen, but it would be naïve to assume too much in the way of responsible land management without clear conditions.

Conclusion

Let me start the conclusion by emphasising that we should be suspicious of terms such as 'food riot' and 'race riot' because they may feed an appetite to reduce riots and protests to single-issue, one-dimensional phenomena. At the same time, such labels may provide a lens through which to regard a seemingly disparate set of phenomena as related and governed by similar processes. Terms like 'food riots' in fact help to discern global social structure. Land-grab riots can, and perhaps should, play a similar role. We discussed the semantics of the land-grab phenomenon earlier – a heavily laden but also highly effective term to classify a range of transactions, some involving purchase, others lease, some involving governments, others private companies or a combination of the two. Some involve farming, others speculation, whereas yet others are aimed at ecotourism or mining. To apply a single term to transactions of such superficial variety focuses the mind on what they share – their capacity for global harm production. The term 'land grab' classifies, denounces and mobilises. Ben Bowling (2011) is correct when he argues that criminology should be about global systems of harm production. The global land grab can be framed as exactly that, despite noises emanating from hegemonic financial institutions and the tacit or enthusiast embrace of these practices by governments, both local and global, in developing countries. Land-grab riots should be on our radar. They can provide a focal point for the concretisation of that harm. But like IMF riots and food riots, these protests are never about food alone

and, in the case of land-grab protests, probably even less so. They do share important characteristics, though, with food riots and IMF riots, but at the same time they are different. We might perhaps argue that land-grab riots may be seen as a precursor to urban food riots. Many displaced peasant farmers may end up in the city where they may experience new pressures and levels of deprivation. Thus there is a connection between those who riot because their land has been taken from them and those who protest against the IMF austerity measures. They may have been victimised by the same global systems of harm production. Thus land-grab riots, like food riots and IMF riots earlier, are not about land or food alone. They are about land use, dispossession, displacement and an inability to engage with complicit, corrupt or ineffectual governments. These protests can be highly difficult to discern as they almost invariably concern the powerless and the remote. It is likely that those protests that become visible have already been elevated to the national, with protests in major cities, in particular national capitals, and where opponents have adopted a nationalistic framing of events. Rather than removing poor peasants, suddenly land grabs are said to surrender national possessions, and sentiments are aroused to appeal to national pride or, if you will, racist and jingoistic notions within the population. While protests have potency, as we have seen, in most places small protests will remain invisible and will be swiftly and, let's face it, brutally dealt with by the police. But it goes without saying that we need more than that. It remains urgent that a counter-hegemonic discourse gathers pace. Away from agencies in situ – such as Oxfam and GRAIN (e.g. GRAIN 2008) – very few studies appear in which the voice of the dispossessed are heard. No doubt hampered by geographic and language barriers, academia, certainly in the realms of criminology and the sociology of exclusion, are still by and large wanting. Whereas there are the more reflective pieces (of which this chapter is admittedly one), we do need to scrutinise global harm production from above *and* from below. United Nations rapporteurs, global activist organisations and academics alike have an important role in furthering that.

References

Alden Wily, L. (2011). 'The law is to blame': The vulnerable status of common property rights in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Development and Change*, 42, 733–757.

Arezki, R., Deininger, K., and Selod, H. (2012). The global land rush. *Finance and Development*, March 2012, 46–49.

Bauman, Z. (2007). *Human Waste: Modernity and Its Outcasts*. London: Polity Press.

Bayat, A. (2002). Activism and social development in the Middle East. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 1, 1–28.

Borras, S. and Franco, J. (2010). From threat to opportunity? Problems with the idea of a 'code of conduct' for land-grabbing. *Yale Development and Human Rights & Development Law Journal*, 13, 507–523.

Bowling, B. (2011). Transnational criminology and the globalization of harm production. In M. Bosworth and C. Hoyle (Eds.), *What Is Criminology?* (pp. 361–379). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bush, R. (2010). Food riots: Poverty, power and protest. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 10, 119–129.

Deininger, K.W. and Byerlee, D. (2011). *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* New York: World Bank.

De Schutter, O. (2011). How not to think of land-grabbing: Three critiques of large-scale investments in farmland. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38, 249–279.

Fairhead, J., Leach, M., and Scoones, I. (2012). Green grabbing: A new appropriation of nature? *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 393, 237–261.

Filer, C. (2011). The new land grab in Papua New Guinea. Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing, University of Sussex, UK, April 2011.

Friedrichs, D.O. and Rothe, D.L. (2012). Crimes of globalisation as a criminological project: The case of international financial institutions. In F. Pakes (Ed.), *Globalisation and the Challenge to Criminology*. London: Routledge.

GRAIN. (2007). *The New Scramble for Africa*. Retrieved from http://www.grain.org/fr/article/entries/606-the-new-scramble-for-africa.

GRAIN. (2008). *Cambodia: Langrabbing and Hybrid Rice*. Retrieved from http://www.grain.org/article/entries/1659-cambodia-langrabbing-and-hybrid-rice.

Jung-a, S., Oliver, C., and Burgess, T. (2008). *Daewoo to Cultivate Madagascar Land for Free. Financial times*, 19 November 2008. Retrieved from http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6e894c6a-b65c-11dd-89dd-0000779fd18c.html#axzz2ACoXEAvh.

Klein, N. (2007). *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. New York: Random House.

Li, T.M. (2011). Centering labor in the land grab debate. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38, 281–298.

McMichael, P. (2009). A food regime analysis of the 'world food crisis'. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 26, 281–295.

OXFAM. (2012a). *Our Land Our Lives: Oxfam Briefing Note*. London: Oxfam.

OXFAM. (2012b). *Land and Power: The Growing Scandal Surrounding the New Wave of Investments in Land*. Oxfam Briefing Paper 151. Retrieved from http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/land-and-power-the-growing-scandal-surrounding-the-new-wave-of-investments-in-l-142858.

Patel, R. and McMichael, P. (2009). A Political Economy of the Food Riot. Review: *A Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center*, 32(1), 9–35.

Pearce, F. (2012). *The Landgrabbers: The New Fight Over Who Owns the Earth*. London: Random House.

Ploch, L. and Cook, N. (2012). *Madagascar's Political Crisis*. Washington: Congressional Research Service: CRS Report for Congress. Retrieved from http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R40448.pdf.

Rowden, R. (2011). India's Role in the New Global Farmland Grab. GRAIN, Retrieved from http://www.grain.org/bulletin_board/entries/4342-india-s-role-in-the-new-global-farmland-grab.

Scott, J.C. (1990). *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Scroggie, A.M. (2009). Preserving tradition and enhancing learning through youth storytelling. *Journal of Bhutan Studies*, 13, 76–92.

Tingay, C. (2007). *Custodians of the Soil – Land, Rights & Conflict in Egypt*. Bonn: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller

Vidal, J. (2008). The great green land grab. *The Guardian UK*, 13 February. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/feb/13/conservation.

Von Braun, J. and Meinzen-Dick, R. (2009). *Land Grabbing by Foreign Investors in Developing Countries: Risks and Opportunities. IFPRI Policy Brief 13*, April 2009. Washington: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Walt, V. (2008). The breadbasket of South Korea: Madagascar. *Time Magazine*, 23 November 2008. Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1861145,00.html.

Walton, J.K. and Seddon, D. (2008). *Free Markets and Food Riots: The Politics of Global Adjustment*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

World Bank. (2010). Principles for responsible agricultural investment that respects rights, livelihoods and resources. *World Bank with FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD*. Retrieved from http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARD/214574-1111138388661/22453321/Principles_Extended.pdf.

Zoomer, A. (2010). Globalisation and the foreignisation of space: Seven processes driving the current global land grab. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 37, 429–447.

15
Policing the Arab Spring: Discordant Discourses of Protest and Intervention

Roxane Farmanfarmaian

Introduction

On 17 December 2011, when the young Tunisian fruitseller Mohammad Bouazzizi set himself on fire in the dusty town of Sidi-Bouzid, he was neither the first nor the last Tunisian to immolate himself in the months leading up to the Arab Spring (Mirak-Weissbach, 2012, p. xxv).[1] Yet the public harangue he experienced at the hands of a policewoman, the prohibition against peddling his wares (his family's sole source of income) and his subsequent abuse in the local police station were uniquely symbolic (if all too common) of the state of indignity and poverty shared by so many in the Arab world, and the degree of hostility that had developed between the people and the enforcers of order. As demonstrations triggered by the YouTube video of Bouazzizi's self-immolation spread across Tunisia and subsequently rolled across the Arab world, crowds came together not just due to contagion but because of their own particularist histories of authoritarian ill-treatment and exploitation (Joffe, 2011).

Yet, it was the commonality of their demands that was so remarkable: 'dignity', 'social justice', 'citizen rights', 'political participation', 'jobs' and 'global integration' (Beck and Hüser, 2011). These 'universal' rights (Canadian International Development Agency, 1996), were expressed largely by activist and unemployed youth using high-tech media to organise national movements and internationally disseminate their message (Filiu, 2011, pp. 31–33). Indeed, not only the protest slogans themselves but the way in which they were mediated immediately put the lie to the view made popular in the West by Bernard Lewis – that

Arab exceptionalism meant that Arabs and others in the Muslim world could not engage with modernisation or democratic practice (1991; Beck and Hüser, 2011, p. 7). From the vantage point of the West, the protests were likewise understood to echo the language of human rights, and the Western-driven project of liberal democracy and international civil society (Ayers, 2009, p. 7). Only later, perhaps, did it become clear that the demands drew equally from Muslim discourses of good governance: 'consultation', 'consensus', 'delegation' and 'community order' (Lambton, 1971).

As President Ben-Ali fled Tunisia and protesters in Egypt ousted President Mubarak, uprisings surged in Bahrain, Libya, Morocco, Jordan, Yemen and Kuwait. Yet despite the consistently liberal slogans of the largely peaceful demonstrations, the speed and significance of the movement across the region was met by surprise and suspicion on the part of policy-makers in the West. International responses, when they emerged, were remarkable less for their engagement with the legitimacy – and consistency – of protest demands expressed throughout the region than for their tailored approach to the regime being contested. Towards Tunisia's and Egypt's protests, the European Union (EU) and the USA expressed cautious support while remaining aloof and unengaged; in Libya, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) moved to establish a no-fly zone, which eventually enabled the UK, Qatar and France to topple Qaddafi's regime; in Bahrain, the West's silence accompanied a discourse of sectarian and Iranian threat by the Gulf Cooperation Council as the latter's troops intervened to secure its near abroad; in Yemen, the USA, concerned about preserving its anti-terrorism agenda against Al-Qaida, supported mediation by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) that for all intents and purposes preserved the status quo; and in Syria, urgent calls by opposition rebels for help produced United Nations (UN) mediators and observer missions as the sole mode of foreign involvement.

In the wake of a decade in which the principle of the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) had come to represent a shift in the role of international humanitarian norms (Weiss, 2011, p. 287), and in which US hegemony had seemed to definitively establish a universal liberal rhetoric of global civil society (Ayers, 2009), how is it possible that a region-wide uprising that expressed such yearning for good governance and principled humanitarian change would have elicited such varied responses? Indeed, a review of the involvement of external states in the Arab Uprising reveals a realist endeavour to condition the conflict zone to

their own national advantage, with issues of national and international security trumping democratic norm promotion.

It is certainly the case that one of the key international relations dilemmas faced by external state leaders is how and when to respond when protests elsewhere become sufficiently widespread that sovereignty claims in the contest between extant regime holders and popular power develops into an issue of international significance. In the cases of Tunisia and Egypt, the international community faced no such dilemma, as the leaders departed before it became an issue of significance. In Libya, however, the victory of the opposition depended heavily on NATO's intervention, while in Bahrain, outside policing gave the sitting sovereign the upper hand. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly view certification, the 'validation of actors, their performances and their claims by external actors' as 'a powerful selective mechanism in contentious politics' (2001, p. 158). Steven Krasner, in addition, sees such responses as highly discretionary, since 'Norms in the international system will be less constraining than would be the case in other political settings because of conflicting logics of appropriateness, the absence of mechanisms for deciding among competing rules, and the power asymmetries among states' (2000, p. 6; see also Ayers, 2009, p. 6). Yet it is also the case that external states in alliance tended to respond similarly to the Arab Spring; the USA, France and the UK, for example, responded in various ways to each state in the region, but similarly to each other, generally refraining from action that would involve engagement, and hence, policing, with the single exception of Libya.

To better understand the discordance between Western actors' promotion of global liberal rhetoric and their realist practices of promoting national interests, responses are examined within the framework of political opportunity theory to reveal not only bottom-up but also top-down processes that affected the diffusion and contestation of norms within the structure of the international system. In this way the political opportunities that enabled protesters to command the streets in the Arab world, and produce demands that resonated with the international regime of liberal norms, will be contrasted with the simultaneous narrowing of political opportunities available to external state actors, reducing their appetite for liberal norm-promoting policing, and hence for active engagement. As such, it is argued, the very elements that led to the protests, and even successes, of the Arab Spring contributed to international normative changes that meant that a coherent, international supporting response was no longer possible.

The next section will review the theory of political opportunity as an approach used originally to map institutional and ideological openings that are critical to understanding social movements in both domestic and transnational environments (Tarrow, 1989; Wiktorowicz, 2004). It will also discuss more recent developments in conceiving opportunity structures as a top-down means to theorise normative change at the state level with implications for the international system (Adamson, 2005, p. 548).

This will be followed by a section in which discursive opportunities will be highlighted in three stages: the political opportunities capitalised on by the protesters during the Arab Uprising, the mobilising of discourses to mirror international liberal rhetoric in order to create opportunities for support by diaspora groups, international institutions and state decision-makers; and, finally, political opportunities available to external state actors, particularly the US and the EU, the primary promoters of global liberalism. The international interpretation of, and interest in, policing, and liberal norm promotion, can thereby be assessed in light of changes within the political opportunities that are open to outside actors. The concluding section will assess the impact not only on the Arab Spring states and the movements within them, but on changes in international norm promotion, including the principle of the RtoP and the enthusiasm for international policing.

Political opportunity: A multilevel approach

Political opportunity theory first emerged to explain how political protest engaged with structural context, linking agency to openings or narrowings within the political environment (Meyer, 2004, p. 127). In an attempt to understand the way in which social movements gained momentum, experienced cycles and developed tactics of mobilisation around grievances that emerged as a result of change within the socio-political space (such as cuts in pay, banning of political parties or police brutality), the concept of political opportunity gained a thicker meaning within what came to be called a 'political process' approach to explain contention against institutionalised power (Meyer, 2004). For McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, this offered a more dynamic, strategic framework that could include 'how social actors frame their claims, their opponents and their identities' (2001, p. 16). In an effort to avoid the tautological (openings mean action, closings mean none), political opportunity was understood as itself mutable, an exogenous factor that is able to

trigger a variety of responses, or 'repertoires of contention', which in turn affected not only the nature of the social movement but political relationships, and the conditions of possibility for norm change throughout the fabric of society (Meyer, 2004, p. 135; Tilly, 1978). Political opportunity structures can, at their most basic then, be defined as 'generally referring to the nature of resources and constraints external to the challenging group' and how they are socially constructed (Meyer, 2003, p. 19).

As scholarship on activism broadened to include transnational social movements, the concept of political opportunity was extended to embrace the role played by international institutions, international alliances or legal regimes, for example, which taken together provide a superstructure around the national, and exert influence on forces and movements inside it. As Meyer noted in an early treatment of the issue, 'The international setting, and particularly the way in which it intrudes upon domestic politics in different states, is a critical . . . component of the structure of political opportunity' (2003, p. 18). Indeed, how protesters constructed and even created opportunities from below was seen as having its parallel in the way in which states, state alliances and other external actors could construct or change political opportunity structures so as to constrain or encourage national movements from above.

The two are in fact interrelated. For example, when protest groups share social media strategies and techniques across state boundaries to influence public opinion, state leaderships may similarly learn from the others' mistakes, or share information on social media control to police domestic access to the internet. Cyberactivists who met in Beirut in 2008 and 2010, and were supported by outside sponsorship, including Global Voices and the Heinrich Böll Foundation, exchanged ideas and blogging tricks that played a significant part in the ensuing dissemination of video and texts that exposed the riots in Sidi Bouzid to the Tunisian population, as well as elsewhere in the Arab world (Filiu, 2011, p. 49). Egyptian President Mubarak's subsequent effort to stifle social media exchange by shutting down the internet, and Iran's proffering of help to Assad in Syria to control cyberprotest, reflect the interrelated, cross-border responses to political opportunity at both the street and the government levels (*Al-Arabiya*, 2012, 23 May; Nanabhay and Farmanfarmaian, 2011). Social media in this instance becomes a variable site of political opportunity that produces a repertoire of resources for social movement organisers (from below) and for state leaderships (from above).

Extending this variable to the broader international policy level, US President Obama, claiming that the shared cyber capabilities of Iran and Syria against their respective populations was a threat to the national security of the USA, signed an executive order in April 2012 in which the 'malign use of technology' was highlighted as contributing to human rights abuses in both states (*The Guardian*, 2012, 23 April). As a political opportunity structure, social media availability and use become a resource to reflect a range of repertoires by actors at various levels of the international system in an interrelated political process. Political opportunity provides the aperture in which to frame claims, construct the opposition, promote norms and affirm identity. As these are socially contingent across system levels, and since they dynamically impact each other, the political opportunity may provide a variety of responses and outcomes – for example, openings for institutional change (as with the cyberactivists in Tunisia and Egypt), institutional constraints (as for the sitting leaderships of those states) and normative constraints (as on Iran's regional cyberpolicies).

Transporting the concept of political opportunity structures to the system level reveals them to be 'sites of power', which provides a different, arguably more plastic, and possibly more nuanced paradigm than 'anarchy' by which to analyse political behaviour and, importantly, changes in practices and norms, to understand the international system (Adamson, 2005, pp. 553–554). Meyer, in developing a theory of nested politics, views the international context as imbricated in domestic policy responses, and vice versa:

> Looking at international determinants of domestic policy, note that the international system can intrude upon domestic politics suddenly and dramatically, for example, through wars, commodity price shocks, or UN resolutions. Alternatively, long-term patterns of trade or security alliances can alter the political and institutional development of affected states, thereby constraining subsequent government decisions ... These responses affect the international context and shape subsequent state politics, and thus future capacities and responses.
>
> (Meyer, 2003, p. 22)

A critical benefit of such a perspective is that it enables political opportunity structures to be seen to exist at the international system level, and, as such, to be parsed into different categories, albeit ones that are constantly in flux (Adamson, 2005, p. 557).

Geopolitical structures present opportunities related to the distribution of power among states, primarily security, coalition-building, war and policing (Meyer, 2004, p. 21). This provides insight, for example, into the use and role of policing in recent developments in international relations. During the US unipolar moment, the shift of threat from the Soviet 'enemy' to non-state actors opened up opportunity structures to move military operations to the more ambiguous task of policing, especially in emerging and failed states – ambiguous because 'While police and military operations should be consistent with the rule of law and human rights, only the police is dedicated to the spread and enforcement of both' (Dean, 2006, p. 194). Policing, epistemologically linked to civilisation, the maintenance of order, and the management of crowds and social mores, was more consistent with the aims of a hegemonic ideology of promoting democratic norms of justice and civil society, even as it addressed the entire condition of instability plaguing the societies in which they were to be embedded (Caygill, 2001, p. 77; Neocleous, 2011). In this way the geopolitical opportunity that opened up at the end of the Cold War enabled a repertoire of responses that produced policing as legitimated by universal values and at the same time, able to fulfil a strategic (some would say 'imperialist') role of managing exceptional circumstances, with, if necessary, the discretionary use of force (Ayers, 2009, p. 6; Caygill, 2001; Dean, 2006, p. 188).

Institutional structures (transnational movements, international organisations and governmental bodies) provide opportunities for mobilisation and norm-entrepreneurship, both inside and outside the state, as well as capacities for state socialisation (Bob, 2005). Discursive structures offer opportunities to engage with frameworks of meaning, the 'symbolic, cultural and ideational resources that exist in a given environment' and which affect the framing of claims (Adamson, 2005, pp. 554–555). Prior to the Arab Spring, for example, discursive opportunity structures provided few strategic openings for activists in Tunisia or Syria, among others, to frame their discourses in terms of political Islam (not to mention Salafism), the prevailing openings being embedded in frameworks dominated by liberal ideologies – and prior to the end of the Cold War, also by Marxist-Leninist ideology. The shift reflects not so much individual changes in aspirations or moral outlook but changes in discursive opportunities within the international system (Adamson, 2005).

In sum, political opportunity structures, first effectively used to understand the functioning and strategies of social movements, have come to be understood as frameworks that define a broader set of interactions,

including those between rioters and domestic institutions, national protests and transnational movements, domestic policy and international norms, and international institutions and local demonstrators. Political opportunities may offer openings for the development of strategic resource repertoires at every level. They likewise can delineate constraints, or shifts between openings and constraints. Additionally, opportunity openings can actively be created. Equally, opportunities for political action or norm promotion can simply be missed.

The next section will examine, first, key political opportunities available to protestors in the course of the Arab Uprising, and how these sites were used, particularly by Egyptian, Libyan and Syrian protestors, to develop repertoires of contention that appealed to wider discourses of human rights and global integration. Second, the same political opportunities will be analysed in terms of how external powers, specifically the EU and the USA, construed these sites and framed their own strategic repertoires to legitimate national interests and concerns over security. In the conclusion, the international context will be reflected back on the uprisings and their outcomes to better understand the relationship between the two.

Political opportunities in domestic and international contexts

The Arab Uprising has generally been perceived as an economic crisis that translated into a political crisis (Joffe, 2011, p. 517; Mirak-Weissbach, 2012, p. xiii; Pace and Cavatorta, 2012, p. 130). The sudden spike in food prices in 2008, which set off riots in Morocco, Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia, coincided with a rise in energy costs which topped $100 a barrel, due in part to China and India's increase in demand. This was coincident with the worldwide financial crisis, which drastically affected foreign direct investment into the region: Europe, which felt the pinch by the end of 2008, dropped levels of investment in the southern Mediterranean by 35%, while global investment declines in the Middle East and North Africa region reached 21% (FAO, 2008).

The inevitable result was a rise in poverty levels, and a financial squeeze on the middle class, the lower levels of which fell below the poverty line (Lynch, 2012, p. 68). At the same time, Gini coefficients for states that are not rich in resources rose, indicating a growing differential between the haves and the have-nots (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Ortiz and Cummings, 2011, pp. 49–60). These changes, several of which reflected longer-term trends, such as rising

poverty levels, took place in a political environment in which repression had accelerated. Co-operation by Middle East leaders, such as Egypt's Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah, with the US in Global War on Terror, the inclusion of the North African states in the EU's security environment, and the fear of leaders themselves of Islamist politics – whether moderate or extremist – had all contributed to a centralisation of domestic control and increased levels of surveillance. Though market liberalisation had provided the regimes with a modicum of legitimacy in the eyes of the West, justifying ongoing security support on their parts, it was accompanied by little actual democracy promotion or attention to the socio-economic costs incurred (Brynen *et al.*, 2012, p. 5; Joffe, 2011).

These two main factors – reduced living standards and high levels of repression – were a reverse picture of the unspoken but well-understood contract between people and state, commonly known in the literature as the 'authoritarian bargain'. The bargain implicitly guaranteed a level of economic wellbeing in exchange for public loyalty to the regime (Beck and Hüser, 2012, p. 8). The systemic inability of the regimes to deliver economic growth had led to a reduction in legitimacy, leading to social turbulence, which had become a regular feature of the societies in which the Arab uprisings were to have greatest impact (Lynch, 2012, p. 70). Indeed, Lynch argues that rather than constituting the beginning, the Arab Spring represents the culmination of unrest, rioting and protest that began in the 1980s and reached 'tidal wave' proportions in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

In the process, variables such as the level of repression, personal humiliation and economic hardship combined to produce a new discursive opportunity structure in which demands were formulated around social justice and civil identity. In the first stage, and triggered in part by the global financial crisis, the discourses of dignity, jobs, political rights and global integration inspired localised movements that coalesced regionally upon the suicide in Sidi Bouzid. The demands, meanwhile were read widely on the outside as expressions of Western concepts inherent in democracy promotion – liberal constructions of human rights, and civil society, for example. In the second stage, mobilisers in turn capitalised on this overlap as a mechanism to gain legitimacy, connect with diaspora communities and, particularly in Libya, gain international military support. In the third stage, the Western powers can be seen to have responded to the global financial crisis as the source of constraint, reducing their liberal engagement with the normative and structural changes sweeping the region. Indeed, the

financial crisis is interpreted as an opportunity to withdraw from foreign commitments without obvious economic benefit, with important implications for the practice of policing previously understood as a means to contain instability (as in Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan) and hence reduce threat.

Stage 1: Discursive opportunities at the local level

Tarrow (1998, p. 70) divides political opportunities into five categories of variables: (1) stability of alignments within the polity; (2) elite tolerance for division and/or upheaval; (3) constraint or openness in the polity; (4) degree of state repression; and (5) support of allies. Each provides political opportunity within the social movement process, and each movement responds in various degrees to different ones according to their socio-cultural and political-economic resources, and with varying degrees of success. The use of mosques everywhere as sites for Days of Rage, for example, reflected a disalignment between grass-roots Muslim community leaders and government; elite tolerance for division and upheaval was capitalised on in Egypt and Tunisia as demonstrators called on the military to join the movement; Libya, Syria and Bahrain did not present similar opportunities. Constraint or openness in the polity can be seen again to have been an opportunity best taken advantage of in Morocco and Jordan, certainly at the early stages, where monarchical restriction on the use of force prevailed.

The most important political opportunities that distinguished the Arab Spring uprisings from previous waves were three: the degree of repression, the response of allies, and, not included by Tarrow here but certainly in later writings, the influence of mediated transnational discourses (Tarrow quoted in Meyer, 2004).

The 'degree of repression' provided a broad, shared, trans-statal political opportunity that enabled both regional strategic responses and particularist ones. Whether liberal authoritarian, charismatic, monarchist or shadow military, the regimes of the Middle East as a whole were rated by Freedom House as having improved by only 1% in 30 years, 'marking the region as the most authoritarian in the world' (Brynen *et al.*, 2012, p. 4). Populations across the region understood the nature of life, and the privations, experienced by others in the region not because they were Arab, or Islamic, but because they lived under similarly repressive circumstances, and all under authoritarian regimes. In the past 30 years the population throughout the region had doubled, from 175 million to 350 million, with 40% being under the age of 25. Except for

the rich Gulf sheikhdoms, levels of unemployment were similar, along with the youth bulge, the level of youth unemployment, the lack of future prospects and the inadequacy of housing.

Though openings offered by authoritarian regimes were by design arbitrary and ambiguous, the abuse of the populations at the hands of the police and incompetent, government officials was consistent, and the only real contact that citizens had with the regime (Lynch, 2012, p. 68). Indeed policing, the key interface between people and state, which was supposed to offer law enforcement for the protection of the wider community, was in effect lawless (Filiu, 2011, p. 76). Its corruption and violence represented the ultimate degradation of human dignity – and, hence, civilisation.

The anguish, felt regionally through humiliation and shame, added new traction and breadth to the social movements. Anti-regime slogans and grievance-specific complaints had generally marked the strikes and riots that characterised the period leading up to the Arab Spring. Likewise, a range of anti-US and anti-Western rhetoric was typical. Protests tended to link to specific issues, notably government corruption, Islamic tensions and economic issues (bread riots, labour protests), and were framed to contest policy decisions rather than to overthrow the system (Mabrouk, 2011, p. 626).

However, in the years immediately prior to 2011, the tone shifted, marking a new discursive political opportunity emerging from the chaos that repression and economic deterioration were creating. The new 'opening moment' reflected a deepening disgust with the hijacking of the political contract and the norms imbedded within it, a disaffection that populations came to realise was shared across borders, thanks in part to the growing reach of al-Jazeera, al-Arabiya, internet news and other new mediated forms of information exchange (Gourevitch, 1986 in Meyer, 2003, p. 21; Nanabhay and Farmanfarmaian, 2011, p. 580). Brahimi describes the change in protesters' demands as 'post-ideological, rather than being about the politics of Left or Right, socialism or Islamism' (2011, p. 606). The rhetoric did not ape the discourses on human rights, civil society and other liberal mantras, as these had been co-opted and denigrated by the regimes themselves. Instead, the language and meaning drew from social justice paradigms inherent in Islamic moral sensibilities, and from the sense of psychological crisis that regime disrespect had fostered.

In Egypt, for example, the Kefaya ('Enough!') movement was able to coalesce around the insults and frustrations borne of rigged elections and the threat of Mubarak's offspring taking the helm. In 2010 the

'We Are All Khaled Said' movement drew a wide swathe of demonstrators mobilised not through crowd-activism techniques but because of individual responses to a video that went viral of the police beating and killing a blogger who had filmed other police officers confiscating drugs for their own use (Joffe, 2011, p. 521). Filiu argues that 'the murdered cyber-militant became the symbol of the fight against an illegitimate regime whose violence was targeting the most law-abiding kind of opposition' (2011, p. 49).

Contributing to what appeared to be 'leaderless' outpourings into the streets in 2011 – a term incongruent with the purposeful activism, framing and strategising that is normally associated with successful collective action – was a growing individualised alienation, expressed not in a public sphere but in a private or community sphere through social networks linked 'below the radar' (Mabrouk, 2011, p. 627; Meyer, 2004, p. 139; Pace and Cavatorta, 2012, p. 134). The ability of the private sphere to respond to the political openings that seemed almost spontaneously to erupt in mass mobilisation led Leenders and Heydemann to reject the emphasis by social media theorists on 'brokerage', and instead to see 'miscibility', – the interconnectedness of clans, families, tribes or other social networks – as the salient factor in the success of the uprisings (2011, p. 140). Pace and Cavatorta reflect on this rising individual need to create 'their own political power' as an 'anti-politics', if that is understood as 'dissatisfaction with traditional modes of political representation' (2012, p. 134),

In Tunisia, as in Libya and Egypt, 'the unbearable lightness of Arab authoritarianism' was experienced in the disconnect between regime fictions and socio-political reality (Teti and Gervasio, 2011). Post-revolution analysis has revealed that the economic miracle touted by Ben-Ali was based on unreliable statistics, while the liberal economic restructuring had lent itself to plundering and predation by inner elites – a situation analogous to that in Libya and Egypt (Brahimi, 2011, p. 609; Cavatorta and Haugbølle, 2011, p. 184; Kandil, 2012). Poverty in Tunisia, claimed to be 3.8%, 'has now been reassessed at 10 per cent', rising to 30% in disadvantaged regions, such as those around Sidi Bouzid. Additionally, youth unemployment figures have been reset to 30% in 2009, with the rate for higher-education graduates as high as 45% (Hibou *et al.*, 2011, p. 4). Meanwhile, elite corruption of the macroeconomic policies emplaced in the early 2000s to encourage private enterprise and to integrate the Tunisian economy into the world market had reduced economic performance by concentrating vast assets and power in the hands of a kleptocracy, shutting out the participation of the

business classes and seeding not only resentment but despair. In Tunisia, this led to a rise in private Islamic practices, including the proliferation of Qur'anic Associations, and a revival in discourses focusing on Islamic social norms (Cavatorta and Haugbølle, 2011, p. 191).

A similar trend of adopting personal lifestyle choices that constituted private struggle against the norms and practices of the regime were also evident in Syria and Libya (Brahimi, 2011; Leenders and Heydemann, 2011, p. 148). In Syria, particularly in the border towns which constituted the first sites of upheaval and mass demonstrations, the frontier's social networks had contributed to a lifestyle of transborder trading, seasonal work, economic exchange and political debate outside the control of the state, which itself had become a carrier culture of 'trust-generating techniques . . . calculated risk-taking . . . intelligence gathering . . . and concealed communication' (Leenders and Heydemann, 2011, pp. 146–147).

Mabrouk argues that in Tunisia the deep-seated anomie had a dark side, highlighted in a UNDP study which described a growing culture of suicide, particularly among youth and other marginalised sectors, that in the face of regime indifference and deliberate practices of humiliation, disdained life as lacking in any value and increased the readiness to face death. He wrote of the last months before the uprisings (2011 p. 629):

> It was as if the polity had handed over to society the duty of dealing with social problems whilst depriving it of the means by which it could do so, with the result that the individual was left bereft of any moral or social protection against the aggression of the state.

He cites the proliferation of suicides during the protests leading up to the revolution, and explains the self-sacrifice of Bouazzizi in Sidi Bouzid as a social act 'generating meaning' in a discourse immediately understandable not only in Tunisia but throughout the Arab world.

The link between shared political repression, individual dignity and widespread economic despair was fundamental to the way in which Arab publics articulated their protests. Lynch cites Abd el-Wahhab el-Effendi, a Sudanese writer, as observing that 'the revolution was required so that the people *deserved* to have bread in the first place' (el-Effendi in *al-Quds al-Arabi* 14 January 2011, in Lynch, 2012, p. 79, emphasis added). That so many felt that way came as a surprise even to such long-time activists as Mona el-Ghobashy in Egypt, where a more active public sphere of discursive contestation had emerged as a result of

groups such as Kefaya and We are all Khaled Said than in Libya, Tunisia or Syria (Lynch, 2011, p. 89)

Stage 2: Discursive opportunities for mobilisation

Yet mobilisation techniques were not absent in the process of developing protest strategies, structuring common narratives and organising public support. Once the original protests had toppled Egypt's and Tunisia's leaders, and it became clear that others would not inevitably follow, protests in different states and cities took advantage of the political opportunity offered by multiple sites of contestation to adopt common slogans and Twitter handles, march simultaneously on Fridays, and gain hope by watching each other do the same on YouTube, Facebook and al-Jazeera (Lynch, 2012, pp. 68–69, 81).

Local bloggers, regional broadcasters, opposition parties and groups such as unions and human rights offices rapidly understood the utility of the personalised slogans demanding basic rights that coincided with the international rhetoric of liberal democracy promotion. As they moved to capitalise on this new political opening, a new set of tactics was added to the repertoire of contention.

In the first instance, actions on the ground needed to be linked to the rhetoric adopted by diaspora communities located in the West. Not only was diaspora support critical, but the communities represented party organisations, and possible leaders for post-revolution scenarios. Bringing the rhetoric of those at home, and abroad, into harmony was therefore critical. Yet diaspora community discourses did not perfectly match those on the Arab streets, as they reflected not just the shared grievances of their homelands but also political opportunity structures available in their host states. To obtain host state support and ensure legitimacy for their claims, diaspora communities in the West 'played the game' of linking pro-sovereignty goals to democracy discourses (Koinova, 2011, p. 437). Particularly for those located in the West – including Rachid Ghanouchi, head of Tunisia's En-Nahda Party, Mohamad el-Baradei of Egypt and Bourhan Ghalioun of Syria – their own relevance and political survival depended on their developing a repertoire of tactics (discursive and otherwise) that were responsive to the political opportunity structures of global 'liberalism' (Adamson, 2005, p. 557).

Linking the rhetoric of revolution with the language of liberalism centred on simple, powerful themes of 'dignity' (*karama*), 'injustice', 'rights', 'regime thuggery' and 'anti-corruption' – terms able to be

claimed equally by Islamic and liberal narratives, and by local as well as expatriate activists (Beck and Hüser, 2012, p. 8; Brahimi, 2011; Koinova, 2011, p. 441; Lynch, 2012, p. 69). What was significant was the carefully engineered use of references to 'democracy', 'elections' or 'popular rule', which, understood in Islamic social terms, drew on such embedded concepts as consensus, consultation, divine delegation and order. 'Freedom' was often expressed in the negative through the use of 'Leave!' (*irhal!*) – directed against Ben Ali, Mubarak, Qadaffi, Saleh in Yemen, the Khalifas in Bahrain, and Syria's al-Assad. The blurring of these terms in translation enabled an apparent nexus of Arab and Western discourses, and veiled for many Western policy-makers and analysts the underlying Islamic structures, and the Islamic networks that were rapidly capitalising on the uprisings as a source of significant political opportunity.

This loose usage of ideological terms for the sake of creating a shared theatre of revolution, hope and momentum was a product, too, of the media, which linked the outside world and its narratives to events on the ground, and vice versa, providing not only foreign witnesses to the local spectacle but a global spectacular expressed in every form of modern high-tech communication (Nanabhay and Farmanfarmaian, 2011). Expressing demands for change and disseminating them upon the global stage were, for the brief interlude of initial contest and overthrow, such examples themselves of change, that frameworks of meaning were daily refashioned. They included the previously unimaginable (Wikileaks inspiring a sense of community and relief in Tunisia, and Sheikh Qaradawi praying in Tahrir Square), as well as the marginalised (women, Christians, youth, Shia, the unemployed, the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafis), suggesting that the very process of contention itself was rewriting concepts of democracy, human rights, consultation and consensus (Lynch, 2012, pp. 73, 81). With the media (both local and international) becoming deeply involved by taking on the roles of both message and messenger, citizen reporters, protesters and mobilisers attempted to control events through action. However, the discourses of protest were unable to adapt quickly enough to frame 'the inchoate ideas behind them', and thus 'action became increasingly violent, independently of the volition of the groups concerned' (Mabrouk, 2011, p. 631).

The threats inherent in using the political opportunity opened up by the apparent mirroring of Islamic and liberal discourses were significant in that they risked encouraging Western meddling. The reasons why this constituted such a threat fall into two general categories.

First, the devastating heritage left by the war in Iraq had inexorably imprinted a discursive shadow in the pairing of the Bush administration's emphatic drumbeat diplomacy on spreading 'democracy' and 'freedom' with pictures of Abu-Ghraib prison, bombings at mosques and urban chaos. A poll of Jordanian university students in 2005 showed 31.7% associating democracy with colonisation and 24% with killing; over 90% associated the world 'terrorism' with the USA (al-Jarrah and Cullingford, 2007, pp. 19–20). Unquestionably, rejection of Western liberal paradigms of democracy was a critical element in the Arab Uprising.

Second, the long-term destructive impact of liberal economic restructuring mechanisms designed to modernise their economies, but which instead promoted crony-capitalism while disenfranchising the poor and middle class, was among the most concrete drivers of the revolutions – particularly in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya (Pace and Cavatorta, 2012, pp. 129–130). Debates, whether online, in public cafés in Egypt, in sit-ins and strikes in Jordan and Morocco, or more privately elsewhere, denounced Western-controlled financial entities such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and particularly the EU, itself in financial crisis and no longer able to claim itself as a model. No longer willing to be submissive in the face of moralistic US laudatory support of the economic reforms carried out by authoritarian leaders, protesters adamantly denounced any further US or European liberal economic involvement, as the Arab experience was the testament that such ideas did not work (Kandil, 2012; Lynch, 2012, p. 63; Pace and Cavatorta, 2012, p. 131).

Yet, as February 2011 moved into March and beyond, it became increasingly apparent that the wave of uprisings that had toppled Mubarak and Ben Ali were not inevitably going to enjoy success elsewhere, and, particularly as regimes such as Libya's, Bahrain's and then Assad's began to fight back, the shared discourse created a new political opportunity. Activist mobilisers, drawn from existing party structures such as the Muslim Brotherhood, or newer formations such as bloggers and diaspora leaders, became more visible and took advantage of the shared rhetoric as a means to engage the West in becoming more muscular in certifying protesters' sovereign rights, and further, helping those in particularly lethal regimes to avoid wholesale killing. Liberal concepts of civil society, self-determination and human rights were discourses that fed into Western concepts of intervention, such as policing, a means for global society to protect victims of violence while safeguarding civilisation (Neocleous, 2011, p. 148). Policing, unlike war, was directed at

the containment of turbulence and civil instability – a limited response whose object was not an enemy per se, but in Caygill's formulation, a *condition* (2001, p. 77). Indeed, NATO had already shifted its mission in the course of the 1990s from being a military alliance to a police organisation tasked to manage turbulence – a state of affairs increasingly viewed as the main threat to the interests and security of its members. This applied even (or perhaps especially) if the origins of the condition lay outside the immediate NATO area (Caygill, 2001, p. 78). In both Kosovo and Iraq, the blurring of military and police operations had rendered ambiguous the war aims and objectives, plunging the international community into normative debates about the RtoP, and made UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, a strong proponent, alert to a clear opportunity to embed the principle (Bellamy, 2011, p. 263).[2]

As protests in Libya turned violent, and the initial gains of the Benghazi demonstrators were rebuffed by Qadaffi's use of aerial power and land mines, Libyan protesters, as well as the members of the National Transition Council (NTC) which had been set up within a month of the rebellion, called for international help, using discourses of human rights and international law (see, e.g., Human Rights Watch, 16 March 2011). On 9 March 2011, France recognised the NTC as the rightful representatives of the Libyan people, offering the much prized certification for the sovereign claims of the population against the Qadaffi government. The same day, the Gulf Cooperation Council accused Qadaffi of human rights violations, a statement that elided their own practices, as discussed below, but was significant in gaining UNSC buy-in. Yet it was the calls for support and help coming from the opposition inside Libya that were spotlighted in media both inside and outside the region as most critical. In an article by Saudi-based *Arab News* reporting these developments, for example, a key element was a description of a desperate Libyan fighter supplicating the international community to act. 'Mahmoud Ibrahim, a retreating rebel in his late teens, wept and called on US President Barack Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron to intervene. "Where's Obama? Where's Cameron? Tell Obama to help us" ' (10 March 2011).

When on 16 March the UN sanctioned a NATO no-fly zone, supporters of RtoP viewed it as a symbolic frame of meaning in which the international community had responded not just to the needs of Libyans but to the political opportunity sought by international norm entrepreneurs to ensure that 'sovereignty is no longer sacrosanct' (Weiss, 2011, p. 289). Further, in this view, it would show definitively that the

use of armed force to protect human lives was not in fact a ruse for Western imperialism.

An alternative view relates to the political opportunity offered by the Libyan uprisings – nested in the successful Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings – as instead accounting for European and US reassertion of realist national agendas in the region. For France and the UK it constituted an opening to establish security control over the western Mediterranean based on motivations that their publics would support, and on calculations that intervention would hand the rebels a useful victory (Koga, 2011, p. 1146). This was an opportunity to recement the south-western Mediterranean community to the north, a community that the EU still reserved for itself the right to define and, hence, police. Indeed, using military intervention as policing to protect the norms of the international community and civilisation links to the idea and practice of imperial power, and effectively characterises those regimes and forces that threaten that community as criminal (Dean, 2006, pp. 198, 200).

Thus, for the West, it offered a political opportunity to rid itself of a dictator-'friend' who was even more unscrupulous and humiliating than Saddam Hussein had been. In responding to the invitation by the NTC to intervene, with the corollary support of the GCC and the Arab League (a stipulated requirement by the USA but also Russia and China to gain their co-operation), the members of NATO (and later, specifically, France and Britain) employed a variety of repertoires that served their own national interests as surely as any commitment to enshrine the international principle of RtoP (Bellamy, 2011, p. 266).

Two developments help to put that claim into relief. Within weeks of what turned out to be a longer and more violent engagement than NATO had anticipated, the USA reduced its role, responding to opportunity constraints upon its own budget, and credibility over-reach in the wake of its two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to place the cost and policing responsibility on Europe. If the USA had initially supported the intervention on the conviction that liberal norm promotion required action, its choice to 'lead from behind' reflected the primacy of national interest, which for the USA did not lie in policing the western Mediterranean, nor in the wholesale underwriting of NATO's mission to do so (Jaffe and Birnbaum, 2011, *Washington Post*).

The other development, more revealing still of the trumping of realist national interest over the promotion of liberal norms, occurred in Bahrain just days before the Libyan intervention, when an opportunity

for the West to support demonstrators suffering similar strife was interpreted as constraint. With the US Fifth Fleet based in Manama, Bahrain, the violence of the police against the demonstrators was understood not in the discursive terms of anti-corruption and human rights (as in Libya) but according to the discourse promoted by the Sunni al-Khalifa monarchy, and backed up by the Gulf Cooperation Council. That discourse, which produced the justification for the GCC's Peninsula Shield Force to send in troops to destroy the Pearl Roundabout – the gathering ground of the demonstrations – and, equally, to enable Saudi Arabian police to take over and manage the 'condition' of turmoil, highlighted the threat of Iran as the instigator of sectarian conflict, and demonised the Shia as a Fifth Column.

Though the crackdown in Bahrain can be counted among the more brutal of the events in the Arab Uprisings, and constituted the first real reversal encountered by the movement, the international community largely looked away (Lynch, 2012, p. 111). With a monarchy unrelentingly referred to as moderate in US political discourse, and supported by the West's own strongest regional allies – Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, themselves anxious to take on the task of intervention – the situations in Bahrain and Libya were perceived from the outside as radically different opportunity structures.

Stage 3: Discursive opportunities as international constraint

For the USA and the EU, the timing of the Arab Spring coincided with their own significant financial meltdowns. With the Euro at risk, employment in freefall, debt levels soaring and banks on both sides of the Atlantic soaking up bailout funds, strategic repertoires shifted, and generous underwriting of global civil society programmes and democracy promotion were no longer perceived as the political opportunities that they had been. Domestic populations were uninterested in foreign adventurism, unless it was to retaliate against specific acts of terrorism, which were spectacularly absent during the Arab Spring. Reducing the US footprint in the Middle East became the mantra of the Obama administration, not just in withdrawing troops from Iraq but in cutting funding (in 2009, even before the Arab Spring) for such liberalist programmes as the US Middle East Partnership Initiative, which had promoted women's rights, liberal civil society and other programmes 'to support the expansion of political opportunity throughout the Middle East' (US Department of State Fact Sheet, 2003).

The outline of US policy regarding foreign aid and investment was laid out by the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, in October 2011, when she stated: 'Our problems have never respected the dividing lines between global economics and international diplomacy,' which is why, she explained, she put 'economic statecraft...at the centre' of US foreign policy (Katz, *The Guardian*, 12 January 2013: 'Review' 21). For the USA, therefore, political opportunity was understood in terms of economic opportunity, while foreign policy focused on security and national objectives. In the wake of the Arab uprisings, the Middle East and North Africa offered neither significant investment opportunities for the USA (with the exception of the oil-rich Gulf) nor openings for norm entrepreneurship. The liberal movement in the distribution of global power had receded with the recession (Weiss, 2011, p. 289).

In fact, democracy promotion had already lost some of its appeal as a contributor to democratic peace and security during the second Bush administration, which had been put off by the success of Hamas at the polls in Gaza in 2006, as well as the fiasco of policing Iraq (Brynen *et al.*, 2012, pp. 5–6; Lynch, 2012, p. 63). In contradistinction to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's statement in June 2005 in Cairo that US insecurity stemmed from an overemphasis on stability rather than democracy, an idea picked up by President Obama in the same city four years later, building civil society on foreign territory was never part of 'the US dialectic of economic presence and political absence in international affairs' (Dean, 2006, p. 199; Obama, 2009; Rice, *BBC News*, 2005, 20 June). The European normative approach to foreign relations through shared values had likewise been narrowed during the previous decade by security and migration concerns (Joffe, 2008). This trend, combined with the constraints placed on the NATO operation as a result of the global financial crisis, led the French President Nicholas Sarkozy, and British Prime Minister David Cameron, to strategise the political opportunity of ridding Libya of Qaddafi as an in-and-out operation without a concomitant repertoire of nation-building or long-term policing to reduce turbulence and emplace the rule of law. In this scenario, subsequent instability on the ground was deemed less threatening than domestic outrage over economic overstretch and costly risk-taking. Indeed, although the NATO operation in Libya represented an institutional opportunity for the UN to set a new precedent of authorising RtoP without host state consent, it was equally an opportunity for the states involved to instrumentalise a constraint on the principle by rewriting the commitment to policing the society thereafter (Bellamy, 2011, p. 264).

Conclusion: Discordant responses to shared opportunity structures

Political process analysis has expanded the conceptual reach of social movement theory in elaborating the multiple repertoires of response that can materialise when political opportunities are signalled by governments, or discovered or created by activists. This has led not only to a clearer understanding of the variables at play domestically but also to their linkages to transnational movements, international norm regimes and state policy as the context. More recently, political opportunity theory has been advanced as a useful mechanism for understanding not only bottom-up but also top-down processes of, for example, norm entrepreneurship, to explain changes in the international system (Adamson, 2005; Meyer, 2004). What has, until now, not been explored, but which the discursive political opportunities of the Arab Spring made clear constituted part of the same investigation, was the discordance between the two, and the variance in the nature of the response at different levels of international society to the same political opportunity structures – in this case, those unleashed by the global financial crisis.

The uprisings that responded to the economic malaise triggered by the financial downturn and subsequent economic crisis drew on individualised, networked and local vocabularies and discourses of political contestation. As these translated into large, mass demonstrations and gained media attention and political success, protest leaders capitalised on the benefits of linkage to larger transnational and diaspora discourses of human rights, justice and civil society. As local government responses turned more violent, opposition discourses used the internationalisation of their message to engage outside actors as witnesses (through the media) and as wielders of protective policing. The responses of the latter, however, were discretionary, based on their own interpretation of how scant resources, reduced by the financial crisis, could best be used to promote their own interests.

On all counts, Libya appeared to be an ideal case for solidifying the principle of RtoP, offering both political and geographical opportunity for the best return: a shortish intervention, and no requirements for nation-building or policing. On that basis, neither Bahrain nor Syria were interpreted as promising. Indeed, with US foreign policy placing increasing emphasis on economic opportunities over political, and with the EU following suit, the likelihood of outside policing in the region lessens, leaving those in the region's bottom-up agency to create, or respond to, political opportunities on their own terms.

Notes

1. In this chapter, Arab Spring and Arab Uprising will be used interchangeably and will refer to the wave of regional protests, demonstrations and opposition outpourings that began in December 2010 with the purpose of fundamentally changing the nature of rule. Each term reflects different preferences: Arab Spring is commonly used in the West but is viewed as discriminatory in the Arab world. Arab Uprising is more commonly accepted in the region itself but is less recognisable in the West. See Rami Khouri (2011), Spring or Revolution?, *The Globe and Mail, 18* August; www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/arab-spring-or-revolution/article626345/.

2. The principle of the RtoP, formulated in 2001 by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, emerged from the inaction of international organisations or great powers in the face of the Rwanda genocide, and the implications that this had for the leadership of the then UN secretary general, Kofi Annan. On 14 September 2009, the UN General Assembly passed A/RES/63/308, adopting the norm of RtoP. See www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/component/content/article/35-r2pcs-topics/2626-un-resolution-on-the-responsibility-to-protect.

References

Adamson, Fiona B. (2005). Global liberalism versus political Islam: Competing ideological frameworks in international politics. *International Studies Review*, 7(4), 547–569.

Alex J. Bellamy (2011) 'Libya and the Responsibility to Protect: The Exception and the Norm', *Ethics & International Affairs*, 25, pp. 263–269.

Al-Arabiya (2012). Iran confirms sending troops to Syria, says bloodshed otherwise would be worse 23 May. Retrieved from http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/05/28/217014.html.

Al-Jarrah, Abdallah and Cullingford, Cedric. (2007). The concept of democracy: Muslim views. *Politics*, 27(1), 16–23.

Arab News. (2011). GCC Blasts Qadaffi gov't as illegitimate. 10 March. Retrieved from www.arabnews.com/node/370698.

Ayers, Alison J. (2009). Imperial liberties: Democratisation and governance in the 'new' imperial order. *Political Studies*, 57(1), March, 1–27.

Beck, Martin, and Hüser, Simone (2012) 'Political Change in the Middle East: An Attempt to Analyze the "Arab Spring"', GIGA Working Paper 203, Social Science Research Network, August 31; http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2145853

Bob, Clifford. (2005). *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media and International Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brahimi, Alia. (2011). Libya's revolution. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 16(4), December, 573–604.

Brynen, Rex et al. (2012). *Beyond the Arab Spring: Authoritarianism & Democratization in the Arab World*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers).

Cavatorta, Francesco and Rikke Hostrup Haugbølle. (2011). The end of authoritarian rule and the mythology of Tunisia under Ben Ali. *Mediterranean Politics*, 17(2), 179–196.

Caygill, Howard. (2001). Perpetual police?: Kosovo and the elision of police and military violence. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 4(1), 73–80.

Canadian International Development Agency (1996). *Government of Canada Policy for CIDA on Human Rights, Democratization and Good Governance*, Retrieved from www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/REN-218124821-P93.

Dean, Mitchell. (2006). Military intervention as 'Police' action? In Markus D. Dubber and Marian Valverde (Eds.), *The New Police Science: The Police Power in Domestic and International Governance*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 185–206.

FAO Economic and Social Department (2008). Part II: World food and agriculture in review. *The State of Food and Agriculture 2008*, FAO (Rome), 103–105.

FAO Food Price Index (2011). *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*. Retrieved from www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/wfs-home/foodpricesindex/en/.

Filiu, Jean-Pierre (2011). *The Arab Revolution: Ten lessons from the democratic uprising*, Oxford University Press.

Hibou, Béatrice, Meddeb, Hamza and Hamdi, Mohamed. (2011). *Tunisia after 14 January and Its Social and Political Economy, The Issues at Stake in a Reconfiguration of European Policy*. Copenhagen: European-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, Fonds D'Anayse des Sociétés Politiques. June, Retrieved from www.euromedrights.org/files/exe_Ra_tunisie_En_150Dpi_847268817.pdf.

Human Rights Watch (2011). Libya: Benghazi Civilians Face Grave Risk. 17 March, Retrieved from http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/03/17/libya-benghazi-civilians-face-grave-risk.

Jaffe, Greg and Birnbaum, Michael. (2011). Gates rebukes European allies in farewell speech. *Washington Post*, 10 June.

Joffe, E.G.H. (2008). The European Union, democracy and counter-terrorism in the Maghrib. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 46(1), 147–171.

Joffe, E.G.H. (2011). The Arab spring in North Africa: Origins and prospects. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 16(4), December, 507–532.

Kandil, Hazem. (2012). Why did the Egyptian middle class march to Tahrir Square? *Mediterranean Politics*, 17(2), 197–216.

Katz, Jonathan. (2013). On the third anniversary of the Haiti earthquake. *The Guardian*, 'Review', 21.

Khouri, Rami (2011). 'Spring or Revolution? *The Globe and Mail*, 18 August; HYPERLINK "http://www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/arab-spring-or-revolution/article626345/" www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/arab-spring-or-revolution/article626345/

Koga, Jun. (2011). Where do third parties intervene? *International Studies Quarterly*, 55(4), 1143–1166.

Koinova, Maria. (2011b). 'HYPERLINK "http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/51495/1/WRAP_Koinova_S0260210510000252a.pdf" Can Conflict-Generated Diasporas be Moderate Actors during Episodes of Contested Sovereignty? Lebanese and Albanian Diasporas Compared,' Review of International Studies, Vol. 37, No.1, pp. 437–462.

Krasner, Stephen. (2000). *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Lambton, A.K.S. (1971). *State and Government in Medieval Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Leenders, Reinoud and Heydemann, Steven. (2011). Popular mobilization in Syria: Opportunity and threat and the social networks of early risers. *Mediterranean Politics*, 17(2), 139–160.

Lynch, Marc. (2012). *The Arab Uprisings: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*. New York: Public Affairs.

Mabrouk, Mehdi. (2011). A revolution for dignity and freedom: Preliminary observations on the social and cultural background to the Tunisian revolution. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 16(4), December; 625–636.

McAdam, Doug, Tarrow, Sidney and Tilly, Charles. (2001). *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meyer, David S. (2003). Political opportunity and nested institutions. *Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural and Political Protest*, 2(1), 17–35.

Meyer, David S. (2004). Protest and political opportunities. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30, 125–145.

Mirak-Weissbach, Muriel. (2012). *Madmen at the Helm: Pathology and Politics in the Arab Spring*. Reading, UK: Ithaca Press.

Nanabhay, Mohamed and Farmanfarmaian, Roxane. (2011). From spectacle to spectacular: How physical space, social media and mainstream broadcast amplified the public sphere in Egypt's 'Revolution'. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 16(4), December, 573–604.

Neocleous, Mark (2011). 'The Policing of Civilization: The War on Terror as Civilizing Offensive', *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 5(2); pp. 144–159; June.

Obama, Barak. (2009). Text: Obama's Speech in Cairo. *New York Times,* 5 June.

Ortiz, Isabel and Cummings, Matthew. (2011). Income inequality: Below the bottom billion. UNICEF Social and Economic Policy Working Paper, April. Retrieved from www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Global_Inequality.pdf.

Pace, Michelle and Cavatorta, Francesco. (2012). The Arab uprisings in theoretical perspective – an introduction. *Mediterranean Politics*, 17(2), 125–138.

Rice, Condaleeza. (2005). Rice calls for Mid-East democracy. *BBC News* Retrieved from news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/4109902.stm.

Tarrow, Sydney (1989). Struggle, Politics, and Reform: Collective Action, Social Movements and Cycles of Protest (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press).

Tarrow, Sidney. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, Charles (1978). *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York: McGraw Hill Publishing Co.)

Teti, G. and Gervasio, G. (2011). The unbearable lightness of Arab authoritarianism: Lessons from the Arab uprisings. *Mediterranean Politics*, 16(2), 321–327.

The Guardian. (2012). Obama announces crackdown on Iran and Syria's cyber oppressors. 23 April. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/apr/23/obama-crackdown-cyber-oppressors.

US Department of State (2003). *Fact Sheet US-Middle East Partnership Initiative*, 18 June.

Weiss, Thomas G. (2011). RtoP alive and well after Libya. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 25(3), Fall, 287–292.

Wiktorowicz, Q. (Ed.) (2004). *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indianapolis University Press.

16

From #Occupy to #IdleNoMore: Rethinking Space, Settler Consciousness and Erasures within the 99%

Konstantin Kilibarda

Recentring postcolonial imaginaries in North America: Putting theory into practice through #decolonize

Postcolonial theory has been a relative latecomer to the cloistered world of international relations (IR). In 2002, Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair's edited volume *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations* and LHM Ling's *Postcolonial International Relations* both marked an important turn towards interrogating the ethnocentric, imperialising and racialised geographies of IR's mainstream (see also Agathangelou and Ling, 2009; Doty, 1996; Grovogui, 2009; Henderson, 2007; Jones, 2006; Shilliam, 2011; Vitalis, 2010). A similar scholarship has emerged within nationality and citizenship studies in Canada (Bannerji, 2000; Razzaq, 2002; Thobani, 2007) and among indigenous scholars who directly challenge the problematics of sovereignty, racial formation and territorial consolidation as they relate to Anglo-American settler states (Amadahy and Lawrence, 2009; Anderson, 2001; Lawrence, 2004; Lawrence and Dua, 2005; Shaw, 2008; Smith, 2005; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

What these academic interventions achieve is the rendering of a radically different global geography, enabling scholars to reimagine the world's remaining settler colonies in both precolonial and postcolonial terms. This echoes the project that #decolonize forwarded on the streets by drawing attention to the unceded, stolen and occupied nature of North American lands themselves (Montano, 2011; Yee, 2011). In fact, #occupy's elision of these themes is echoed in IR's own

silence concerning the string of broken international treaties between indigenous peoples and North American settler states, including acts of direct dispossession and the multiple genocides that this process entails. Such silences serve to naturalise and reproduce tenuous claims to US and Canadian territorial integrity and sovereignty. The failure of the US and Canadian governments to ratify the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples underscores the legitimacy of indigenous claims to unceded lands, waterways, forests and mountain ranges across North America. Indigenous understandings of the global therefore draw pointed attention to the unfinished business of decolonisation, simultaneously rupturing the assumed coherence of the North American nation space through appeals to both international law and to a growing transnational network of indigenous alliances (Shaw, 2008). Additionally, indigenous scholars and activists often go beyond simply challenging the legal foundations of the settler state by problematising and reimagining concepts such as self-determination, sovereignty, property, democracy, gender/sexuality, pluralism and nationhood as well (Nation to Nation Conversations, 2013).

The #decolonize effort within #occupy therefore, represents only a small fragment of these broader struggles, attempting to take these indigenous critiques directly into #occupy encampments, thereby providing an important case study of not only how theory becomes translated into everyday practice but also how social movements themselves can sometimes be reshaped by prefigurative contestations from within. Existing social movement theory has already drawn our attention to issues of resource mobilisation (McCarthy and Zald, 1979), opportunity structures (McAdam *et al.*, 1996; Tarrow, 2011), and the importance of social networks, repertoires of contention and common cultural/identity/representational frameworks in building sustainable movements (Della Porta and Diani, 2006; Tilly, 2004). Below I mainly focus on the last of these social movement considerations by examining how #decolonize attempted to transform the organising frameworks that guide everyday practices at the three #occupy sites considered.

#Decolonize Canada: Recentring indigenous self-determination on Turtle Island as foundational

Jessica Yee, a Mohawk organiser with the Native Youth Sexual Health Network in Toronto, succinctly summarised indigenous critiques of #occupy's framework in late September 2011: 'There's just one problem:

THE UNITED STATES IS ALREADY BEING OCCUPIED. THIS IS INDIGE-
NOUS LAND. And it's been occupied for quite some time now' (Yee
2011). John Paul Montano, a Nishnaabemwin language instructor,
echoed this point in a widely circulated 'open letter' to the #occupy
movement:

> I am not one of the 99 percent that you refer to. And, that saddens
> me. Please don't misunderstand me. I would like to be one of the
> 99 percent . . . I had hoped that you would address the centuries-long
> history that we indigenous peoples of this continent have endured
> being subject to the countless '-isms' of do-gooders claiming to be
> building a 'more just society,' a 'better world,' a 'land of freedom'
> on top of our indigenous societies, on our indigenous lands, while
> destroying and/or ignoring our ways of life.
>
> (Montano, 2011)

In spite of centuries of genocidal policies targeting indigenous lands,
belief systems and bodies, indigenous communities have repeatedly
managed to successfully resist the same capitalist system that #occupy
began challenging in 2011 (Smith, 2005). This history of struggle is espe-
cially significant in the Canadian context, since prior to #occupy one
of the most common uses of the term 'occupy' by the media was to
describe indigenous peoples' resistance to state appropriation of their
unceded and treaty-defined lands.

In fact, since the mid-1960s, indigenous communities across Tur-
tle Island have increasingly sought to reclaim traditional territories by
blockading bridges, railways and roads; physically reoccupying their
lands; directly confronting extractive industries operating on their terri-
tories; organising boycotts and public information campaigns; reclaim-
ing educational, cultural, social, scientific and linguistic knowledge; and
staging sit-ins and hunger strikes before federal and provincial legisla-
tures, and government offices (Johnston, 2005). As a result, indigenous
organisers have faced the full force of Canada's state-security apparatus,
including police violence; extrajudicial executions; military interven-
tion; Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Canadian Security and Intel-
ligence Service surveillance; mass arrests; and paternalistic government
interventions into community governance (Pasternak, 2011). Not only
have indigenous communities managed to mobilise support for their
struggles in spite of this repression but they also continue to win impor-
tant victories (including recent challenges to TransCanada's Keystone
XL and Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipelines).

Unfortunately, these indigenous experiences of resistance to the same forces that #occupy seeks to confront appear to have been lost on many. An examination of the 39 Facebook pages and websites that claimed to represent #occupy initiatives in various Canadian cities revealed that most failed to acknowledge the (often unceded) indigenous territories on which they were being organised. Only #OccupyWinnipeg initially adopted a statement of unity in which indigenous sovereignty was foundational to its analysis (2.6% of the sample), while only six websites even addressed the issue (15.4% of the sample). Of course, such a sampling is an imperfect reflection of the important work done at various #occupy sites to correct these erasures. However, for a movement whose organisational basis was heavily dependent on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and blogs, the omissions were telling. In response, a number of alternative online forums such as Occupy(ed) Canada and Decolonize Vancouver emerged to correct the situation.

Beyond social media, the experience of those attempting to shift the #occupy discourse on the ground towards a #decolonize framework was often difficult and strained. However, through sustained interventions by indigenous organisers and allies, initially hostile attitudes towards indigenous sovereignty shifted over time. Liisa Schofield (2011) of the Stop the Cuts anti-austerity campaign in Toronto notes the non-linear ways in which these shifts occurred:

> in the beginning there were tensions about the constant representation of Canadian nationalism in symbols and the way people talked about Occupy. But then it morphed into Indigenous folks leading off the [General Assembly (GA)] every night and people somewhat problematically/tokenistically engaging (in my opinion – again, from outside). Then it morphed again into Indigenous folks defending the sacred fire, and not engaged as much in the GA's.

The permutations were telling of the shifting dynamics at Toronto's St. James' Park. An important workshop entitled 'Race, Colonialism and the 99%' in early November helped to stimulate more concrete discussions about decolonising Toronto's #occupation (Nielsen *et al.*, 2011). Such interventions appeared to bear fruit, as #OccupyToronto's one-month anniversary, on 12 November 2011, was celebrated with a 'de-Occupy' march (ibid.). Rebeka Tabobondung (2011), publisher at *MUSKRAT Magazine* and a member of the Wasauksing First Nation, noted the positive impact that some #occupy organisers played in shifting the terms of debate in Toronto:

a real effort was made on the part of several Occupy organizers and Indigenous Sovereignty Week allies to ensure there was space for Aboriginal voices to be included. They even offered us tobacco as speakers, a gesture that was greatly appreciated and in my experience not common working with Non-Aboriginals ... These key occupy organizers outreached to us to help them outreach to the broader Aboriginal community and in the end on the day of the march it was an Aboriginal female Elder that opened, mainly female speakers, and the march was led by Aboriginal women with the men marching behind. They even painted a huge banner that said 'Decolonize Bay Street' [Toronto's equivalent of Wall Street] which is what we suggested prior to the march. To see that felt wonderful.

Nevertheless, as Krystalline Kraus (2011), an organiser at the #OccupyToronto encampment noted, the: 'movement [remained] split in regards to being open and accepting of centering Indigenous ideas'. Ryan Hayes (2011), an organiser with the migrant justice group No One is Illegal (NOII-Toronto), observed the contradictory ways in which the anti-colonial critique was internalised. As eviction of the encampment loomed, he recalled that 'one of the chants was just "occupy, occupy, occupy" or something to that effect, and I remember someone remarking that it didn't really reflect the criticism of the occupy language taking root.' However, Hayes also noted that 'the sacred fire was one of three sites to be protected' in the end (ibid.).

Organisers involved with #OccupyMontreal's encampment at Victoria Square also experienced difficulties when attempting to shift the discourse towards decolonisation. Fred Burrill (2011), an organiser with Décolonisons Montréal, explains that some of these difficulties were simply the result of the fact that 'there was very little crossover between ongoing radical organizing in Montreal (around indigenous solidarity but also around anti-capitalist critiques) and the folks who came together to make the call for an occupy encampment in our city'. In order to address this gap, a diverse coalition of organisations came together behind a Décolonisons Montréal contingent for the initial 15 October #OccupyMontreal march. This contingent eventually evolved into a permanent presence based around one large tent in Victoria Square. Burrill explains:

we tried to put forth a solid anti-colonial analysis, create a space for discussion and popular education, and promote a diversity of tactics. In terms of bringing an anti-colonial perspective to the occupy effort,

> I think we were reasonably successful in the early goings, at least:
> the General Assembly adopted a motion to the effect of recognizing
> indigenous sovereignty over the territory and created an Indigenous
> Solidarity Committee. It's hard to say how effective this was over the
> long-term, but certainly the discussion was ongoing.
>
> (Ibid.)

Farha Najah Hussain (2011), who was part of the South Asian Women's
Community Center in Montreal, found that while these efforts were
worthwhile, they ultimately fell short of transforming the discourse at
the #occupy site: 'Although I was not consistently at the site, I think
social justice organizers attempted to address the reality of colonialism
of Indigenous lands and communities (e.g. via discussions, organizing
the decolonize tents, speeches) but this did not seem to be sufficient'
(ibid.). Ultimately, Najah Hussain found that 'Occupy Montreal did not
re-center its analysis [towards] an anti-colonial or anti-racist perspective'
(ibid.). Accordingly, issues of indigenous self-determination seemed to
her: to be 'more of an add-on, than a proposal coming from an emerging
anti-colonial perspective' (ibid.).

Similarly, while #OccupyVancouver acknowledged that it 'is tak-
ing place on un-ceded Coast Salish territories', Jasmine Rezaee (2011),
a volunteer with Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) Women's
Centre and an #occupy organiser, noted that the analysis continued
to meet with obstacles in implementation. As a result an Indige-
nous Solidarity committee was formed since it appeared that 'many
participants of [#OccupyVancouver] did not understand the rami-
fications of this reality and did not pose the question, how can
we reclaim/liberate space without recolonising/reoccupying it?' (ibid.).
Rezaee explains that the Indigenous Solidarity committee sought to
'ensure that Indigenous-specific issues . . . [are] heard, that Indigenous
people, particularly elders, are respected at [#OccupyVancouver] and
that Indigenous self-determination, ways of living and traditions are
supported and understood' (ibid.). The committee aimed to educate
those onsite around that fact that: 'all the economic and political injus-
tices [we are protesting against] are built on the history of colonialism
and that colonialism and indigenous struggles are foundational' (ibid.).
While the effort was a step forward, many at the camp still had problems
taking leadership from indigenous peoples (Rezaee, 2011; Walia, 2011a).

Overall it seemed that concerted efforts by indigenous organisers,
elders, members of the homeless urban indigenous population and allies
forwarding a #decolonize narrative had some impact. By organising (and

often defending) teach-ins, special committees, sacred fires, separate tents and territories within the #occupy sites, a space for discussing indigenous sovereignty and decolonisation was created. However, in the experience of most organisers, such spaces flourished away from GAs or were only reluctantly internalised as part of the #occupy structure. While many #occupy sites in Canada eventually began planning rallies focused on indigenous rights, the #occupy movement as a whole was still far from having fully internalised the implications of such politics in its everyday practice. This is perhaps understandable given the short timespan of these interventions, the limited and already committed resources of #decolonize activists, and the latent nationalist and populist starting points of many who were drawn to #occupy.

Beyond tokenism? Confronting identity and privilege in the 99%

The #occupy movement's perceived in/ability to address indigenous critiques was for many a gauge of its broader capacity to reflect the diversity of identities, interests and locations of privilege/exclusion within the 99%. In an article for *The American Prospect*, Kenyon Farrow (2011) summarised the ways in which some of #occupy's discourse was also alienating to African Americans and potentially other historically racialised communities in North America:

> Comparing debt to slavery, believing police won't hurt you, or wanting to take back the America you see as rightfully yours are things that suggest OWS is actually appealing to an imagined white (re)public. Rather than trying to figure out how to diversify the Occupy Wall Street movement, white progressives need to think long and hard about their use of frameworks and rhetoric that situate blacks at the margins of the movement.
>
> (Ibid.)

Similarly in Canada, many community organisers felt that the 99% discourse glossed over the multiple hierarchies of race, gender, class, sexuality, dis/ability and so on that continued to structure everyday social relations in the encampments. #OccupyVancouver's Rezaee (2011) notes: 'I've personally disliked the 99% vs. 1% analysis from the beginning. I think this analysis oversimplifies many issues ... Fighting the 1% isn't enough in my opinion, we have to fight all the other issues that exist within the 99% in order to be successful.' As with indigenous

self-determination, Rezaee explains that the #OccupyVancouver GA decided to form an anti-oppression committee to address and discuss some of these issues because 'classism, sexism and ableism (but many other issues as well) have been a significant problem at [#OccupyVancouver] and in some ways pose the biggest threat to the success of our movement' (ibid.).

Furthermore, Rezaee was troubled by the problematic distribution of labour and decision-making power that emerged onsite:

> participation took on a very oppressive, classist dynamic and reproduced the division between mental and manual labor. The people participating in the 'decision making' bodies i.e. committees and general assemblies were largely university educated and didn't sleep at the encampment overnight whereas most of the people who tented and participated in more communal things (food, cleaning up, peace keeping, etc.) were homeless, not university educated and/or poor. This dichotomy didn't apply to everyone of course, but it was an issue nonetheless that kept manifesting itself and [was] reproduc[ed] in ugly ways. Tent city folks eventually voted to be autonomous from the General Assembly.
>
> (Ibid.)

Harsha Walia (2011a) a longstanding community organiser in Vancouver described a similar dynamic at play in the ways in which tasks were divided and decision-making power enacted in Vancouver:

> If you go to the site, it would seem inclusive. At the tent city it was mostly street involved folks, people of colour, women, etc. On site you'd see a diversity of people. But you wouldn't see those people being actively involved in decision-making. In response tent council had its own meetings and created its own community ... The leadership [of #OccupyVancouver nevertheless] remained overwhelmingly white and/or middle class.
>
> (Walia 2011a)

Schofield (2011), speaking about these issues in Toronto, echoed Rezaee and Walia's concerns as power appeared to be concentrated in white, male middleclass hands:

> The people that I have made connections with at Occupy [Toronto] have been critical of the blanket '99%' and have sought to reflect diversity in the space/organizing. The sense that I got is that it was certainly an up-hill battle at [St. James] park. There was one

demonstration at City Hall where all of the speakers, except for one woman, were white men. It was a constant list of John's, Sean's, etc. People in the crowd actually started to revolt and heckle. It opened up space at the park and in the action committee about what went wrong, and what needs to be different for next time. There were some strong women who I saw step up and really challenge men on the involvement of marginalized communities in the organizing and would actively seek out organizations like Jane-Finch Action Against Poverty, OCAP, No One Is Illegal, Stop the Cuts, etc. to come to the park and speak with people ... The outreach and action committees largely took this work on.

(Ibid.)

Nevertheless, Schofield identified 'a lot of oppressive behavior' that persisted at the GA and in the ways that leadership developed:

The loudest voices often dominated or blocked process. I think consensus decision-making models of that kind were certainly a huge challenge for facilitators. Leadership inevitably developed, and from what I could see, some decisions were definitely being made behind the scenes by small groupings of people that weren't always accountable to the group or critical of their own privilege in making decisions for other people ... I wish I could say it became more nuanced than that on the whole, but I am not sure ... [that] on a whole the Occupy movement took this up.

(Ibid., 2011)

Kraus (2011) also noted that the 'free Skool' set-up at #OccupyToronto became another space where critical reflections on the tensions within the 99% were addressed. While this space became 'a hub for discussion', she also noted how 'diversity was often confined to the free Skool ... I would have liked to see more or better integration of these issues into the larger Occupy Toronto movement' (ibid.). According to Kraus 'part of this failure [had] to do with the slogan "we are the 99%" which created the false assumption of binding unity where diversity is seen as divisive to that 99% whole' (ibid.).

#Occupy and movement-building: Looking behind to look ahead?

While often presenting itself as a *sui generis* response to the current economic crisis, the reality is that #occupy draws on broader genealogies

and repertoires of action. In addition to indigenous land reclamations, the 'occupy' tactic has been repeatedly used in a variety of contexts: from the civil rights movement (the occupation of lunch counters, buses, publicly segregated spaces and so on) to student, labour, anti-poverty, queer, dis/ability, feminist, environmental, housing rights and alternative community projects. Drawing on these histories, Rinku Sen, editor of *Colorlines*, notes that in the long run, #occupy will have to learn to engage with 'all the people in communities – working people, unions, homeless people, tenants, immigrants – who have been struggling for so long to make particular things happen and to get back some of the stuff that was stolen from us' (Sen, 2011). Sen suggests that a key question for #occupy remains whether racialised participants and those engaged in longstanding struggles against various forms of oppression within the 99% are 'able to influence the agendas of local occupations?' and whether #occupy is 'able to help people who are attracted to Occupy Wall Street get moved back out to all of the organisations and campaigns and efforts to really win things?' (ibid., 2011).

The recent experiences of the #occupy encampments in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver suggest that this may already be happening to some extent. Along these lines, Rezaee (2011) provides a humble assessment of #occupy in Vancouver and the lineages from which it emerged:

> Vancouver has a rich and radical history of social movements and #OccupyVancouver is a baby movement that, in many ways, has a great deal left to learn. Key campaigns in Vancouver have been about stopping gentrification of the Downtown Eastside . . . , one of Canada's poorest neighborhoods, and making Vancouver an affordable, inclusive city that has enough social housing and support services for all. Aggressive development has displaced many local residents of the DTES and many locals have been excluded from enjoying the benefits of 'urban revitalization.' Campaigns against economic cleansing in the DTES have taken place for decades now in this city. Other movements that are/have been active in this city in recent years are organizations like No One is Illegal, Food not Bombs, Stopwar.ca, Anti-Poverty Coalition, Carnegie Action project and anti-Olympics resistance.
>
> (Ibid.)

As Rezaee notes, many within the #occupy movement have come to recognise that 'we need the support of other organizations in

this city to succeed, collaborate, grow and successfully occupy a space . . . community outreach, building, and support is key to our success' (ibid.).

Some of these longstanding issues were dramatically highlighted by the tragic death of Ashlie Gough from a drug overdose at #OccupyVancouver in early November. Her death amplified conservative media calls to evict the encampment, while British Colombia's Liberal premier, Christy Clark, sought a province-wide injunction against #occupy (citing health and safety concerns). Nevertheless, the autonomous tent city in Vancouver – and the strong tradition of resistance by the street-involved community in the DTES – provided a context for a more proactive approach to these issues. As Walia (2011a) explains, 'while some organisers saw the presence of a tent-city composed of the homeless and poor as "bringing us down" others sought to build more substantial links between #occupy and other movements in the city'. After the #occupy encampment in Vancouver was cleared out by police in late November, a major focus of local #occupy activism shifted to longstanding anti-gentrification actions, including a newly formed #occupycondos campaign that creatively brings together the energy of #occupy with longstanding organising traditions in Vancouver (Klein, 2011).

Similarly, in Toronto, the first #occupy planning meeting in late September 2011 was convened a few days after 2,500 people had marched on City Hall to oppose the austerity budget of the newly elected mayor, Rob Ford. Following the spring of 2011, grass-roots opposition to Ford's proposed cuts grew across Toronto. Organisers formed neighbourhood committees, held speak-outs and convened community forums to plan a response. Each affected neighbourhood sought to defend local services and push for alternatives to City Hall's austerity budget. Street-level polling of residents in the affected neighbourhoods, protests, creative occupations (including a family sleep-in in Dufferin Grove Park), petitions and marathon mass-deputations condemning the cutbacks were organised. Migrant justice organisations and organisers from marginalised (and often racialised) communities played an important role in these campaigns. An open-air public forum with over 600 participants, held in early September, came up with a Peoples' Declaration outlining alternatives. As a result of this campaign, Schofield (2011) saw the initial caution that greeted #occupy as understandable:

> both Stop the Cuts and [the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty] OCAP were slow and hesitant to engage fully in the Occupy movement. We

went to the large events, supported it on-line, and had private conver-
sations where we voiced our concerns and worries. A lot of the more
experienced activists/organizers that I know were definitely hesitant
to engage fully (i.e put tons and tons of energy into [#occupy]) –
though at the same time self-critical about our cynicism. I think this
comes from an honest place though of not wanting to drop the work
that we are doing, of feeling alienated and worried of the space at
Occupy (who is involved and who is missing, how anti-oppression
gets taken up, etc).

(Ibid.)

Nevertheless, it appeared that the #occupy encampment in Toronto
'responded really well' to Stop the Cuts. Particularly important were
the many people who acted as 'bridges' between #occupy and exist-
ing movements: 'people who stayed at the camp, but were famil-
iar/connected with work in the city' (ibid.). According to Kraus (2011
'The anti-Ford movement helped build the skeleton that Occupy
Toronto continued to flesh out regarding activism in Toronto' (ibid.).
While #OccupyToronto was also evicted in late November, many of the
activists who were involved rechannelled their energies into the anti-
Ford campaign, culminating in another 3,000 person rally in front of
City Hall on 17 January 2012 that managed to reverse some $20 million
in proposed spending cuts.

   Finally, and most dramatically, while #OccupyMontreal was also
evicted by the police, the generalised anti-austerity sentiment soon
found a more potent expression in the 2012 Quebec Student Strike
(which drew on longer traditions of militant student activism in
the province). The movement directly opposed new tuition hikes
imposed by Jean Charest's provincial Liberal government. The stu-
dent strike, which began in February 2012, quickly grew to encompass
the province's 300,000 secondary and post-secondary students, even-
tually expanding into a generalised social revolt following the gov-
ernment's adoption of the draconian Bill 78 in May 2012 (curtailing
freedom of assembly across Quebec). Civil disobedience soon expanded
to trade unions, lawyers, civil rights organisations, community groups,
neighbourhood committees, grass-roots organisations and the general
population. In addition to the picketing of universities, the protests also
took the form of nightly 'casserole' demonstrations, in which marches
began simultaneously in different neighbourhoods, and participants
would bang pots and pans as a protest against Bill 78. The student
strike – and the closely related anti-Bill 78 protests – produced the

largest mass demonstrations in Canadian history. Strikes and protests continued into August 2012, when the provincial government dissolved the National Assembly and called for an early election. The election resulted in a resounding defeat for Charest's Liberal Party and the repeal of the tuition hikes.

Thinking beyond #occupy? Responding to state repression and reimagining alternatives

In her 'Letter to Occupy Together Movement' Walia (2011b) explains why recognising the diversity within the 99% is essential for #occupy's future: 'Ignoring the hierarchies of power between us does not make them magically disappear. It actually does the opposite – it entrenches those inequalities.' The experiences of organisers in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver noted above speak to the potential cross-pollination between #occupy and longer-standing social justice struggles. As the previous section illustrates, there was no lack of organising for the #occupy movement to undertake as it faced eviction from public spaces by the police. Building a broad-based anti-austerity programme that understands the foundational nature of North America's racial contract is thus an important step towards embracing a truly transformative politics. It requires that activists steer clear of the notion that #occupy is necessarily the biggest threat to the neoliberal order or that the crackdown by the state against the movement represents 'unparalleled policy brutality' (as Naomi Wolf claimed in *The Guardian*). It requires a more humble appreciation of the local and global struggles that enable movements and moments like #occupy to emerge.

As the #occupy movement was confronted with increasing repression, the failure to identify lessons from previous iterations of state repression deployed against particular communities in North America risked further undermining potential solidarities. Furthermore, while some continue to insist that calls to #decolonize are 'unrealistic' or 'complicate' the analysis, it is perhaps worth recalling indigenous scholar Andrea Smith's response to sceptics of decolonising frameworks: 'Why? Why does it sound so absurd to say that we don't want to live under a settler state founded on genocide and slavery? That the proposition seems silly shows the extent to which we have so completely normalised genocide that we cannot actually imagine a future without genocide' (Smith, 2011). The experiences of the #decolonize contingents above offer a glimpse into the potential for reimagining post-colonial futures. In fact, the increasing attentiveness of the remaining #occupy networks

in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver to indigenous issues speaks to the longer-term effectiveness of such interventions. These experiences also pose an important question for social movement and IR scholars as well: What will it take to #decolonize our own disciplines?

Postscript: Rereading #occupy through the lens of #IdleNoMore

This chapter was originally written in early 2012, shortly after the violent police evictions of #occupy encampments across North America in late 2011. A year later, with the emergence of the indigenous-led #IdleNoMore movement in Canada, it is perhaps worth revisiting the #occupy movement in light of these developments. This postscript briefly introduces the #IdleNoMore movement (including its core demands, tactics and scope); highlights some important similarities and differences between #occupy and #IdleNoMore; and provides concluding observations about how #IdleNoMore is contributing to broader conversations about the need to decolonise alternative imaginaries across Turtle Island.

#IdleNoMore: Origins, tactics and scope

Russell Diabo, a Mohawk negotiator and treaty rights expert, places this latest wave of indigenous mobilisation in the context of the 4 September 2012 announcement by Stephen Harper's government that it is seeking a new 'results-based approach' to treaty negotiations with indigenous communities in Canada. According to Diabo, this policy translates into fast-tracking negotiations on a take-it-or-leave-it basis as the Canadian government seeks to narrow the scope of aboriginal title and treaty rights. The policy shift, in the government's own words, aims to 'unlock economic opportunities' in territories that are subsumed by the negotiation's process (Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada, 2012a, 2012b). On the same day, the government also called for a 'modern legislative framework' to be imposed on indigenous communities and announced millions of dollars in additional funding cuts to indigenous organisations. In the weeks that followed, Harper's Conservatives unilaterally introduced a number of legislative acts in Parliament that would erode important features of indigenous self-government, aboriginal title and treaty rights, and environmental protections, while simultaneously expanding Canada's powers over the Band Council system (Diabo, 2012).

According to #IdleNoMore's creators Nina Wilson, Sylvia McAdam, Jessica Gordon and Sheelah McLean, it was the legislation affecting indigenous land claims and environmental protection that initially spurred them into action:

> Idle No More began with four women . . . who share a vision of uniting people to ensure the protection of Mother Earth, her lands, waters and people. We began by focusing on a piece of legislation called Bill C-45, which attacks the land base reserved for Indigenous people and removes protections for hundreds of our waterways. In November of 2012, we organized a mass teach-in at Station 20 West in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, called Idle No More. This teach-in included guest speakers, petitions [against] Bill C-45 . . . and discussion of our next steps. That day, we developed plans for more teach-ins, with the goal of building consciousness [and] a grassroots movement [to] resist the impending legislation. A week later plans were in effect for teach-ins, rallies, and protests across Saskatchewan and on to Winnipeg, Manitoba and Edmonton, Alberta. The four of us supported organizers in other centers and used social media – primarily facebook (http://www.facebook.com/ IdleNoMoreCommunity) and twitter (#idlenomore) – to build this movement. We discussed and planned a national day of action for Dec. 10th – which quickly became one of the largest Indigenous mass movements in Canadian history.
>
> (Gordon *et al.*, 2012)

#IdleNoMore's goals were also announced in a manifesto that characterised the new legislation as an 'attempt to take away sovereignty and the inherent right to land and resources from First Nations peoples'.

In the weeks following the initial teach-ins, #IdleNoMore actions took place in over 200 locations (mainly in Canada, but also around the world, as indigenous peoples facing similar struggles expressed their solidarity). The movement's most visible tactics included flashmob-style round-dances (Martin, 2013); hunger strikes inspired by Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence's six-week long example (Christoff, 2013; Rands, 2012); some two-dozen blockades of major roads, highways, bridges, border crossings and mining projects (Gordon and Martell, 2013; Groves, 2013; Ljunggren, 2013); and other forms of public protest, such as teach-ins, and a flurry of web-based and social-media initiatives. The protests placed the country's colonial relationship with indigenous peoples at the centre of national and international media attention for

the first time since the Kanesatake/Oka crisis of 1990. While indigenous voices featured prominently on the airwaves, a racist backlash was also discernible in some of the local media coverage (Newland, 2012; Simpson, 2013). In spite of hostile responses and ongoing government intransigence, the movement has continued to grow and alter the terms of public debate on the position of indigenous peoples in Canada (Idle No More, 2013).

#Occupy in light of #IdleNoMore: Similarities, differences and lessons

On the surface, some obvious similarities between #occupy and #IdleNoMore are immediately noticeable. Noteworthy for one is the effective use by both movements of social media, including the use of identifiable #hashtags as a tool for movement branding, coordination and diffusion. Both #occupy and #IdleNoMore were thus incredibly successful at mobilising a new generation of youth, including many first-time participants in protest actions. They also shared an open, decentralised format, which admits a plurality of voices around core, unifying messages. While clearly advantageous, these characteristics also made both movements the targets of critiques – on both the left and the right – that took aim at what were perceived as shallow, short-term or trendy solutions to difficult problems. Nevertheless, in spite of these critiques, social media tools provided #occupy and #IdleNoMore activists with important means of forging real-world relationships and networks necessary for sustaining months of intensive action (fostering communities of committed activists that persisted well after these movements 'peaked' in the mainstream media). More importantly, as supporters of both movements note, the combination of social media and direct action tactics produced a fundamental shift in public discourse regarding income inequality (in the case of #occupy) and colonialism (in the case of #IdleNoMore).

In spite of these similarities, the two movements also diverge in important ways. According to Naomi Klein, #IdleNoMore (and the longer legacy of indigenous resistance to colonisation) differs markedly from #occupy (and the earlier generation of 'anti-globalisation' activism) in that the former displays a greater sense of 'rootedness' within particular histories, communities and genealogies of struggle (Nation to Nation Conversations, 2013). Furthermore, #IdleNoMore implicates all 'treaty peoples' in its framework, including settlers, by

recognising that the legitimacy of any system of governance on Turtle Island flows from the reciprocal rights and obligations of both natives and settlers as defined in existing treaties (Nation to Nation Conversations, 2013). This is a point that was initially lost on the #Occupy movement in Canada, when it effectively excluded indigenous peoples from consideration. In fact, #IdleNoMore has proved to be an important corrective for such elisions, not simply within progressive circles but also within Canadian society as a whole. Along these lines, #IdleNoMore is not only proposing alternatives to the currently hegemonic model of 'liberal market democracy' (as #occupy attempted to do) but also recasting the universe of such alternatives within the much wider domain of non-Eurocentric imaginaries. As Mississauga Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson points out, indigenous worldviews offer the possibility of re-embedding social relations in a new 'ecology of intimacies', which are based on reciprocal, plural and egalitarian relations that bind individuals, diverse communities and the natural world to each other (Nation to Nation Conversations, 2013). To the extent that #IdleNoMore has been an effective vehicle for initiating such conversations, it serves as an important corrective to the initial elisions and erasures that characterised #occupy.

References

Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada (2012a). Frequently asked questions – A results-based approach to treaty and self-government negotiations, 4 September 2012. Retrieved from http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1346792541298/1346792586198 (accessed 30 March 2013)

Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada (2012b). Harper government responds to calls for more efficient results-based approach to treaty and self-government negotiations, 4 September 2012. Retrieved from http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1346781914593/1346782141075 (accessed 30 March 2013).

Agathangelou, Anna and Ling LHM. (2009). *Transforming World Politics: From Empire to Multiple Worlds*. New York: Routledge.

Amadahy, Zainab and Lawrence Bonita. (2009). Indigenous peoples and black people in Canada: Settlers or allies? In Arlo Kempf (Ed.), *Breaching the Colonial Contract: Anti-Colonialism in the US and Canada*. New York: Springer Publishing.

Anderson, Kim. (2001). *A Recognition of Being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood*. Toronto: Sumach Press.

Bannerji, Himani. (2000). *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press.

Burrill, Fred. (2011). Email interview. 27 November 2011.

Chowdhry, Geeta and Nair Sheila. (2002). *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class*. London: Routledge.

Christoff, Stefan. (2013). 'Idle No More' and colonial Canada. *Al-Jazeera*. 30 January 2013, Retrieved from http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/01/20131289123344980.html (accessed 30 March 2013)

Defenders of the Land (2011). Retrieved from http://www.defendersoftheland.org.

Della Porta, Donatella and Diani Mario. (2006). *Social Movements: An Introduction*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Diabo, Russel. (2012). Harper launches major first nations termination plan: As negotiating tables legitimize Canada's colonialism *First Nations Strategic Bulletin*, 10, 7–10.

Doty, Roxanne Lynn. (1996). *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ethier, D., Jean-Marc Piotte et Jean Reynolds. 1975. *Les travailleurs contre l'état bourgeois: avril et mai 1972*. Montreal: L'Aurore.

Farrow, Kenyon. (2011). Occupy Wall Street's race problem. *The American Prospect*. Retrieved from http://prospect.org/article/occupy-wall-streets-race-problem (accessed 24 October 2011).

Frankish, James C., Hwang, Stephen W., and Quantz, Darryl. Homelessness and health in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, March/April 2005.

Gordon, Julie and Martell, Allison. (2013). Canada aboriginal movement poses new threat to miners. *Reuters*, 17 March 2013. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/17/mining-canada-aboriginals-idUSL1N0C6CYS20130317 (accessed 30 March 2013)

Gordon, Jessica *et al.* (2012). Idle No More: Indigenous brothers and sisters taking the initiative for a better tomorrow. *Indian Country Today*, 17 December 2012. Retrieved from http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/article/idle-no-more-indigenous-brothers-and-sisters-taking-initiative-better-tomorrow-146378 (accessed 30 March 2013)

Groves, Tim. (2013). Idle No More may have economic impact on Canada. *Media Co-op*, 2 January 2013. Retrieved from http://www.mediacoop.ca/story/idle-no-more-may-have-economic-impact-canada/15395.

Grovogui, Siba. (2009). Counterpoints and the imaginaries behind them. *International Political Sociology*, 3(3), 327–331.

Hayes, Ryan. (2011). Email interview. 27 November 2011.

Henderson, Errol A. (2007). Tracing the mystification of racism in international relations. In Wilbur C. Rich (Ed.), *African American Perspectives on Political Science*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Idle No More. (2013). Idle no more solidarity spring: A call to action from idle no more & defenders of the Land, 18 March 2013. Retrieved from http://idlenomore.ca/item/154-human-rights (accessed 30 March 2013)

Johnston, Darlene. (2005). Respecting and protecting the sacred. *Attorney General of Ontario*. Retrieved from http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/inquiries/ipperwash/ policy_part/research/pdf/Johnston_Respecting-and-Protecting-the-Sacred.pdf.

Jones, Branwen Gruffydd. (Ed.) (2006). *Decolonizing International Relations*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc.

Klein, Naomi. (2011). Video: Naomi Klein speaks out against condos in DTES. Retrieved from http://dtesnotfordevelopers.wordpress.com (accessed 2 December 2011).

Kraus, Krystalline. (2011). Email interview. 27 November 2011.

Lawrence, Bonita. (2004). *'Real' Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Lawrence, Bonita and Dua, Enakshi. (2005). Decolonizing anti-racism. *Social Justice: A Journal of Crime, Conflict and World Order*, 32(4), 120–143.

Ling, L.H.M. (2002). *Postcolonial International Relations: Conquest and Desire between Asia and the West*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ljunggren, David. (2013). Native Canadians could block development, chief warns. *Reuters*, 10 January 2013. Retrieved from http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/01/10/canada-aboriginals-idUSL1E9CA8AQ20130110 (accessed 30 March 2013)

Martin, Melissa. (2013). Round dance: Why it's the symbol of Idle No More. *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, 28 January 2013. Retrieved from http://www.cbc.ca/manitoba/scene/homepage-promo/2013/01/28/round-dance-revolution-drums-up-support-for-idle-no-more (accessed 30 March 2013).

McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. (1996). *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, John David and Zald, Mayer N. (1979). *The Dynamics of Social Movements: Resource Mobilization, Social Control and Tactics*. Cambridge: Winthrop Publishers.

Mills, Charles W. (1997). *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Montano, John Paul. (2011). An open letter to the occupy wall street activists. Retrieved from http://mzzainal-straten.blogspot.com/2011/09/open-letter-to-occupy-wall-street.html (24 September 2011)

MUSKRAT Magazine. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.muskratmagazine.com.

Najah Hussain, Farha. (2011). Email interview. 27 November 2011.

Nation to Nation Conversations. (2013). *Nation to Nation Conversations: Public Symposium*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

Newland, David. (2012). Parsing the online comments on #IdleNoMore How Canadians are failing a tolerance test. *Macleans*, 20 December 2012. Retrieved from http://www2.macleans.ca/2012/12/20/parsing-the-comments-on-idlenomore/ (accessed 30 March 2013)

Nielsen, Tannis, Tabobundung, Rebeka, and Walia, Harsha. (2011). Race, colonialism and the 99%. Teach-in at the #OccupyToronto encampment at St. James' Park 3 November.

No One is Illegal – Toronto. (2011). Retrieved from http://toronto.nooneisillegal.org.

No One is Illegal – Vancouver. (2011). Retrieved from http://noii-van.resist.ca.

Occupons-Québec. (2011). Qu'est-ce que le mouvement 'Occupons-Québec'? Retrieved from http://occuponsquebec.org/le-mouvement/occupons-quebec.

OccupyTheHood.org. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.officialoccupythehood.org.

Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.ocap.ca.

Pasternak, Shiri. (2011). Occupy(ed) Canada: The political economy of Indigenous dispossession in Canada. *Rabble.ca*, 20 October 2011. Retrieved from http://rabble.ca/news/2011/10/occupyed-canada-political-economy-indigenous-dispossession-canada.

Rands, Chris. (2012). Chief spence exclusive interview. *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, 18 December 2012. Retrieved from http://www.cbc.ca/player/Shows/ID/2318285061 (accessed 30 March 2013)

Razzaq, Sherene. (2002). *Race, Space and the Law: Unmapping White Settler Society*. Toronto: Between the Lines.

Rezaee, Jasmine. (2011). Email interview. 27 November 2011.

Schofield, Liisa. (2011). Email interview. 27 November 2011.

Sen, Rinku. (2011). Occupy everywhere: Michael Moore, Naomi Klein on next steps for the movement against corporate power. *Democracy Now!* 25 November 2011. Retrieved from http://www.democracynow.org/2011/11/25/occupy_everywhere_michael _moore_naomi_klein.

Shaw, Karena. (2008). *Indigeneity and Political Theory: Sovereignty and the Limits of the Political*. New York: Routledge.

Shilliam, Robbie. (2011). *International Relations and Non-Western Thought: Imperialism, Colonialism and Investigations of Global Modernity*. New York: Routledge.

Simpson, Leanne. (2013). Idle No More: Where the mainstream media went wrong; Self-representing the people's movement. *The Dominion*, 27 February 2013. Retrieved from http://dominion.mediacoop.ca/story/idle-no-more-and-mainstream-media/16023 (accessed 30 March 2013)

Smith, Andrea. (2005). *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Cambridge: South End Press.

Smith, Andrea. (2011). Critical ethnic studies and the future of genocide. March 2011. Retrieved from http://www.queergeektheory.org/2011/03/cesa-2011-liveblog-white-supremacy-and-settler-colonialism-plenary.

Stop the Cuts. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.torontostopthecuts.com.

Tabobondung, Rebeka. (2011). Email interview. 27 November 2011.

Tarrow, Sidney G. (2011). *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thobani, Sunera. (2007). *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Tilly, Charles (2004). *Social Movements, 1768–2004*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Tully, James. (1993). The two treatises and aboriginal rights. In *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

United Nations' Economic and Social Council. (2012). 'Doctrine of Discovery,' Used for Centuries to Justify Seizure of Indigenous Land, Subjugate Peoples, Must be Repudiated by United Nations, Permanent Forum Told. New York: UN Department of Public Information, News and Media Division, 8 May 2012. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/hr5088.doc.htm (accessed 30 March 2013)

Vitalis, Robert. (2010). The noble American science of imperial relations and its laws of race development. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 52(4), 909–938.

Walia, Harsha. (2011a). Phone interview. 27 November 2011.

Walia, Harsha. (2011b). Letter to occupy together movement. *Rabble.ca*, 14 October 2011. Retrieved from http://rabble.ca/news/2011/10/acknowledgement-occupations-occupied-land-essential.

Yee, Jessica. (2011). Occupy Wall Street: The game of colonialism and further nationalism to be decolonized from the 'Left.' *Racialicious*, 30 September 2011. Retrieved from http://www.racialicious.com/2011/09/30/occupy-wall-street-the-game-of-colonialism-and-further-nationalism-to-be-decolonized-from-the-left

Index

Index