Revolting in a digital revolution:

An analysis on the changing importance of resources within modern activism.

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Introduction

"The Internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow." - Bill Gates

Modern times call for modern views. In the current age of continuous digitalization within everyday life, all organizations within society deal with new obstacles, opportunities and changing working environments. These exciting developments have created new fields of study but also an increasing necessity to review traditional theories. Within the field of social movements, this is no different. New tools and technologies change not only the context in which social movements operate, but also the means they use. Current theories on social movements may not be so adequate anymore in explaining modern practice, which raises the urgency for acquiring modernized perspectives. Contentious social movements have gained new working terrains, arsenals of opportunities and communication platforms through the use of the internet. Social movement theories should focus subsequently on these new types of movements, rather than restricting to the old forms of mobilizations (Melucci, 1996).

In order to realize a modernized perspective, this thesis focuses on the role of resources within modern social movements (SMs). The main question, therefore, I aim to answer in this thesis is: How have technological developments changed the importance of resources within modern social movements? By looking at the changing importance and consistency of resources in the digital age, this thesis aims to contribute to a realistic view on modern day practice within social movements.

This research will mainly consist of an elaborate discussion using second hand literature, while focussing on important changes technological developments have created for SMs. In this discussion, the role of technological developments within the offline dimension, and the online dimension will be mentioned separately. The offline dimension will be discussed by looking at the challenges and opportunities the internet has offered SMs that operate in the traditional, offline platform. The online dimension will be discussed through an analysis of the Anonymous social movement, because it represents a unique, yet typical example of a purely online-operating SM. In addition, one single collective action-case will be discussed using a content-analysis to test how these new perspectives fit within the online reality. The observations made throughout this thesis will finally be summarized and discussed in the conclusion.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

To establish a starting point from which the research can initiate, this chapter will summarize some of the key theoretical concepts used to analyse SMs and the motives they control in the mobilization of resources.

Della Porta and Diani state in their work on social movements (2006: pp. 20) that social movements use the following mechanisms to come to collective action:

1. They are involved in conflict relations with a clearly identifiable opponent
2. They are tied to a loose, informal network.
3. They have a certain unique collective identity.

More elaborated, that means according Diani & Della Porta, and Smith (2006: pp. 21-22; 1997:pp.59-63):

1. That participants of a social movement are involved in a political, or cultural, conflict in which they promote, or resist social changes. In this regard, it is important that they have one specific group as an opponent (so not one particular individual, or humanity as a whole; but just one particular group in society). Also important here is that the change a particular social movement is fighting for (or against) goes against the principles of the opponent.
2. That in general, a loose informal network separates social movements from other action staging organizations. This network means that individuals are internally exchanging means and together form a collective unity, while involved individuals maintain their own identity and autonomy. Because of this, one individual can never represent an entire social movement
3. That social movements for a collective actor of all protests against or in favour of a certain change in society, and develop a collective and shared sense of identity along in process. The import aspect here is the sense of serving a common goal and an equal dedication towards completing this particular goal. Participants or adherents of a social movement consider themselves typically as single elements in an otherwise overarching ideal. This overarching collective identity can also have a transnational character.

Within the social movement literature there are different approaches towards analysing how social movements achieve their goals (such as gaining institutionalized influence, opposing/proposing a certain social development, etc.). Scholars have looked at political opportunity structures, systems of alliances, institutional structures etc. (see Offe, 1985: 817-

868, McAdam, et al., 1996 and Marks & Adams, 1996: 1-41). Within this discussion there has been no unanimous agreement on a single factor for success for SMs. Some see the key to success for SMs in having powerful allies, other in the ability to work within the political opportunity structure etc. However, the oldest and most influential approach towards the analysis of social movements looks at resource mobilization. This school of literature generally assumes that the degree of resources decides the action-repertoire of a social movement and the chances of achieving their goals. Within the resource-mobilization context, McCarthy & Zald (1977:1212-1241) (and later Edwards & McCarthy, 2004: 117-118) have developed five conditions for success:

1. The degree of access to resources: social movements with elaborate access to resources are generally more successful in achieving their goals. Because of the unequal distribution of resources amongst groups in society, social movements that involve better endowed (or richer) groups in society are generally more successful, than less resourceful groups in society.
2. The type of resources that social movements control is important. Social movements that control resources that connect with their general goals and needs have an increased chance of reaching intended performance and results. The different types of resources generally agreed upon list as: moral, material, social-organizational, cultural and human resources.
3. The fungibility of the resources; deriving from the degree in which social movements are able to employ the resources available to them into efficient ways to pursue their goals and enhance their performance.
4. The way in which social movements provide themselves with the necessary resources. Every way of generating and mobilizing resources namely has its' own advantages and disadvantages.
5. The degree in which social movements manage to generate resources through their own actions.

The relevance of these conditions is increasingly challenged in modern times of digitalization, especially through the upcoming of the internet. The internet has created a completely new context in which the discussion, on which factors are vital for SMs' survival and success, continues. Anduiza for example, recognizes that the internet is increasing political participation but adding new participatory inequalities and challenges (Anduiza et al., 2009:872-873). Within the light of this discussion, understanding the changing importance of resources becomes crucial in creating a modern perspective on SM-practices.

Chapter 2: Resource mobilization within social movements

This chapter will discuss five types of resources social movements can control in order to realise collective action more elaborate. The typography of resources provides an important tool for the following discussion in order to make a comparison on how traditional resources have changed in importance under the influence of technological developments.

Within the resource mobilization literature on social movements it is generally agreed upon that the amount of resources a certain social movement controls has an important influence on the potential success of the social movement. This means that the more resources a social movement controls, the bigger its chances are to reaching a certain goal, gaining institutionalized influence or effectively opposing a certain development (Edwards & McCarthy: 2002, McCarthy & Zald: 1970, Cress & Snow: 1996, Jenkins & Perrow: 1977). Consequently, social movements with limited access to resources either have to find ways to generate resources mobilization from external, better endowed, groups in society (such as companies or wealthy individuals), or face eventual decay.

The resources a social movement can control can be divided into five categories: moral, material, cultural, social-organizational and human resources (Cress & Snow, 1996: 1095, Edwards & McCarthy, 2002: 125-128). The five types summarize as follows:

Table 1: Traditional types of resources

Type of resource	*Examples*
Moral Endorsements by external organization of the aims and actions of SMs	• Sympathetic support: Statements by external organizations that are supportive of the aims and actions of SMs. • Solidaristic support: Participation by an external organization in the collective actions of the SM.
Material Tangible goods and services mobilized by SMs.	• Supplies: Basic goods that help maintain the SM (e.g., paper, poster board, telephones). • Meeting space: a location where meetings can be organized • Office space: a location to conduct day-to-day business. • Transportation means: facilities to get participants of social movements to where they have to be • Money
Cultural	• Strategic support: Knowledge that

Knowledge capital pertinent to the organization's maintenance and mobilization.	facilitates goal-attainment collective actions, like sit-ins and housing takeovers. • Technical support: Knowledge that facilitates organizational development and maintenance (e.g., how to run a meeting and delegate tasks). • Referrals: Provision of connections to potential external organization for resources.
Human People who donate resources, time, and energy to the SM.	• Captive audiences: Constituency and bystander populations assembled for recruitment and resource appeals. • Leaders: Individuals who provide relatively stable organizational guidance and who function as spokespersons. • Cadre: Individuals who function as lieutenants on a relatively permanent basis resources

Sources: (Cress & Snow, 1996: 1095 Edwards & McCarthy, 2002: 125-128)

By making these distinctions, we can observe which resources have changed in importance over time. Cress & Snow and Edwards & McCarthy however in addition both recognize the influence social-organizational resources, such as the general context of society. They remark that despite its' influence, it is impossible to analyse the role of social-organizational resources for the chances of success within a SM because the complete context is often too large and complicated to fully understand (Edwards & McCarthy 2002). For this reason I will not look at the role of Social-Organization resources in this research.

Traditional resource-literature assumes that the availability of these four types of resources decide the chances of success within social movements (Jenkins & Perrow, 1977: 249). This general typography of resources, however, is based on a society in which technology is not yet as developed as it is in modern times. It assumes for example, that material goods, such as a meeting space or office space, are required in order to make a SM work effectively. In contrast, modern practice of collective action using new technological opportunities, such as the internet to facilitate day-to-day workings and communication, suggests that the importance of these material resources is decreasing. When one can communicate with adherents using a home computer and share documents and manifests using for example online social media, the need for an office space seems to become superfluous. However, technological means can also be considered material resources. Modern day social movements obviously cannot operate online without controlling access to the internet. Therefore this research will initially discuss the way in which the need for traditional

material resources has changed, and discuss the results in light of the increasing need for technological material means, to come to an understanding of how the need for material resource-mobilization is changing within modern-day social movements.

Chapter 3: Resources within the offline dimension

This chapter will discuss the influence of technological developments on collective action within the offline (or traditional) realm of protest. Increasing digitalization of society creates changing contexts in which traditional social movements have to learn to operate. When looking at traditional protest, Van Laer & Van Aelst recognize that the internet has offered both rapid effort diffusion of communication and mobilization efforts, as well as created new challenges for SMs to overcome (van Laer & van Aelst, 2009:230-231).

3.1.: New opportunities and new challenges

Literature suggests a new arsenal of opportunities for SMs through the use of the internet (Milan & Hintz, 2013: 24-25 and Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2009: 235):

- First of all, the internet has reduced the potential costs of participating in a collective action since the chances of getting arrested during an online protest are lower than during an offline protest.
- Secondly, Travelling costs and time consumption are reduced by the internet since participants can easily plan protests other using their own home-owned computer.
- Furthermore, the internet makes coordination and communication much easier and cheaper since there is no more need for time-consuming meetings, phone calls or mailings; all can be done fast and for free using online social media.
- Finally, internationalisation (or trans-nationalisation) becomes much easier since the internet allows SMs to quickly connect with likeminded people in different countries

Van Laer & van Aelst, however signal in addition that the usage of the internet in coordinating collective action also creates three main new challenges for SMs:

First of all they recognize that some people stay behind in the digital revolution. Less developed countries, as well as less resourceful groups in more developed countries, have very limited access to computer/internet facilities and in addition lack the skills to use these facilities. This creates a further misbalance between resourceful and less resourceful SMs (more elaborate on the digital/democratic divide: see Norris, 2003: 4-17).

Secondly, the reduced potential cost of getting arrested for online activism is getting weaker over time because the police and other judicial authorities are also becoming increasingly active online through the gathering of, for example, IP addresses of protesters and through investing in software that hinders online attacks (van Laer & van Aelst, 2009).

Finally they state the often stated argument that the Internet does not create the strong social ties needed to build a sustainable network of activists necessary for the realization of effective collective actions. According to this argument, online collective actions only trigger short and uncommitted support, like for example signing an online petition, which reduces the impact of the actual petition. This phenomenon is often described as 'clicktivism' or 'slacktivism' (Diani 2000 and Clark & Themudo 2003).

In short, the internet has created new opportunities and new challenges. The main challenges are summarized as the increasing of inequalities in participation, high potential costs through participation and decreased value of collective actions. Although these challenges seem to weaken the internet as a provider of revolutionary new tools, the challenges are also being overcome by SMs.

Firstly, the argument that certain people/countries stay behind in the digital revolution is reducing over time under the influence of the digital revolution itself. Because access to computer technology has become cheaper and easier, more and more less advantaged groups in society can afford to purchase a machine allowing them full access to the internet. Children born in modern times are dealing with computer technology starting from a very young age enabling them to quickly learn advanced skills on how to operate computer technology. In addition, In Western society the educational system has moved along with the digitalization, creating a situation where basic computer skills are considered to be common knowledge and perhaps even a necessity for finding employment in virtually all areas of the labour market. The argument that uneven access to computer technology/skills undermines the power of the internet in facilitating online protest, seems to lose its' power in the face of continuing technological evolution, and the ever reducing costs individuals face in order to get online (Diani,2004:341).

Secondly; the argument, made by Van Laer & Van Aelst (2009:237), that online activism is not as risk-free as it used to be, could be described as reducing in strength over time as well. Though obviously the newness of online activism has disappeared and the anonymity of online activists can no longer be taken for granted, activists have also managed to find new ways to hide their true identities better while online. One of the techniques used for example is the browsing via Proxy

servers in order to mislead anyone trying to find out the IP-address (and consequently the whereabouts) of the activist. "*A proxy acts as an intermediary, routing communications between your computer and the Internet. A proxy specializing in anonymous surfing, however, uses its own IP address in place of yours in every outgoing request.*"(www.proxy.org). Using proxy-browsing is currently even supported by the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 12) providing legal rights to online activists to hide their offline (or true) identities (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 12, www.un.com). The fact that authorities are fighting online anonymity, and removing the lower risks that the internet offers of getting arrested, is therefore countered again by new tools to better hide the identities of online activists

Finally, the argument that online activism creates only weak ties, which are not able to create a necessary, sustainable network of activists, represents an out-dated view on activism. Where in the past, dominant ideologies drove activists and SMs towards collective action, Karpf argues that in modern times single-operation mobilization seems to be increasingly dominant. When collective action can quickly and easily be set up using the internet, it becomes relatively easy to find sympathizers for the one particular case at hand and mobilize them (Karpf, 2012:35). When a temporary network of activists can be set up easily acting only on the current collective action, the need for a sustainable network dissolves. Even in case that the argument, that online activism creates insufficient ties, proves to be true; it only supports that activism has been shifting from ideology based activism towards single-operation mobilization. As Carty & Onjett state: "*the central role of electronic media and global networks; have identified SMs more as flows than organizations, (which) are fundamentally different than earlier social movements.*" (2007:238). This does not necessarily mean that the short term, single-operation based support is less intense, or powerful, than the long-term support that traditional SMs generated (Calderaro & Kavada, 2013:3).

These three examples outline how new challenges created by the internet are being overcome by SMs, and provide a useful starting point for the analysis of which resources shape the keys to success for modern SMs.

3.2.: Changing importance of resources

In terms of resources, it seems that it becomes more and more important for SMs to have individuals involved in their organization that have knowledge and operational skills on how to use technological tools effectively. SMs that control a high degree of cultural resources are increasingly empowered to overcome modern challenges. When a SM has extensive access to participants that do move along in the digital revolution and possess the tools to put their computer knowledge/skills

into practice to overcome the challenges the internet offers, the repertoire of the SM will be strongly enhanced. This indicates that the internet is creating an increased demand for cultural resources (Yang, 2011: 19-24).

Based on the discussion so far, there seems no indication that moral resources have increased or decreased significantly under the influence of technological developments. Traditional material resources, in turn, do seem to decrease in importance when using the internet to set up a collective action offline. Participants and adherents no longer need to invest large amounts of time and money in order to participate in an offline protest. Also, organizers of a collective action no longer need to maintain an office space, telephone networks, copying machines etc. to mobilize participants and streamline communication (Della Porta, 2005: 175-202). The need for material resources is moving more and more from a need for money and office spaces towards a need for control over technological means and access to the internet.

In terms of human resources, identifiable leadership, individuals that function as sustainable lieutenants and spokespersons, have become less important to SMs because of the shifting focus on single-operation activism (Karpf, 2012:35). When captive audiences and lieutenants change with every collective action there is less need for sustainable and identifiable leadership. Therefore, with the internet creating possibilities to quickly mobilize adherents and sympathizers for a certain cause at hand, there seems to be a decreasing need for traditional human resources within the offline dimension of protest. The importance of operation-based leadership, however, seems to increase.

As discussed so far, the importance of resources within the offline dimension of protest has been developing in the following directions:

Table 2: Changing importance of resources in the offline dimension

Type of resource	Importance
Moral	Unclear/unchanged
Material	Shifting towards access to technological means
Cultural	Shifting towards technological expertise
Human	Shifting towards operation-based leadership

The main challenge for SMs when using the internet to coordinate offline collective action therefore seems to lay in the mobilization of the right kind of resources. Facing the increasing importance of technological means and operational expertise, combined with a decreasing importance of traditional material and human resources, SMs have to adapt their resource mobilization tactics in order to effectively use the new arsenal of opportunities and overcome the challenges it brings

along. In the next chapter I will examine if this shift in the importance of certain resources also holds true in collective action staged completely in the digital realm.

Chapter 4: Resources within the online dimension

In order to get a clear perspective on how the importance of resources has changed in the transition within modern activism, this chapter will summarize the range of additional tools and challenges SMs face when staging protest using just the internet. The Anonymous social movement functions as a guiding example throughout this chapter because it stages its' collective action purely online. By analysing how resources are used when collective action is staged in the online dimension, this chapter aims to create a clearer perspective on the changing importance of resources for SMs that operate purely online.

The fact that the internet has created a complete new public sphere, and therefore a new platform for collective action, again poses unique challenges and opportunities for SMs. Van Aelst & van Laer state that: "the shift towards new Internet-based actions and tactics heavily related to the Internet has not resulted in the replacement of the old action forms but rather completed them."(2009:232). Meikle observes in addition that "Net activism has never been *exclusively* Net-centered" (2002:41). These arguments represent a view that the internet can only offer an additional toolbox for SMs in order to streamline and enhance offline protest. It assumes that even when SMs stage their collective actions via the internet (like virtual sit-ins, online petitions or e-mail bombs), it is always to strengthen and enrich offline (real world) ideologies and protests. The claim that online activism (or Net activism) has never been exclusively net-centered (Meikle: 2009), however proves no longer true by the upcoming of purely online operating SMs.

As mentioned before, the upcoming of the internet has had an ambiguous effect on SMs that operate offline. It has revolutionized the communication and coordination capacity of SMs through the use of online social media, fast and easy information and document exchange, and simplified transnational mobilization. In addition, it has also created a complete new dimension for protest (Kriesi et al. 1995). This means that besides the streamlining of offline protests, the internet offers an extra street in which SMs can bring their signs and protest (Rheingold, 2003). Operating in the digital realm offers new opportunities to SMs, but also demands different organizational structures, of which the Anonymous movement provides a typical example.

This chapter focuses on the Anonymous social movement because it is unique, yet represents a stereotypical example of a purely online operating SM. Besides the fact Anonymous has many unique characteristics (like targeting mainly companies and individuals, instead of political actors),

the relevant uniqueness of the movement in light of this topic lays in the platform they operate in, and the organizational structure they adopted accordingly.

More elaborate, the uniqueness of the platform that Anonymous operates in derives from their purely online staged activism. It uses tools obtained through modern technologies to achieve goals that exist only online (Stryker, 2011:8). Despite the relative newness of the exclusively net-centered activism, Anonymous can provides valuable insight into operational methods within online activism.

In an ideal situation, an in-depth analysis of resource exchanges within the Anonymous movement offers the best perspective on how the importance of certain resources is changing under the influence of modern technology. However, Anonymous adherents (Anons) communicate through private chat channels and go to extreme lengths to keep their internal processes hidden. In order to assess how Anonymous structures its' resource demands, this chapter will look into the organizational structure of the social movement. By going over the different organizational structures Anonymous has adopted over the years, this chapter aims to clarify how the importance of resources has developed within the Anonymous movement; and consequently within protest in the online dimension.

4.1.: Anonymous

Anonymous finds its' birthing ground on the internet. In 2003, a fifteen-year boy named Christopher Poole decided to launch a forum board where he and his friends could share Japanese anime. The website he launched was called 4chan (www.4chan.org). In current times, 4chan hosts between 12 and 20 million unique visitors a month. The website became so popular because of the lack of moderators and the infamous anonymity of the visitors (Stryker, 2010: 18-19). From this website the social movement Anonymous was eventually born. Also the name Anonymous comes from the 4chan culture in which a posters' name is always stated as *Anonymous*. 4Chans' Anonymous rapidly evolved into an influential community on the internet. Christopher Poole himself was even elected most influential person of the year 2008 by Time Magazine (Time Magazine, 27 April 2009).

Despite its' rapid emergence, and considerable successes, relatively few authors have managed to chart the life cycle of the Anonymous movement. As mentioned before, Anonymous operates via secret online channels, creating a situation where adherents become extremely difficult to identify. Direct observations from the movement itself are therefore impossible to obtain. Because of the general unavailability of information, I am forced to rely mainly on literature work done by Underwood (2009), Halupka (2011) & Olson (2012).

Literature suggests that Anonymous went through four different life-stages. Anonymous started with inception, transformed into a progressive social community, developed into a social movement and eventually into a decentralized, isolated cell network (Halupka, 2011:32-55, Olson, 2012: 110-112). During the inception period (2003-2005), Anons (members of Anonymous/posters on 4chan) created an online community which communicated using memes and language that was only known to 4chan insiders. That means that 4chan created "a vacuum where individuals could anonymously share their thoughts, yet while doing so they used tools (memes, language styles) that created a strong insiders' culture" (Halupka, 2011:36-37).

In the progressive social community-stage (2006-2008), the Anonymous community developed a hive mind-set in which a strong culture and typical brand of humour was advocated and online attacks and humorous disturbances of vulnerable websites were orchestrated (Halupka, 2011:39). During this period, anti-individualistic elements and philosophical concepts began to surface (Landers: 2008). Also the usage of Distributed Denial Of Service-attacks (or DDOS-attacks) for taking down servers and websites became one of the mostly used tool for collective action by Anonymous (Underwood, 2009). However in this stage, the main goal for the group was still personal entertainment.

During project Chanology, in which Anonymous was fighting against the church of Scientology, it entered its' social movement stage (2008-2009). Portrayed by the media as an altruistic group fighting for human rights and freedom of speech, it chose the Church of Scientology (which frequently harassed opponents) as the main target for collective actions. Anonymous started publishing private documents and videos made by the Church of Scientology and started creating its own ideologies regarding freedom of information and freedom of speech (Underwood, 2009: 156). Also in this stage, certain symbols (such as the Guy Fawkes mask) were coined. Following the rise of moralfags (ideology driven Anons) the call for more ideologically driven actions became stronger. The moralistic sub-culture that was born within Anonymous channelled their newly gained ideologies into attacks. Operation TitStorm is an example of an ideology driven attack in which Anons protested against the Australian government for proposing a degree of internet censorship in the country (Halupka, 2011:48-49).

In the following years, a conflicting divide between moralists (Anons with strong ideological views) and purists (Anons seeking only entertainment and disturbance of society) began to surface within the movement. This growing divide between the moralists and purists sub-groups forced the movement to develop into its current decentralised isolated cell-structure (2009-current). Operating via these decentralized cells, the Anonymous collective was represented by ad-hoc majorities.

Despite the two different ideologies within the movement, Anonymous has still successfully maintained adherents of both sub-groups to identify themselves as members of Anonymous (Olson, 2012). In comparison, the model of an ideological divide (or rather the divide between ideological and non-ideological participants) while remaining a sense of general connectedness through shared symbols and elite cooperation, reminds of the Dutch political system during its period of pillarization (Delsen, 2002: 12-13). Since anyone can claim to be an Anon and also anyone (even those who do not feel any ties with Anonymous) can participate in a collective action set up by Anonymous, a strong ideological bodice was avoided. Choosing a specific direction would fuel internal conflicts and cause a reduction of participants in the movements' collective actions. Consequently, the symbols have different meanings from Anon to Anon (Olsen, 2012:47-58).

This overview of the Anonymous life-cycle provides some insight into the track record of this opaque network of online activists. The question still remaining now is how Anonymous has dealt with resource exchange during its periods of collective activism. The next chapter will address this question.

4.2.: Resource exchange analysis

As mentioned before, the Anonymous group has had no identifiable leadership or sustainable member-base from the very start. Although social movements are generally loosely organized, Anonymous is unique in the total absence of sustainability in leadership and adherent-base. Its' birthing ground, 4chan, has been infamous for its lack of moderators, which has translated into a social movement without central leadership or traditional resourceful elite. In the current state, every operation set up by Anonymous is one of ad-hoc cells operating together only for the purpose of the one collective action at hand. Halupka states that every operation organized by Anonymous in fact creates a unique mini-social movement with its own ideology, leaders and goals (Halupka, 2011:58-59). This operation-based way of operating alters traditional resource exchange in two ways

First of all the anonymity of the adherents creates a situation where participants of a collective action do not know who they are working with. This anonymity makes traditional exchange of material resources difficult. It seems logical that if you do not know who you will be pooling money with, the likeliness of the money-pooling taking place at all reduces substantially. Consequently, Anonymous has no membership fee or any other material resource mobilization or exchange. Stryker summarizes this attitude as follows: 'Keep your money; we do it for the lulz' (2011:290). This attitude suggests a strongly decreasing importance of the generating of money for the movement. By using technological means for mobilizing participants and staging collective action Anonymous

has overcome the need for the mobilization of money and other traditional material resources in order to perform effectively (Stryker, 2011).

Secondly, the divide between the moralists and the purists within the Anonymous movement created a differentiation in the reasons adherents participated. This means that some of the Anons participating in an operation that was initially moralistically driven would only participate because they thought it was good fun. In order to realize collective action anyway, Anonymous has developed the aforementioned decentralized cell structure. The isolation of the different cells has made traditional resource- exchange even more difficult. In other words, the result of the current decentralized and isolated cell structure is an even further absence of material resource-exchange (Stryker, 2011).

Anonymous has survived over time without mobilizing traditional material resources, and by doing so it has challenged the claim that SMs' success depends heavily on the degree of control over material resources. The explanation for the continuous survival seems to lay in the effective utilization of opportunities the internet has offered in organizing collective action and communication between adherents. Because of the near to zero costs movements deal with in organizing collective action online, the importance of material resource mobilizations has decreased accordingly. Widespread access to the internet and to computer /hacking skills adherents increasingly control, have resulted in a decreasing importance of the mobilization of traditional resources.

The theoretical importance of traditional human resources is also challenged by the Anonymous movement. Since there is a large and easy contactable crowd of people with computers and necessary operational skills there is a decreasing importance for the maintaining of sustainable organizational structures. When a certain event calls for collective action, participants can be found quickly and nearly costless using online social media, creating opt-in/opt-out situations (Bennet & Segerberg, 2012). The use of DDOS attacks as a main tool for online protest has additionally created a near costless way of disrupting target companies and governments. The software that is used for creating these DDOS attacks (the Low Orbit Ion Cannon- software, or LOIC) is freely available for anyone and very accessible for any individual with a computer.

In order to find out how these developments translate into practice, the next chapter will discuss one particular operation by Anonymous, and provide insight on how the collective action was set up with regard to resource-exchanges between participants.

Chapter 5: Operation LeakSpin analysis

This chapter will analyse a single case of purely online staged collective action by doing a content analysis of the webpages used in staging the collective action. By looking at the steps the SM (in this case Anonymous) has taken in the mobilization of the necessary resources for the realization of this operation, this chapter aims to place the observations from the previous chapter into a more practical context.

The case selected is called ' Operation LeakSpin'. Operation LeakSpin is a collective action which came into being on December 10th, 2010 and was set up as a response to oppressive behaviour of the United States' government towards any sympathizer of the Wikileaks organization. During a predating operation called 'Operation Payback', Anonymous members launched online DDOS attacks on MasterCard and Visa by overflowing them with internet traffic. They attacked these companies in order to protest against the blockade of donations to Wikileaks set up by these two mayor financial companies. The blocking of donations to Wikileaks was demanded by the US government after the exposure of the sensitive diplomatic information in September 2010. One Anon in the Netherlands was arrested for his involvement in operation Payback for using the Low Orbit Ion Cannon (software that creates a virtual network of computers making it possible to launch DDOS attacks) (Binlot: CBS News, December 2010).

In reaction to this arrest on the 9th of December 2010, a segment of Anons decided to dig deeper into the sensitive information that has been put online by Wikileaks and translate and summarize them in YouTube-videos, calling operation LeakSpin into existence. By translating and summarizing the (mainly Spanish) leaked diplomatic cables, Anonymous protested both against of the oppressive behaviour of the US government as well as a promotion of freedom and transparency of information (Doctorow: BoingBoing, December 2010).

Operation LeakSpin is suitable for a content analysis because during this operation, Anonymous actively approached any individual sympathizing with the particular goal making providing a relatively big transparency on the steps taken by involved actors. Because this operation actively appealed to anyone with internet access, it becomes relatively easy to find information in comparison to other Anonymous operations.

Since participants of this operation, like Anonymous participants in general, strongly hold on to the secrecy of their true (offline) identities, it has become very difficult to obtain information from participants. In order to insights into the structure of the operation this chapter will discuss the results of a content analysis of several WebPages used in this operation. The LeakSpin operation has

relatively large amounts of information still available online, making it the most tangible operation for this analysis. The information derived from the online content analysis will be discussed in light off the observations made in the previous chapters of this thesis through an inductive paradigm, providing the most objective perspective for this type of analysis (Babbie,2007: 56-58)

By analyzing the website-content still available online, Operation LeakSpin offers a unique insight in the workings of Anonymous, and the importance of resources within their operational structure. The content analysis was performed on the operation LeakSpin official website, the Crowdleaks official website, the Anonypress website and Anonypress-Facebookstream, the LeakSpin Blog, WikiLeaks webpage and related YouTube video uploads. This content-analysis was performed in April 2013. The web sources for the analyzed websites will be separately mentioned in the bibliography summary. The results of this analysis suggest that the operation was structured in a number of smaller collective actions. The collective actions within this operation can be summarized as follows:

- Creation and uploading of an elaborate and detailed YouTube instruction video
- Creation of a general LeakSpin website in order to instruct participants and coordinate the publication of the translated and summarized diplomatic cables on YouTube.
- Massive uploading of YouTube videos in which Anonymous members read English versions of leaked diplomatic cables.
- Creation of a website, named Crowdleaks, where exceptional shocking summaries were published more elaborate with the help of Anons which possess journalistic background
- Using the Crowdleaks website, Anonymous members set up a Quality control centre which goes over the summaries of the exposed cables to see if they are translated and summarized correctly
- An AnonyPress centre was set up in order to present the US embassy, and Western media with the results of the LeakSpin operation and creating awareness on international and diplomatic interaction.
- A blog was created in order to keep involved actors up to date on the developments.

While looking at these steps, a number of observations can be made on the importance of the different types of resources. Since these steps taken in the realization of LeakSpin are clarified, we can now look at which resources were important in doing so. Although they are distilled from a complex process, and form an extremely simplified depiction of reality, useful indications about the importance of certain types of resources can be made based on this analysis. The steps taken within this collective action suggest the following importance of resources:

1. Moral resources: The information on the analysed website suggests that in this operation there was no strong endorsement from aligning groups or social movements. In addition, no external organization seemed actively involved in the realisation of this collective action.

2. Material resources: Based on this analysis there is a clear indication that during this operation, there was little to none internal exchange of traditional material resources. None of the analyzed websites mention any call for a mobilization of traditional material resources such as money. Participants completely relied upon their already owned computers and technology to download the source material and create, and upload the YouTube videos: e.g. almost all material resources used were technological tools.

3. Cultural resources: Analysed information from the analysed websites strongly suggests that during LeakSpin, most resource mobilization effort was put into the obtaining of cultural resources such as linguistic skills, information pooling, knowledge sharing and journalistic efforts.

4. Human resources: Based on the information that was exchanged via the social media channels and websites during this operation, the mobilization of human resources prove to have been mobilized on very ad-hoc and on project based levels. For every one of the steps that can be distinguished within this operation, different individuals functioned as ad-hoc leaders and lieutenants. Profiting from the large amount of attention that operation LeakSpin generated amongst adherents, Anonymous had managed to quickly gain the involvement of capable individuals in the coordination of internal processes that were being organized during this operation without centralized coordination.

Table 3: Resource importance in Operation LeakSpin:

Type of resource	Importance
Moral	Unclear
Material	Almost no traditional, high importance of technological resources.
Cultural	Intensive, ad-hoc importance
Human	Intensive, Ad-hoc importance

The shifting importance of resources within online activism, as discussed earlier in this thesis, clearly reflects within the single case discussed in this chapter. The importance of moral resources, however, remains unclear when looking at this particular analysis. There have been no clear indications that the importance of moral resources has changed in any way. For this reason this

research is not sufficient to make any credible statement about the influence of modern technologies on the importance of moral resources.

However, Anonymous did clearly make intensive use of modern technological material means, while traditional material resources seem to strongly decrease in importance. In terms of cultural resources, the importance of knowledge on how to operate technological means is increasing as well. Although now almost entirely mobilized on ad-hoc project bases, online protest obviously requires a great deal of expertise in order to overcome challenges that exist for SMs operating in the digital dimension. The importance of the mobilization of human resources also remains when SMs operate in the online dimension, but accordingly show a strong development towards ad-hoc, opt-in/opt-out mobilization structures.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has illustrated which resources have increased in importance in order to effectively utilize the opportunities the internet has offered SMs. Also it has discussed how the challenges the online dimension poses can be overcome, and which resources are increasingly important in doing so. As mentioned in the discussion, and supported by the observations from the single case-analysis, a shifting importance can indeed be found in the mobilization of resources. The shift in importance of certain resources proves present in both modern protest in the offline dimension, as well as protest staged completely in the digital dimension.

Firstly, traditional material resources (so: non-technological means) have strongly declined in importance. The importance of control over large amounts of money, or office spaces are increasingly replaced by the importance of control over computer technology. SMs operating via the internet deal with lowered material costs and accordingly have decreased needs for traditional material resources. Material resources therefore can no longer simply be summarized as the need for money, but need to be understood as the degree in which SMs have access to technological means.

In addition, the need for modern cultural resources (computer expertise and skills) has strongly increased in importance. With the internet as a new platform for collective action, the importance of know-how on how to operate modern technological means, that allow access to the online platform, has risen accordingly. Cultural resources, however, are no longer mobilized via traditional, sustainable channels but are subject to ad-hoc, operation based mobilization strategies. The modern mobilization strategies are creating intense exchanges of knowledge within every new collective action set up online. By effectively using technological means, and related operational knowledge,

necessary additional expertise can quickly be obtained using the internet as well. SMs that have control over technological expertise therefore not only increase their effectiveness and chances of achieving success, but are also able to acquire additional expertise faster and easier. The mobilization of cultural resources therefore is still very important to SMs in modern times, but the importance within the mobilization process has clearly shifted towards quickly obtaining knowledge on how to operate technological resources.

Thirdly, the importance of the mobilization of human skills (such as leaders and spokespersons) still proves very relevant for the survival of modern day SMs. Similar to cultural resources, modern mobilization tactics of human resources have been shifting its' importance from a sustainable degree of control, towards an ad-hoc, operation-based mobilization. Identifiable leadership and sustainable spokespersons are increasingly replaced by Opt-in/Opt-out lieutenants and participants. The internet has created the possibility to disregard the mobilization of traditional sustainable leadership since SMs can quickly tap into human skills available online, once they establish effective control over technological tools.

Possible fluctuations in the importance moral resources remain unclear in this thesis, and form an interesting new subject for future research.

In general, the internet has offered SMs not only new tools in terms of ways to protest, but also has given them revolutionary new ways to mobilize technological- (or modern material), cultural- and human resources. Through the extreme speed in which SMs can tap into necessary resources using the internet, resource mobilization has generally shifted towards operation (or single-action) based mobilizations. SMs that manage to construct their resource mobilization around the quick mobilization of ad-hoc cultural and human resources, and manage to appeal participants that have control over modern technological means, seem to be best fit to overcome the challenges modern times have created, and access the full potential the internet has to offer.

Finally, the theoretical typography of resources (see Chapter 2) proves an out-dated tool for analysis based on the conclusions this thesis provides. In order to clearly understand why modern-day SMs mobilize their resources in the way they do, and how their mobilization efforts influence their chances of success (or survival) this thesis suggests that an updated typography of resources is necessary. The traditional typography of resources has proven inadequate for understanding SMs that operate within the digital revolution. This thesis has accordingly provided important suggestions on how the typography of resources should be understood within the modern age. Future work on this topic should focus on further developing a modernized theoretical typography in which resource

mobilization-efforts and chances of success for SMs can be understood within the modern digitalized context.

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