Occupy Everywhere! An Analysis of Narrative Semiotic Structures as Movement-Building Relays in the Global Diffusion of the Occupy Movement

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Faculty of Humanities

Winter Semester 2023 / 2024

OCCUPY EVERYWHERE!

An Analysis of Narrative Semiotic Structures as Movement-Building Relays in the Global Diffusion of the Occupy Movement

MA Thesis

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Submitted as part of the examination in the degree programme

MA *International Relations*, specialisation *Culture and Politics*.

Submitted by:

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Words: 15,000

Leiden, 22 December 2023

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SECTION I – SETTING THE STAGE

1.1. Introduction

Occupy Wall Street (OWS) was a name to be taken literally. On September 17, 2011, between 800 and 2000 protesters marched through Manhattan, occupying Zuccotti Park for the next 59 days. Solidarity marches in New York City would count around 20,000 protesters, with the 2012 May Day march reporting up to 100,000 participants. By October 9, 2011, movements in over 80 countries rose in solidarity with the occupation, occupying spaces in their areas and voicing concerns, with many even outlasting the New York occupation (Lubin 2012, 184-185). Its spread, domestic and international, transformed Occupy into a global phenomenon. Its insistence on not articulating concrete demands as well as its dependence on pre-figurative politics seemed simultaneously puzzling and mesmerizing (Welty, Bolton, and Zukowski 2013). Thus, whilst media struggled to grasp it, those advocating for societal change heralded Occupy as a new form of movement capable of addressing the concerns of the post-2008 world (Skonieczny and Morse 2014).

Of course, OWS had not been the first social movement to gather such a wide reaction. Indeed, social movements have long been recognised as important political actors, uniting individuals as collective agents and bargaining for concessions through contentious politics (Tilly 2008). With rises in movements' globality, they also entered the realm of international relations as agents that influence local and global politics and serve as connectors between local actors on a global scale (Della Porta, Kriesi, and Rucht 1999). Apart from personal and spatial connections, social movements also allow temporal connections through identification with past and inspiration of future movements. Terms such as 'waves of protest' and 'protest cycles' capture this temporality, with preceding waves aiding the mobilisation of current waves, in turn inspiring future waves (McAdam and Sewell 2001).

OWS thus took inspiration from the movements preceding it, such as the Arab Spring, and would go on to inspire protest in the early 2010s. These "movements of the squares" (Fernández-Savater and Flesher Fominaya 2016, 119) comprise a coherent wave of protest, with the Occupy movement itself being only one of many. There is,

however, a specificity to the example of Occupy, resulting from its spread from the local to the global.[1] The decentralised and anti-hierarchical organisation of the movement means that explanations of this spread cannot (solely) rely on personal networks or growing institutionalisation, forms of direct diffusion, but instead must take forms of indirect diffusion into account (Almeida 2019, 73-74). But, where indirect diffusion is modelled, it often relies on "structural equivalence" (Strang and Soule 1998, 274), similarities in social position and culture that play into pre-existing grievances, which is problematised by the inner heterogeneity of the Occupy movement. It has even been argued that it is precisely this heterogeneity and demandless-ness that aided the spread of the movement (Beer 2018). Thus, when explaining how the Occupy movement spread from OWS one must explain why and how people were inspired to mobilise *themselves* after being exposed to OWS absent of structural equivalence. Contained in this approach is a view on the Occupy movement that exemplifies its disruptive power in social movement studies, destabilising assumptions and questioning theories of the discipline (Pickerill and Krinsky 2012). This thesis sets out to address the topic stated above by answering the question:

How did the Occupy Wall Street movement inspire other Occupy movements around the world despite their heterogeneity?

I argue that we can find an answer to this question in the narrative presented by OWS, whose structure allowed for its recontextualization by others. Other parts of the Occupy movement thus did not simply 'take over' the OWS narrative but changed it to fit their specific context whilst retaining its underlying structure. My thesis, thus, is the following: The OWS narrative contains specific structural aspects that make it especially viable for inspiring the self-mobilisation of recipients and their respective movement-building in which the content of the narrative is recontextualised within the local context. My approach to the OWS narrative in this analysis thus focusses on its semiotic structure instead of its content. Consequent to this self-mobilisation, the

[1] It is noteworthy here that the first protest calling itself 'Occupy' occurred seven weeks before the first OWS assembly. 'Occupy Dataran' in Kuala Lumpur can be seen as another 'movement of the squares' that served to inspire OWS, and later was integrated into the larger Occupy movement.

connections between local Occupy movements' narratives needs to be understood as commonality, not identity.

To argue for the view present above, this thesis will proceed as follows. First, I define the Occupy movement as a form of rhizomatic social movement, dependant on processes of inspiration and self-mobilisation. Afterwards, I will review the already existing scholarship on the diffusion of the Occupy movement, focussing on its narrative dimension. Here, I will identify a gap in the literature, marked by the absence of a comprehensive study of the role of the OWS narrative in the indirect diffusion of the Occupy movement. Finally, I will clarify the interpretivist-hermeneutical methodology utilised in this thesis, my approach to the case of the study, as well as the corpus of analysed documents.

Section II provides the theoretical framework for the analysis, introducing theories of four aspects of structural semiotics. As a dimension of narrative, structural semiotics serve as conditions for drawing connections between different elements of the narrative, enabling its story to unfold. Their analysis is thus not overly concerned with the narrative content, but rather with *how* this content is presented and put into relations. The four aspects of structural semiotics I will be analysing are the temporal, spatial, actantial, and social structure of narrative to understand how these structures condition the possibility and inspirational power of the OWS narrative.

My analysis, then, proceeds in two steps. Section III contains the application of the theoretical insights gathered in section II first onto the narrative presented by OWS, and then onto the narratives of other Occupy movements. Here, the analysis of the OWS narrative serves two functions: first, to identify the inspirational potential within the narrative structure, and second, to build an analytical framework against which the narratives of other movements can be compared. Analysing 27 Occupy movement documents, I will show that the narrative structure presented by the OWS narrative simultaneously inspires self-mobilisation and enables recontextualization. I will further show that the connection between Occupy movements does not lie in narrative content, but rather in common narrative structure. The thesis closes with a discussion of the importance of the presented analysis for contemporary and ongoing social

movement research, identify limitations and showcase potential future avenues for research.

1.2. On Contemporary Social Movements

Contemporary social movements like the Occupy movement trouble definitions of and theories about social movements. Funke and Wolfson (2017) identify five characteristics of contemporary social movements that exemplify this specificity in the history of social movement theory as:

1. An acceptance and embrace of the diversity and equality of actors and their different struggles.
2. The use of social media by participants and organizers, elevating it to play an infrastructural role for movement politics.
3. A commitment to leaderless and pre-figurative forms of organizing.
4. A decision-making process based in grassroots democracy and consensus-based decision making.
5. A distrust of institutional actors such as traditional parties and unions as well as the existing political institutions writ large.

(Funke and Wolfson 2017, 397)

According to Funke (2014), post-1990s waves of protests were dominated by these movements, such as the pre-2008 global justice movements (e.g., the World Social Forum), the 'crisis movements' of the late 2000s and early 2010s (e.g., the Spanish *Indignados*), and contemporary 'post-crisis movements', in a "rhizomatic era of contention" (30). The movements themselves, accordingly, are termed 'rhizomatic social movements'. Here, Funke employs the concept of the rhizome found in works of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987), where it is used as a metaphor to describe non-hierarchical, non-centred, and non-apparent conceptualisations of connections. A rhizome connotates a strictly horizontal connection, which is not oriented around fixed points, allowing for seemingly endless connections between points within the rhizome, a multitude of exits and entryways into the rhizome, and general internal pluralism (21). Rhizomes are contrasted with 'traditional' arborist concepts that rely on root and leaf nodes, organising concepts hierarchically and limiting possibilities

and directions of connections (Funke 2014, 29).[2] Rhizomatic social movements, then, are conceptualised as horizontal, non-hierarchical, and non-centred associations,[3] which can accommodate inner heterogeneity through an embrace of diversity and multi-connectivity (Funke 2012, 36-37).

Whilst the concept of rhizomatic social movements better grasps the specificity of contemporary contentious politics, it also problematises theories of mobilisation and movement emergence. The movements' inner heterogeneity troubles standard functionalist (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996) or culturalist (Flynn 2011) models of mobilisation, where mobilisation is conceptualised as responding to shared characteristics amongst activists, such as social position or culture. Furthermore, rhizomatic social movements' openness problematise the idea of 'global social movements' describing movements that 'went global' in response to globalisation (Waterman 2001). Whilst many contemporary movements position themselves explicitly as global and, like global social movements, rhizomatic social movements 'think' beyond the local, their anti-hierarchical organisation poses a problem to network-driven approaches to studying global social movements as "networks of networks" (Della Porta and Mosca 2005, 182). Nonetheless, rhizomatic and global social movements can both be analytically divided into global movements and their local articulations, which can be movements of themselves. Here, the relationship between global and local is characterised by reciprocal influence captured in the term of "glocality" (Köhler and Wissen 2003, 943).

This connection between global movements and local articulations returns to the question of mobilisation. In absence of structures and equivalences that beget mobilisation, how do rhizomatic social movements emerge and spread globally? It was already alluded to in the introduction that inspiration, interpretation, and recontextualization play an immense role in this process. Building on McAdam's (1995) distinction between 'initiator movements' and 'spin-off movements', Funke (2014) develops a conceptual framework for understanding these processes as

[2] Funke's usage of the concept of the rhizome does not exhaust the full complexity of the concept. However, a complete explanation of its theoretical basis is beyond the scope of this thesis, and I will thus, for the purposes of my analysis, proceed with Funke's reception of the term.
[3] Or, to continue in Deleuzian terminology 'assemblages'.

"movement-building relays" (31). In relays, mobilisation of strata of society is understood as *self*-mobilisation responding to actions of already-mobilised. These actions of the already-mobilised are situated within their respective context but are communicated beyond this context. The to-be-mobilised receive these communications, interpret them, and situate them in *their* respective context, leading to their mobilisation (Funke 2014, 31-34). Movement-building relays may differ in their convergence, with rhizomatic social movements excelling at stages of low convergence but falling victim to their own logic at higher levels of convergence (Funke 2014, 36-41). For the purposes of this thesis, the concepts of rhizomatic social movements and movement-building relays inform my specific view on the Occupy movement. I will be arguing that the structural semiotics of the OWS narrative can be understood as low-convergence movement-building relays begetting self-mobilisation of strata of society receiving the narrative, interpreting and situating them in their specific context.

Additionally, I need to clarify the vocabulary I will be using to refer to the object of my study. Since, as a rhizomatic social movement, the Occupy movement remains an elusive object, its inner heterogeneity informs an evaluation of the language used when referring to it. In this thesis, I will be referring to the globe-spanning rhizomatic social movement as 'the Occupy movement'. It is however important to keep in mind that this umbrella term incorporates a large diversity of tactics, demands, and activists in local movement articulations. To preserve this dimension of glocality, I will be referring to the local articulations either specifically by their names as provided by activists, or generally as 'local articulations of the Occupy movement' or 'Occupy movements' in the plural.

1.3. Literature Review

Whilst there has been scholarly work on the diffusion of the Occupy movement and the narratives present within movement(s), studies utilising a narratological approach in studying diffusion are quite rare. It is thus helpful to evaluate both the approaches to movement diffusion already employed in the literature as well as the already undertaken scholarship about the narratives of the Occupy movement.

The first group of studies analysing the diffusion of the Occupy movement rely on models of direct diffusion. Many studies here employ a network-theoretical approach, seeking to identify connections between movement articulations. Vasia and Suh (2016) analyse the importance of social media networks and spatial proximity for the establishment of 'solidarity movements' in the US responding to OWS. Park, Lim, and Park (2015) offer a similar study of the usage of Twitter and YouTube networks in transferring information between Occupy activists, which they view as a prime factor in its diffusion. Tremayne (2015) comes to similar results, arguing for an approach in which digital networks replace personal networks. A comprehensive study of the usage of new media, not only social media, in the Occupy movement has been undertaken by Costanza-Chock (2012), who again iterates the general importance of networks for diffusion, as well as the specific importance of media produced by the movement to be disseminated. Uitermark and Nicholls (2012) offer a more global perspective, analysing the tension between local activist networks and a global network of Occupy activists, which they argue explains differences between articulations. Romanos (2016) argues that Spanish residents of New York City served as brokers between the Spanish social movements that helped inspire OWS, and later for the diffusion of OWS into the Spanish-speaking world. Similarly, Hopke (2016) presents an analysis of the crossing networks between Occupy movement articulations and the Spanish 15M movement, which she argues serve as a 'hyperlink' between movement networks. From a more global perspective, Hosseini (2013) offers a study of cosmopolitan Occupy activists that serve as brokers between local movement and aid the 'transversalization' of their ideas.[4] Studies analysing the direct diffusion of the Occupy movement thus often rely on network-theoretical approaches. Analysing the case of Occupy London, Halvorsen (2012) criticises these approaches modelling direct diffusion networks, pointing out their limits when analysing non-hierarchical organisations.

Studying Occupy Montreal, Ancelovici (2016) argues that the movement's diffusion best be understood as indirect, informed by its horizontalism. The second group of studies can thus be subsumed under indirect diffusion approaches. A first mechanism

[4] The idea of transversality here describes a state of intersection without complete embrace.

analysed here is shared identities of movement activists. Langman (2013), terming Occupy a 'new new social movement', argues for the importance of shared identities in mobilisation, resulting from a legitimacy crisis of post-2008 capitalism. Smith, Gavin, and Sharp (2015) instead argue that the Occupy movement *creates* shared identities through practices of online interaction, which then lead to mobilisation. Similar arguments are put forward by Kavada (2015). Della Porta and Mattoni (2014) argue that the creation of a distinct cosmopolitan identity within the Occupy movement aided its global diffusion. Apart from shared identities, Kern and Nam (2017) analyse shared cultural values as prime factors for mobilisation. Jensen and Bang (2013) instead refute the reliance on pre-formed or emergent shared identities or values, pointing out the variety of identities within movements and questioning the importance of culturalist new social movement theory approaches to the study of Occupy mobilisation. An alternative approach to indirect diffusion relies on the production of Occupy's image. Akbaba (2013) analyses the importance of a produced digital image of OWS actions for its diffusion, arguing that the medial image of protest distributed in digital spaces motivated mobilisation. Suh, Vasi and Chang (2017) argue that images of repression, disseminated through social media, led to further mobilisation in response to OWS, whereas Juris (2016) especially focusses on the aesthetic dimension of OWS protest in its online #OccupyEverywhere reception. Similarly, Doerr, Mattoni, and Teune (2013) analyse the diffusion of movement-produced texts and images as the main motivator for grassroots mobilisation beyond the movement's network.

An approach informed by the concept of mobilisation through indirect diffusion *not* based on shared identities but on the dissemination of movement-produced objects aligns with the concept of rhizomatic social movements. However, where most of these approaches focus on visual images, in this thesis, I will be focussing on textual objects and their respective narrative.

Reviewing the literature employing a narratological approach to the Occupy movement, we can identify three main groups of studies. The first of these focus on the ways in which Occupy narratives are presented. Catalano and Creswell (2013) employ a cognitive linguistics approach to analyse metaphor and metonymy in the

presentation of OWS's narrative by activists, revealing a reliance on metaphors of dynamism and constant change. Similarly, Neu, Saxton, and Rahaman (2022) identify a reliance of the OWS narrative on normative instead of political language. Martín Rojo (2014) moves beyond linguistics and, in addition to analysing banners and signs, presents an analysis of the importance of spatial symbols like encampments in the portrayal of the Occupy movement narratives. On the topic of appealing to potential activists, Dahlgren (2013) offers an analysis of the interpolation between political identity and the OWS narrative and Taylor (2013) presents a view in which the neo-anarchist language employed by OWS made it appealing to activists in political limbo after the break-down of the pre-2008 alter-globalisation movement. Overall, studies in this group rely on the analysis of general narratives in specific Occupy movement articulations. A second group of studies concerns itself with specific (counter-)narratives *within* individual movement articulations. Eschle (2018) presents an interview-driven retelling of the marginalisation of Feminist views at Occupy Glasgow, culminating in 'narratives of betrayal' after the camp was abandoned. Brady and Antoine (2012) examine the narrative presented by the 'Decolonize Wall Street' movement, a response movement led by Indigenous activists criticising OWS for their absent critique of colonisation and disenfranchisement of Indigenous groups. A further analysis is provided by Barker (2012). Campbell (2011), drawing on his own experiences within OWS, presents narratives of Black Occupy activists critiquing OWS's unsatisfactory protest on issues of race discrimination and absent reflection on the interconnections between capitalism and racism. This group of studies shows the tension between specific narratives in specific Occupy movement articulations but does not analyse narratives' diffusion. Studies that evaluate this diffusion tend to be rare and, when they exist, more focussed on narrative reception instead of the narrative itself. Cloke, Sutherland, and Williams (2015) discuss the importance of 'crossover narratives' between New York churches and OWS, in which OWS incorporated and transformed religious language into 'post-secular' terms. In a transnational perspective, Kaun (2015) compares the reception of the 'traveling narrative' of Occupy in Sweden and Latvia, arguing for the necessity of a historically contextualised analysis of narrative receptions to explain the differences between local movement articulations. Zamponi (2012) argues similarly, presenting political and

social contexts in Italy as an explanation for the failure of Occupy narratives to embed themselves in activist circles. Crane and Ashutosh (2013) offer an analysis of narrative diffusion *after* OWS, arguing that the OWS narrative, after the eviction of activists from Zuccotti square, travelled with the evicted to other spaces within New York and abroad.

As we have seen, existing studies on the diffusion of the Occupy movement mainly rely either on network-theory driven models of direct diffusion or models of indirect diffusion based on pre-formed or emergent commonalities. Models of indirect diffusion that do not rely on such pre-formed elements, however, mainly evaluate visual aesthetics produced by the movement. We can identify the first gap I aim to fill here, in the absence of a study of indirect diffusion of the Occupy movement based on textual sources and narrative instead of pre-formed elements. The second part of the gap I aim to fill arises from missing links between narratological studies of the Occupy movement and studies about its diffusion. As we have seen, when narratives were studied, the analyses focus on individual narratives within local movements, presentations of general narratives by local movements, or small-scale narrative diffusion focused on reception, revealing an absence of a comprehensive study of the potential of narrative in the global diffusion of the Occupy movement. The study I am presenting here understands itself as evaluating the role of narrative structures as movement-building relays to connect models of indirect diffusion with narratological research. The thesis thus aims to deepen our understanding of the spread of contemporary rhizomatic social movements by viewing their inner heterogeneity as a consequence of their mode of diffusion.

1.4. Methodology and Corpus

Rather than consisting of a set of methods and their applications, the methodology of narratology needs to be understood as a process. It is important to first define the 'attitude' one has towards the texts one will be analysing (Czarniawska 2010), which can be one of three as described in Hernadi's (1987) hermeneutical triad (Table 1).

Table 1: Hernadi's Hermeneutical Triad

	Explication	**Explanation**	**Exploration**
Position	Standing under	Standing over	Standing in for
Procedure	Reproductive translation	Inferential detection	Existential enactment
Aim	Reconstruction	Deconstruction	Construction

Source: Own work based on Hernadi 1987 and Czarniawska 2004.

Each attitude pursues a different research interest. Thus, explication is mainly concerned with the text's meaning, whereas explanation seeks not to understand *what* the text says, but *how* the text says it. Exploration is not generally utilised for scientific endeavours, but often appears implicitly in their conclusions.

This study understands itself as one of explanation. My aim is thus not to analyse and reconstruct the content and meaning of narratives of Occupy movements, but to ascertain and evaluate the structures within them. By analysing their movement-building potential and comparing these structures between narratives, it is possible to illuminate the structures' role as movement-building relays as well as commonalities between movement articulations. My approach further understands itself as a hermeneutical and interpretivist engagement with the text. It thus does not lend itself well to the quality criteria of positivist research, the triad of objectivity, reliability, and validity (Kreiswirth 2000), instead needing to be understood as essentially subjective and in its presented form only possible from my position. By not denying this subjective dimension of the analysis, I also commit myself to a conscious reflection of this standpoint-dependency throughout every step (Patnaik 2013).

Furthermore, whilst the study understands itself as a 'case study' of the Occupy movement, the word 'case', here, carries with it a set of assumptions in what Soss (2021) terms the 'realist view' on cases. Here, the task is to find "the real nature of a thing in the world, asking whether it truly qualifies as a member of the class we are

sampling from" (85). Instead of this view, in my approach, I follow a 'nominal view' in which a case as a phenomenon of the social world is made *through* analysis and theorising (85). It might thus be better suited to say that instead of studying the case of the Occupy movement, the Occupy movement cases the study of this thesis. As such, the structural analysis of OWS's narrative, my evaluation of its role as a movement-building relay and its comparison with the structure of other Occupy movement narratives, serves as the casing for a larger point about the role of narrative structures in movement diffusion and commonality that I am arguing for.

The corpus I will be analysing consists of documents and resolutions published by the Occupy movement in local articulations. I am restricting myself to the analysis of text, recognising that the narratives of the Occupy movement might also be present in other media. Due to the prevalence of online dissemination of these documents, their accessibility has been preserved via the Internet Archive (waybackmachine.org). The decision which documents were included was made based on my careful evaluation on whether they constitute an important part of the overall narrative provided by the local movement. This process mirrors 'theoretical sampling' within Grounded Theory, in which the stages of data collection and data analysis are performed simultaneously. The list of relevant sources is continuously reviewed and updated until reaching a moment of 'theoretical saturation' deemed satisfactory by the analyst (Breckenridge 2009, 114-117).

A full list of analysed documents can be found in appendix A. If not marked otherwise, emphases are my own. If there was an English-language version of a document available, I utilised this version, in all other cases, all translations of documents are my own. In cases where my command of the relevant language was not sufficient, the translation was aided by translation programmes.

SECTION II – SEMIOTIC STRUCTURES OF NARRATIVES

Until now, I have alluded colloquially to the structure of the Occupy movements' narratives. To evaluate my thesis that structural elements of the OWS narrative serve as movement-building relays for its global diffusion through recontextualization and self-mobilisation, however, it is necessary to sharpen the theoretical understanding of narrative structures. A narrative can be broadly defined as a "perceived sequence of non-randomly connected events" (Toolan 2001, 6) told by a narrator to an audience, and prefabricated before telling (4-6). To analyse how narrative events are set into these non-random connected relations, narratology differentiates between the 'story' or *histoire* of a narrative, that which happens or '*what* is told', and its 'plot' or *discourse*, its presentation or '*how* it is told', with the latter supplying information about the causal relations between story elements. The connection between events thus arises out of the relation between story and plot (Wake 2006, 15). Underlying this connection, however, is the narratives 'narrativity', that which *makes it* a narrative and allows for causal relations between elements to be recognised (Prince 2004, 16-17). This narrativity is based on semiotic structures which form the "conditions of narrativity" (Ryan 2005, 5) by allowing for the differentiation of story elements before establishing their relations (Pier 2008, see also Greimas et al. 1989). In my analysis of the OWS narrative, I seek to identify these semiotic structures to evaluate their role as movement-building relays and compare them with structures of other Occupy movements' narratives to assess their commonality. I will be focussing on four dimensions of semiotic structures: temporal structure, ordering elements in time, spatial structure, ordering elements in space, actantial structure, ordering actions, and social structure, ordering narrator and recipient relations.

2.1. Temporality and Temporal Structure

The importance of differentiating narrative elements along temporal orderings has long been recognised in narrative theory (Richardson 2006). In social movement theory, whilst some have lamented a "weak conception of temporality" (Gillan 2020, 516), time has also been recognised as an important dimension for movements and their reception. As such, Uprichard (2011) presents a view on temporality as the enabling condition for thinking about alternative futures, whereas Maeckelbergh

(2016) points out the importance of temporality for social change and argues that social movements' pre-figurative politics bridge temporal gaps. As I will show in the next section, OWS exhibits a temporal structure within its narrative providing motivation for and legitimacy to its actions and aiding the mobilisation of recipients. The understanding of how this order is constituted thus informs the evaluation of its role as a movement-building relay.

Temporal structures of narrative show themselves in multiple ways. Ricœur's (1980) distinction between episodic and configurational dimensions of temporality offer a first insight into this multiplicity. Here, the episodic dimension is based on attributions of specific positions to specific events within the sequence of all events to bring them into chronological order. The configurational dimension, then, determines the temporal framework in which *all* events occur (178). In other words, the episodic dimension shows which events took place when in relation to other events, whereas the configurational dimension defines the time in which the narrative itself takes place.[5] The chronology of the episodic dimension, now, can be further illuminated by relating it to "the study of the relationship between discourse time and story time" (Ricœur 1981, 167). 'Discourse time' refers to the time elements occupy in their narrated presentation, whereas 'story time' refers to the time elements occupy *within* the narrative. This distinction thus enables that "events occur in one order but are narrated in another" (Genette 1983, 11). From this arises the possibility of 'anachrony', the non-chronological ordering of elements in plot that follow chronologically in story. This aspect of temporal structure, 'order', thus is concerned with the tension between the temporality of story elements and their temporal presentation. Another aspect, 'duration', deals with timespans and also arises out of the tension between story time and discourse time, "between the actual duration of the events and textual length" (Genette 1983, 87), since long timespans in story might be narrated in mere moments. The final aspect of temporal structure is 'frequency', the repetition of story within plot, which can happen in four ways: singulative, where an element happens once and is narrated once, repetitive, where an element happens once and is narrated several

[5] Ricœur's conception of narrative time here relies on the Heideggerian notion of 'being-within-time'. A full exploration of the fundamental-ontological origins of Ricœur's theory is unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis.

times, iterative, where an element happens several times and is narrated once, and multiple, where an element happens several times and is narrated several times (Genette 1983, 114).

My analysis thus needs to consider four elements of temporal structure: First, the configurational dimension of the narrative, the time in which the narrative 'takes place'. Second, the chronological sequence of episodes within the narrative, organised in timepoints between story time and discourse time. Third, the duration of elements within the narrative, organised in timespans around timepoints. And fourth, the frequency of story elements through their (non-)repetition.

2.2. Spatiality and Spatial Structure

Spatiality also serves as a condition of narrativity allowing the distinction between elements. Unlike temporality, however, spatiality in narrative theory only gained significant traction in the last decades (Ryan, Foote, and Azaryahu 2016, 17). An exception is the work of Mieke Bal (1985) in which spatiality is conceptualised as being constitutive to story[6] since stories need to take place 'somewhere' to be meaningful (2). Here, Bal (1985) describes a configurational role of space like the one Ricœur attributes to time. With the geographical turn in the social sciences, social movement theory also began engaging with spatiality through concepts like scale, place, mobility, and position (Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008). The Occupy movement especially has been recognised as a movement dependent on spatiality due to its main mode of protest relying on the occupation of space (Halvorsen 2017). As I will show in the next section, understanding the spatial structure of its narrative is important for evaluating space's role as a movement-building relay.

The constitutive nature of space points us to the first necessary distinction in theorising narrative spatiality: general space and particular space. General space refers to space in the narrative through differentiating elements along spatial terms (Ryan, Foote, and Azaryahu 2016, 35). This builds on Lotman's (1970) work on spatial metaphors, which only become possible through differentiations along boundaries. Analysing general

[6] Or, in Bal's terms, *fabula*.

space thus means analysing where these boundaries are drawn and which differentiations result from delineations (Ryan, Foote, and Azaryahu 2016, 36-37).

Particular space then is concerned with the meaning of delineated zones through the attribution of characteristics and possibilities. Certain actors can be narratively tied to a subspace and only allowed certain behaviours *because* of that tie (Ryan, Foote, and Azaryahu 2016, 37-38). Subspaces can also serve as traversing-spaces between other subspaces, like hallways or corridors, creating a horizontal pattern of zones that are differentiable along boundaries and associated meanings, but traversable through connections of traversing-spaces. Vertically, subspaces might be incorporated in a 'salient ontology', which reflects differing levels of narrative embeddedness of subspaces, allowing the differentiation between 'ontological layers' in the narrative (Ryan, Foote, and Azaryahu 2016, 38-39; see also Pavel 1986). Traversing-spaces already allude to a final dimension of spatiality, movement, which can be conceptualises as 'stepping over boundaries' of general space. Movement can thus lead to elements being 'out of place' or 'in a new place' when their position in general space no longer corresponds to their proper position in particular space (Ryan, Foote, and Azaryahu 2016, 21). Since movement is a spatial action happening *over time*, it also informs the connection between temporal and spatial structures. For analytical purposes, I will nonetheless analyse both structures seperately.

The analysis of the spatial structure of narratives thus also includes four elements: First, the constitutive space where the narrative 'takes place'. Second, the general space of the narrative, the delineated zones that are produced or presupposed. Third, the particular space of the narrative, in which spatial meaning and connections are analysed. And fourth, movement and its possibility, as elements stepping-over the boundaries of general space.

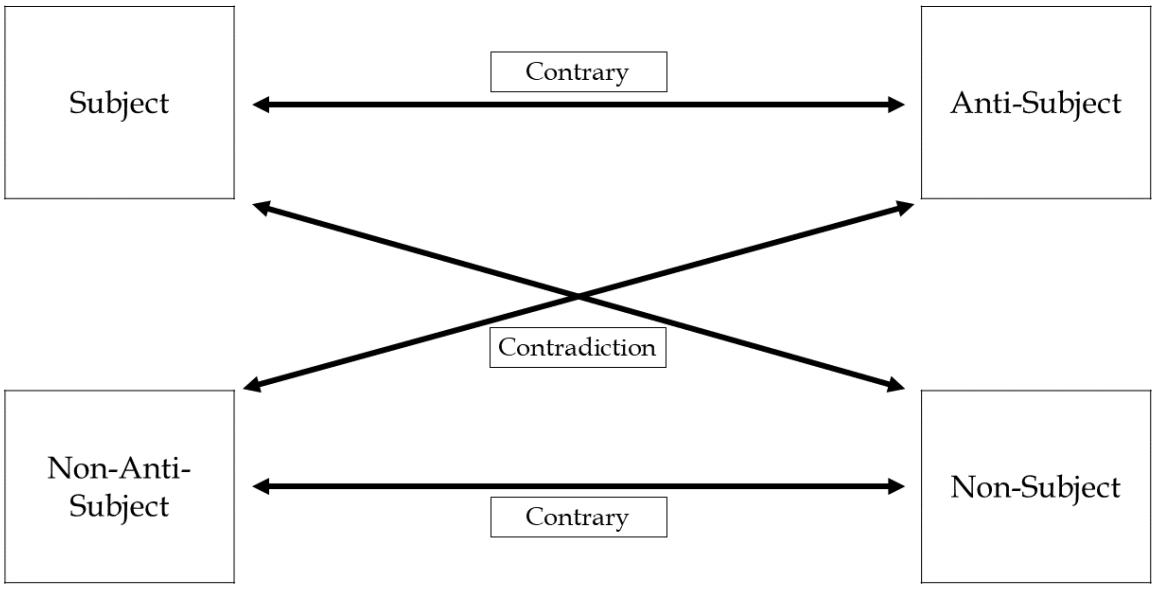
2.3. Characters, Actions, and Actantial Structure

In addition to times and places, narratives also contain characters and actors with agency that drive the narrative through their actions. Jacobs (2002) argues that ordering narrative character relations can serve as a strategic resource for social movements in further mobilisation. To understand how characters in OWS's narrative

can serve as movement-building relays, it is thus necessary to evaluate how their actions and relations are structured.

To analytically isolate this structure, it is important to remain focused on the narrative itself, avoiding 'denarrativization' in which actions of characters are explained by exo-narrative discourses (Somers 1994). To understand the endo-narrative structure of characters and action, I am employing Greimas' (1983) actantial model, which allows for the narrative itself to 'drive' the relations among agential characters, making it valuable for the description of characters' narrative positions (Wang and Roberts 2005, 53). This position results from specific relations to other characters based in the 'semiotic square' (Figure 1). Here, when setting a character as subject, every other element results from a possible relation to this subject. It is directly opposed by the 'anti-subject', its contrary, along the 'complex axis', and contradicted by the 'non-subject'. The anti-subject is contradicted by the 'non-anti-subject' who engages in a relation with the non-subject along the 'neutral axis' (Wang and Roberts 2005, 55-56).

Figure 1: Greimas' Semiotic Square.

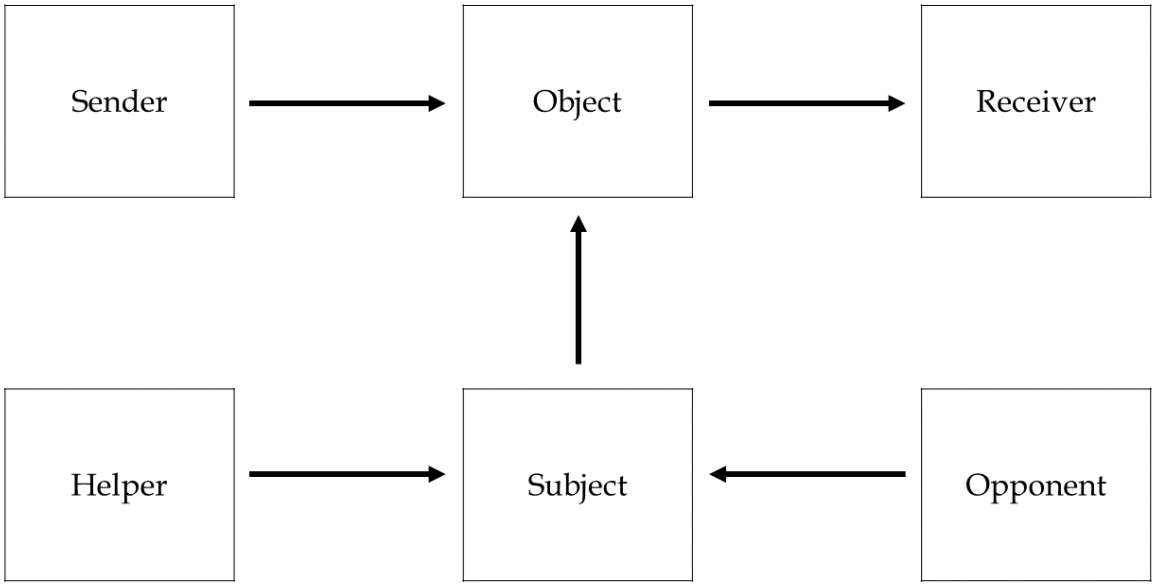


Source: Own work based on Greimas 1983.

The semiotic square informs possible relations between characters of a narrative. To understand character actions, Greimas builds on Propp's (1990) concept of narrative

functions, in which action is conditioned through its functional role in narrative. Greimas' actantial model breaks open the staticity of Propp's set of function and divides an action into six components called actants, following the distinctions of the semiotic square (Hébert and Tabler 2019, 80). The first pair of actants are subject and anti-subject, now object, organised along the 'axis of desire', with the subject being directed at the object through their 'junction'. If the subject desires to conjoin with the object, this junction is termed 'conjunction', if they desire to part with it, 'disjunction'. The second pair of actants is organised along the 'axis of power' and consist of helper and opponent. The helper supports the subject in fulfilling the junction whereas the opponent opposes it. The final pair of actants are sender and receiver along the 'axis of knowledge'. The sender is requesting the junction, whereas the receiver is its beneficiary. In many narratives, those two components are identical, but are still split for analytical purposes (Hébert and Tabler 2019, 81). A visual representation of the actantial model can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Greimas' Actantial Model.



Source: Own work based on Greimas 1983.

When analysing narrative action through the actantial model, then, it is first necessary to isolate the action, determine subject and object, and only then 'build' the other actants around the subject-object junction. In the next section, I will show that the

actantial structure of the OWS narrative serves as a movement-building relay through actantial identities in the models of the movement action and corporate action.

2.4. Narrators, Recipients, and Social Structure

The final structural semiotic condition of the narrative I will consider in my analysis is social structure. Whilst up until now, I have treated narratives in a vacuum, with the invocation of their social structure, the narrative is embedded in its social context. I want to consider two elements here: the social production of the narrative and its social reception. This is in accordance with Fine's (2013) argument that the co-production of narrative within social movements and its dissemination inside and outside of the movement constitute important elements for the movement's impact and stability. As I will show, the social structure of the OWS narrative has profound implications for its potential as a movement-building relay.

Genette's (1983) differentiates narrators along two axes: intradiegetic and extradiegetic narrators, narrators within the narrative or outside of it, and heterodiegetic and homodiegetic narrators, narrators that are not characters in the story and narrators that are (248). Building on this typology, Walsh (1997) argues that the main differentiation is between narrator characters and authors (510-511). The concept of the narrator is thus tied to authorship of the narrative and to the conditions of narrative production, determining *who* has access to authorship and *how* this access is regulated. The other dimension of social structure is its presumed audience. In narration, certain assumptions are made about the audience receiving the narrative, with the narrator responding to these assumptions through rhetoric. Consequently, the presumed audience can be inferred from the narrative (Smith 1980, 234; Phelan 1996, 7-8). The analysis of the social structure of Occupy narratives thus consists of three elements: First, the identification and classification of the narrator. Second, the analysis of conditions of authorship. And third, the analysis of the narrative's presumed audience

SECTION III – OCCUPY NARRATOLOGY

Before applying the theoretical framework I have described onto the OWS narrative in order to identify and evaluate its movement-building relays and illuminate commonalities between movement articulation, it is necessary to establish that there has indeed been a reception of the OWS narrative in other Occupy movements.

We can infer such a relationship from the way OWS is presented in narratives of other Occupy movements. A. Joe Hani of Occupy South Africa states that "[t]he Occupy Banner was chosen as an experimental tactic after its rallying success was witnessed in the US […]" (OSA-IN-01) and Occupy Stockholm describes itself as "a local political protest, inspired by and in solidarity with protests around the world" (OST-GE-01). Occupy Amsterdam describes their relationship to the overall movement as such: "[t]he global Occupy Together actions are spontaneously occurring […] *Similarly*, Occupy Amsterdam is a spontaneous action and collaboration" (OAM-GE-01), and Occupy Porto Allegre sees itself "in line with […] Occupy Wall Street" OPA-GE-01), with Occupy Mumbai calling itself "an offshoot of the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement […]" (OMU-GE-01). Similar formulations can be found in most local movement articulation narratives, seeing themselves as simultaneously inspired by the Occupy movement in general and OWS in particular, but distinct through their adaptation to their relevant context. As such, Occupy movements in Europe incorporate more anti-austerity rhetoric into their narratives (Ancelovici 2015), where Occupy South Africa focusses on issues of racism and (neo-)colonialism (Mottiar 2013), and Occupy Baluwatar on women's rights in Nepal (Koyu and Pokharel 2014). My analysis thus seeks to identify the role of narrative structures of the OWS narrative in this tension between inspiration and recontextualization, pointing out structural commonalities between movements along the way.

3.1. Past Corruptions and Future Utopias

Analysing the configurational dimension of temporality within the OWS narrative, we can find representations of its meaningful timeframe in formulations like "the blatant injustices *of our times*" (OWS-GE-02) and "[w]e come to you *at a time* […]" (OWS-GE-01). The configurational dimension here is inherently tied to the moment of protest and its motivation. As such, the meaningful timeframe in which the narrative takes

place is organised with the movement at its core, meaning that temporally meaningful structures need to be connected to the movement to be part of the narrative. The OWS narrative thus temporally takes place *around* the moment of assembly. This temporality can serve as a movement-building relay due to its non-dependence on any specific exo-narrative timepoint. Whilst the moment of protest of OWS thus can inspire other protests, resulting movements are not tied to the moment of OWS, but instead are able to recontextualise the narrative around the moment of *their* protest.

We can see examples of this in movements that mobilised shortly after the 2011 OWS protest, such as Occupy London, whose *Initial Statement* reads "The *current* system is unsustainable. […] We need alternatives; this is where we work *towards* them." (OLO-GE-01) and whose statement *United for Global Democracy* reads "That is what we demand *today*" (OLO-GE-02). Both formulations point towards a temporal framework oriented around the moment of assembly. Other initial spin-off movements exhibit similar narratives, such as Occupy Stockholm's *Kärnvärden* (Core Values) which contain the formulation "*It is time* to stop competing and start cooperating […]" (OST-GE-01), with the tension between 'stop' and 'start' moderating conceptions of meaningful pasts and futures tied to the movement's assembly. Paris' Occupons La Défense's statement *Nous sommes les 99%*, reading "Come and join us in *building* another world, so that austerity *ends* and real democracy *prevails*" (OLD-GE-01), exhibits similar tensions between past, present, and future. The narratives of later movements, such as Blockupy in Germany which emerged in 2012, also exhibits this configurational temporality in formulations in its *Selbstverständnis* (Self-concept) like "[t]ogether we want to *create* a European movement […] that *overcomes* the power of the crisis regime […] and begins to *build* democracy and solidarity from below" (BLO-GE-01). Occupy Baluwatar's 2012 declaration *Baluwatar Satyagraha* reads "[t]his peaceful, independent struggle *started* with the demand that justice and judicial rule should be *restored* in the country. [The occupation] is *growing* day by day […]" (OBA-GE-01). Both 'later movements' exhibit similar temporal tensions to earlier mobilisations. The recontextualization of configurational temporality thus, instead of orienting around OWS, puts the relevant moment of movement assembly into the centre of the movement's narrative.

There are several timepoints within the episodic dimension of temporality in the OWS narrative. I will introduce them in the order that they appear in the *Declaration of the Occupation of New York City*, in discourse time, and afterwards determine their story time. The first timepoint, A, is the moment of the assembly, exemplified by statements like "*As we gather together* in solidarity to express a feeling of mass injustice […]", which opens the *Declaration*, and "[w]e *have* peaceably assembled here, as is our right, to let these facts be known." (OWS-GE-01). The latter statement, by describing the action of assembly as already concluded, positions A as the moment between assembly and action, thus directly preceding the narrative present of OWS. The second timepoint introduced in the *Declaration* arises out of the second half of its first sentence: "[…] we must not lose sight of what *brought* us together". This timepoint, B, describes preceding actions that motivated the assembly in A. B is heavily embellished in the latter half of the declaration with motivations being provided through statements such as "[t]hey have taken our houses […]" and "[t]hey have sold our privacy […]" (OWS-GE-01). The third timepoint, C, is introduced by the statement: "[…] our system must protect our rights, and upon *corruption* of that system, it is up to the individuals to protect their own rights, and those of their neighbors" (OWS-GE-01). The term of corruption here opens a temporality in which the uncorrupted got corrupted, thus informing a time before B in which 'the system' was not yet corrupt. In close proximity to this statement, the formulation "the future of the human race" (OWS-GE-01) also points to a distant future timepoint D, in which the fulfilment of OWS' protest removes the need for protest itself. Before the embellishment of B the *Declaration* further distinguishes between the timepoint of assembly A and of the declaration E. The temporality of E can be extracted from the sentence "[w]e *come* to you at a time *when* corporations […], *run* our governments." (OWS-GE-01). The verb tense is important here, with the present tense showing that the actions are currently happening, making E the narrative present. A further temporal dimension present is that of the immediate future F, different from the distant future D. F can be inferred from the calls to action that follow the list of motivations, such as "[w]e, the New York City General Assembly occupying Wall Street in Liberty Square, urge you *to assert* your power" and "[*e]xercise* your right to peaceably assemble" (OWS-GE-01). Both statements point to future actions as the immediate aftermath of the assembly. The *Declaration* thus introduces six distinct

timepoints in discourse time: A, the moment of the assembly; B, the motivations for the assembly; C, the time of adequacy before B; D, the utopic distant future; E, the narrative present; and F, the immediate future in of OWS actions. We can infer from their temporalities that the story time reads: C, B, A, E, F, D. We can thus rewrite our timepoints as C1, B2, A3, E4, F5, and D6. A summary of the characteristics of the timepoints I have identified in the *Declaration* can be found in table 2.

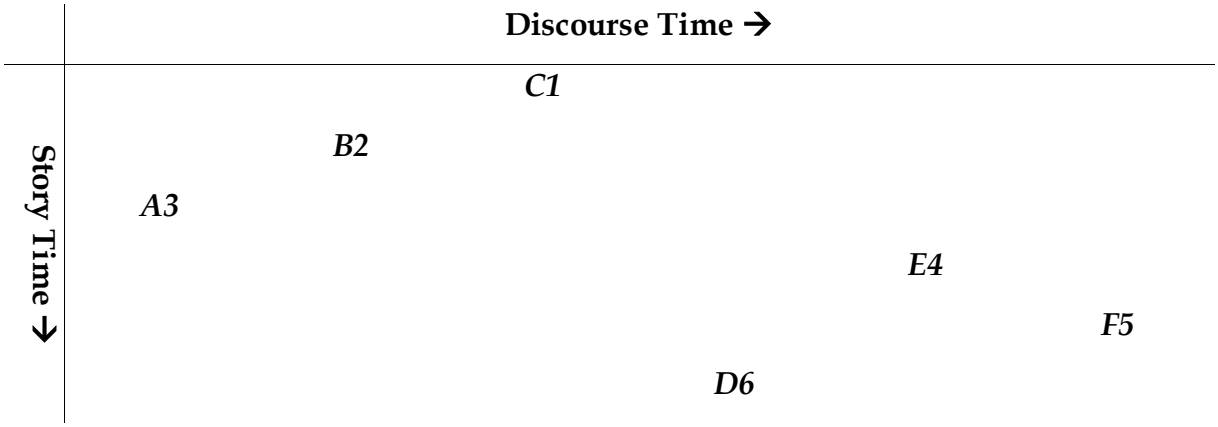
Table 2: Characteristics of Timepoints in the *Declaration of the Occupation of New York City* in Story Time

C1	**B2**	**A3**	**E4**	**F5**	**D6**
Adequacy	Motivation	Assembly	Declaration	Action	Future

Source: Own work based on OWS-GE-01.

The succession of these timepoints informs a logic of return within the OWS narrative: There exists an adequate past in which the system was not yet corrupted, which was departed from through the corruption of OWS's opponents. This corruption motivates the assembly, declaration, and action, through which it is deemed possible to safeguard future utopia. The narrative temporality of the OWS *Declaration* emerges when putting the story time of timepoints in relation to their discourse time. A depiction of this relationship can be seen in figure 3.

Figure 3: Discourse and Story Time in the *Declaration of The Occupation of New York City*



Source: Own work based on OWS-GE-01.

The temporal order in discourse time within the *Declaration* thus is also centred around the assembly. The recipient of the narrative is first met with the timepoint of assembly, which is subsequently justified through referring to motivations and a preceding adequacy. The first part of the narrative thus follows a retrospective order. Afterwards, the narrative jumps to the distant future, juxtaposing the two marginal timepoints that delineate its configurational temporal dimension, before describing how this future is achievable in prospective view. The structure of the episodic dimension of temporality within the OWS narrative invites recipients of the narrative to first understand the movement and its motivations, before delineating a path towards the future. As a movement-building relay, its inspirational power can thus be drawn from recipients identifying marginal timepoints (C1 and D6) in their own context, allowing them to mobilise themselves in reaction to perceived corruption of adequacy and orienting towards a utopic future. Consequently, narratives resulting from this self-mobilisation would retain the relational structure between timepoints, their role as sources of grievance, motivation, and utopic vision, without necessarily presenting them in the same way.

The workings of this movement-building relay can be seen in several documents put forward by Occupy movement articulations. In its narrative, Ocupa Rio posits itself against "[g]overnments, corporations and financial institutions [controlling] our lives" (ORI-GE-01) inferring an adequate past before this. Additionally, motivations subsumed under the statement that "[w]e Brazilians have a lot to complain about, and a lot to change" (ORI-GE-01), ranging from environmental issues to evictions, serve as corruption, and thus as motivation for the movement "waking up, and [being] not satisfied with what is happening to the world" (ORI-GE-01). The distant future is characterised by "a critical break with the financial system" (ORI-GE-01) after which autonomy and individuality are possible. Similar temporalities can be found in the narratives of Occupy London, Blockupy, and Occupons La Défense. An application of the structure that reduces its scale can be found in the narrative of Occupy Baluwatar in which corruption is identified with "the injustice done to Sita Rai [a female migrant worker arrested for travelling with a fake passport] by the state machinery" (OBA-GE-01), moving timepoints closer together. The utopic future in this narrative also is

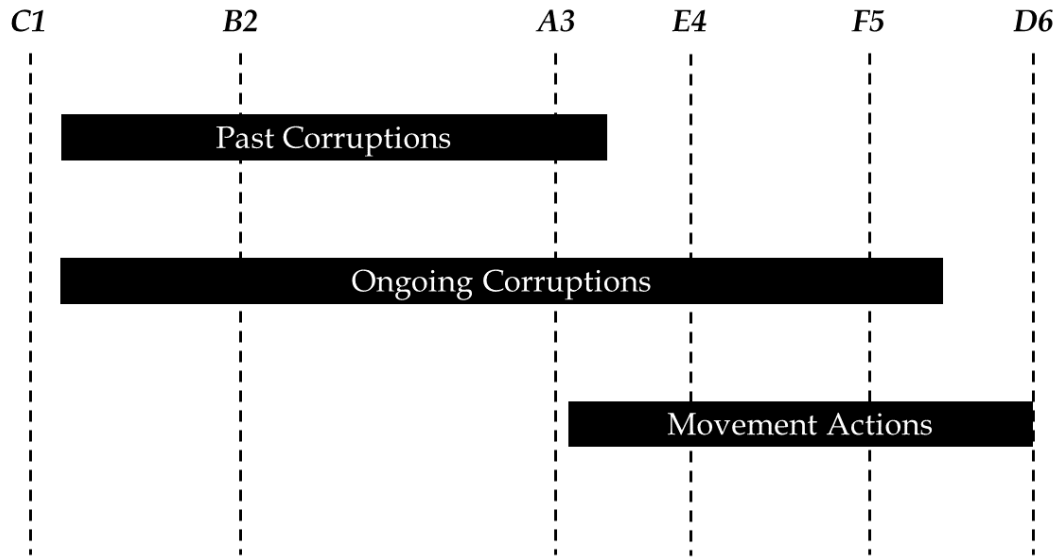
temporally close through hoping that "the [police's] gender-based violence department will fulfil the pledge to make public the five woman's issues addressed by *Satyagraha*" (OBA-GE-01). A further peculiar application of this structure can be seen in the narrative of Occupy South Africa, in which the state of adequacy in C1, identified with the 1994 abolition of Apartheid, is characterised as a 'mirage' preceded by a pre-C1 temporality of the "painful past of Apartheid" (OSA-GE-01) whose injustices were never fully addressed. Nonetheless, the motivation of the movement is drawn from post-C1 actions, such as "[…] control of our country [being] handed over to Western corporations" (OSA-GE-01) and "[t]he ANC [African National Congress] [passing] privatization laws […] which caused the loss of millions of jobs" (OSA-GE-01). The marginal timepoint of utopic future nonetheless is defined as the time when "the people are taking back South Africa" (OSA-GE-01) equated with Frantz Fanon's 'This Africa to Come' (OSA-CO-02). In the recontextualization of episodic temporal structure, movements might thus change both the scale and content of timepoints to fit with their context, but retain the structural relations between timepoints as sources of motivation and orientation.

Two different durations can be found within the OWS narrative, through the difference between statements like "They have *held* students hostage […]" and "They *continue* to block alternative forms of energy […]". In the first case, the timespan described lies entirely in the past, belonging *to* B2; whereas in the second case, it originates in B2 but moves into the narrative present. This, however, does not mean that the *Declaration*'s authors think that student debt belongs to the past. Instead, the difference in verb tense reflects an evaluation of the efficacy of OWS' pre-figurative politics. As a collective providing alternative education through the self-education of activists (Webb 2019, 349), OWS addresses the issue of student debt immediately, but not the one of energy production. In the first category of corruption processes, 'past corruptions', corruption does not 'disappear' in narrative present, but is addressed. The second category of timespans, 'ongoing corruptions', are instead only addressable at later stages of OWS's development. Another example of ongoing corruption can be inferred when returning to the statement "[w]e come to you at a time when corporations […], run our governments" (OWS-GE-01). This statement implies an

ontological distinction between government and corporations in C1, but infers that through ongoing corruption, this distinction has fallen.

Apart from durations of corruption, there is also a duration of 'movement actions', which can be inferred from statements like "[…] we offer support, documentation, and all the resources at our disposal." (OWS-GE-01). The duration begins with the assembly in A3, continuing until the utopic future D6 is reached. Further characterisation can be found in formulations like "we proudly remain in Liberty Square constituting ourselves as autonomous political beings […]" and "[w]e are daring to imagine a new socio-political and economic alternative that offers greater possibility of equality" (OWS-GE-02). The usage of present participle forms points towards the ongoing nature of these actions, informing our conception of the 'movement actions' duration. An overview of the durations in the OWS narrative can be found in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Temporal Structure of Duration in the Occupy Wall Street Narrative



Source: Own work based on OWS-GE-01 and OWS-GE-02.

As movement-building relays, these durations allow recipients the differentiation between addressable and to-be-addressable corruptions through actions, thus communicating a sense of optimism aiding self-mobilisation. The content of the corruptions themselves can then be recontextualized.

Occupy Vienna articulates the corruption duration through statements such as "banks must *no longer* be fed with our money […]" (OVI-CA-01) and "[w]e distance ourselves from the manner […] in which the interests of banks and economic elites *are* enforced" (OVI-CA-01) and posits movement actions in opposition to corruptions, oriented towards the utopic future in the statement that "No, this cannot be the Europe in which we want to live" (OVI-CA-01). Belgium's *Indignés* movement's narrative exemplifies the movement actions duration through formulations such as "[a]t the same time [to the assembly], real democracy is being created" (OBE-GE-01). Similar durations are utilised by Occupy Rotterdam in the statement "[b]ecause banks and governments *have gambled* with money, we *are now* in a financial crisis […]" (ORO-GE-01) as past corruptions, "[…] banks and companies *make* the choices that *are* to their advantage […]" (ORO-GE-01) as ongoing corruptions, and "[w]e *want* to show people that the world does not belong to big companies […]" (ORO-GE-01) as movement actions. Hong Kong's Occupy Central also exerts these structures, showing past corruptions in arguing that "to occupy is to seize control over the space and the time that capitalism *has taken* from us" (OCE-CO-01) and ongoing corruptions in their description of China as "a state that *blends* rapacious, cutthroat neoliberal economics with the iron fist of Stalinist authoritarianism" (OCE-CO-03). The optimism of movement actions in Occupy Central's narrative shows itself in the statement: "[t]his path, the path of co-existence, needs to be forged together [in order to] break our dependence on [economic elites]" (OCE-CO-02), or that "we cannot abandon what we have built. We will not allow the rich sense of possibility that has opened itself up […] to be sealed up again" (OCE-CO-01). Temporal duration structure has thus been recontextualised by off-shot movements, with corruptions now reflecting EU austerity politics or Chinese autocracy, and movement actions in their optimism being tailored to the specific movement articulation.

In the OWS narrative, there is a twofold relationship between story elements and their narrative iteration in frequency. The actions motivating the movement are narrated iteratively, happening multiple times but only being narrated once. For instance, the 'holding hostage' of students through debt or the 'stripping of rights' of workers are continued or repeated actions, thus subsuming multiple injustices under one narration

(OWS-GE-01). However, since the narrative treats them as part of a coherent totality of corruption the frequency is also multiple, happening several times and being narrated several times. Out of this duplicity, frequency's role as movement-building relay arises since recipients of the narrative are able to recontextualise the iterative and subsume it in the multiple through their own concepts. An example of this is Occupy Mumbai referring to "the Indian government's *frequent* abuse of human rights […]" (OMU-GE-01) in an iterative manner, but which, taken together with the "rampant corruption and oppression of it's people" (OMU-GE-01) forms a part of a multiple frequency.

3.2. Occupations Here, There, and Everywhere

The spatial ontology of the OWS narrative is organised around vertical and horizontal lines. Its vertical ontology differentiates between a totality, shown in formulations like "but corporations do not seek consent to extract wealth from the people and the Earth" (OWS-GE-01) as the Earth, and specific spaces in statements like "[t]hey have perpetuated colonialism at home and abroad" (OWS-GE-01). Differentiating between 'home' and 'abroad' informs the elements subsumed under 'Earth'. A similar encompassing spatiality can be seen in the formulation "the corporate forces of the world" (OWS-GE-01), which resonates with the differentiation of "people from all across the United States of America and the world" (OWS-GE-02). In the narrative we find mention of specific countries and places within these countries like 'Liberty Square', which inform its ordering of general space. Horizontally, the spatial ontology of OWS thus differentiates between 'home' and 'abroad', but also introduces other delineated spaces within these categories, which inform the efficacy of their occupation practices. As movement-building relays, this spatial structure thus allows for recipients of narratives to define their position in relation to the 'home-abroad' dichotomy as well as identify the individual delineated spaces that hold value for the movement. What this value is, then, is a matter of particular space.

The particular space of the OWS narrative is focussed on the occupied space of Liberty Square. When considering OWS's *Good Neighbor Policy* (OWS-SU-01), a document regulating conduct of activists with "members of the local community" (OWS-SU-01), its language suggests that OWS consider themselves 'outsiders' to the zone of Liberty

Square, necessitating regulating "respectful and good-faith dialogue" (OWS-SU-01). Whilst the occupation is an action of 'taking back' space, it is simultaneously recognised as spatial infringement. The particular space of Liberty Square holds occupation to be improper, the boundary-crossing of OWS with the intention to occupy thus reflects an infringement on the space's rules. However, since non-corporate residents of Liberty Square are considered 'on the same side' as OWS, it is necessary to uphold relations. Occupying public space can thus be characterised as deliberate movement into spaces whose particularity is debatable. Actors might regard spaces as not fit for permanent residence, with OWS's infringement on this recontextualises the space as decidedly public. We can find indices for this in OWS's definition of Zuccotti Park as "privately owned, public space" (OWS-SU-02), informing a volatile legal situation where "even the foremost First Amendment scholars cannot predict with certainty how a court would characterize this space and the rights enjoyed by the people therein" (OWS-SU-02). The occupation is thus narrated as breaking the connection between private ownership and public access, becoming symbolic for the larger OWS narrative in which private spheres are to be occupied and transformed.

Movement is also a characteristics of OWS's opponents This can be inferred from statements like "[t]hey have consistently outsourced labor" (OWS-GE-01), which contains the intentional direction of movement, and, again, "[t]hey have perpetuated colonialism at home and abroad" (OWS-GE-01). Corruption thus is carried out by actors 'belonging' to the narrative 'home' but operating 'abroad', thus infringing on particular spaces of others. As a movement-building relay, the particular spatial structure of the OWS narrative allows recipients of the narrative to utilise meaningful spaces as symbols. The inspirational force of the OWS narrative here stems from the possibility of utilisation of space in protest.

A strong reception of this in the narrative of Occupy Central. Here, when talking about occupied space, it is stated that

> "[w]e have created what we would like to call an 'impossible space', one that exposes and demonstrates the elementary point that space, when liberated from

property laws and freed for common use, opens itself up to new possibilities, encounters and experiences"

(OCE-CO-01)

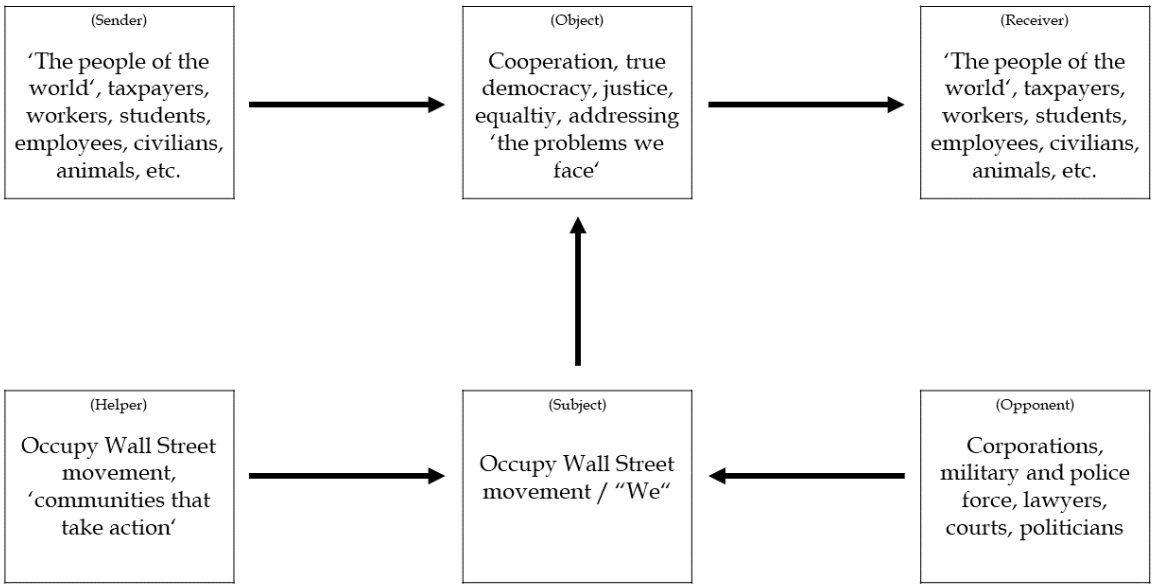
exemplifying the symbolic-discursive usage of space relevant in local contexts as well as the break between private ownership and public access. Similar accounts can be found in Occupy Porto Alegre's narrative where "[the] camp [is] transforming the public space symbolically and concretely" (OPA-GE-01) and "functions as a laboratory where we put these values into practice" (OPA-GE-01). Armenia's Occupy Mashtots Park movement expands this beyond the occupation by their call to "network, expand, participate as the true owners of Yerevan: citizens!" (OMP-GE-01) thus attributing a public ownership not only to occupied space but to the entire city. Occupy South Africa portrays a reception of the 'home-abroad' dichotomy which situates corrupting elements in the abroad. This is exemplified by protest against "[w]estern Corporations controlling our resources while we suffer from extreme poverty" (OSA-GE-01) and the statement that "South Africa today is a classic imperialist controlled country […]" (OSA-GE-01). Occupy London and Occupy Rotterdam invoke a further dimension of infringements on particular space through critiquing tax havens in statements like "[i]n and through the Netherlands, 80% of the biggest companies of the world established themselves to avoid taxes in their own country" (ORO-GE-02). This shows companies being 'out of place' in tax havens. Protesting this 'being-out-of-place' then uses the space of tax havens as symbols. Thus, whilst through recontextualization specific spaces change, their symbolic power resulting from their structural relation is retained when the OWS narrative serves as a movement-building relay.

3.3. Our Protest and Their Wrongdoing

There are two acting subjects in OWS's narrative, referred to as 'we' and 'they'. The 'we' is identifiable as the OWS movement itself, its object being the movement's goals, such as "cooperation", "true democracy", "justice", "equality" (OWS-GE-01) as well as "[e]xercising personal and collective responsibility", "[e]mpowering one another against all forms of oppression" and "imagin[ing] a new socio-political and economic alternative" (OWS-GE-02) to "create a process to address the problems we face" (OWS-

GE-01). The 'we' thus seeks a conjunction with its object along the axis of desire. Along the axis of power there is an identity of subject and helper. In other terms, OWS only can be helped by OWS, exemplified in statements like "[t]he people who are working together to create this movement are its sole and mutual caretakers" (OWS-GE-03). This does not mean that only movement members may offer support, but that supporters *automatically* become members of OWS. As such, the call addressed at "communities that take action" (OWS-GE-01) in the *Declaration* does not compromise this actantial identity between subject and helper, calling onto these communities to become part of OWS. Further, "[a]ny organization is welcome to support us with the knowledge that doing so will mean questioning your own institutional frameworks of work and hierarchy and integrating our principles into your modes of action" (OWS-GE-03), supports this view. The actant of the opponent is defined through its actions against OWS. The corrupting actions already discussed thus serve as the framework to identify this actant. The main opponent thus is 'corporations', exemplified by the statement "[w]e come to you at a time when corporations […] run our governments" (OWS-GE-01) directly before the list of corruptions, identifying the 'they' of these actions with corporations. Through these actions, we can identify further opponents in statements like "[t]hey have influenced the courts […]" or [t]hey have spent millions of dollars on legal teams […]" (OWS-GE-01), pointing to the opposing judicial system, and "[t]hey have used the military and police force […]", pointing to opposing military and police forces. Finally on the axis of knowledge, the actantial structure exhibits an identity of sender and receiver. The relation between statements like "[t]hey have taken bailouts from taxpayers" (OWS-GE-01) and the call to action for "the people of the world" to "assert [their] power" links these actants together. Those that are currently missing the object of justice and are suffering as a result are also those that benefit from the conjunction. A depiction of the actantial structure of the movement subject in the OWS narrative can be found in figure 5.

Figure 5: Actantial Model of the Movement Subject in the Occupy Wall Street narrative.



Source: Own work based on OWS-GE-01, OWS-GE-02, and OWS-GE-03 as well as Greimas 1983.

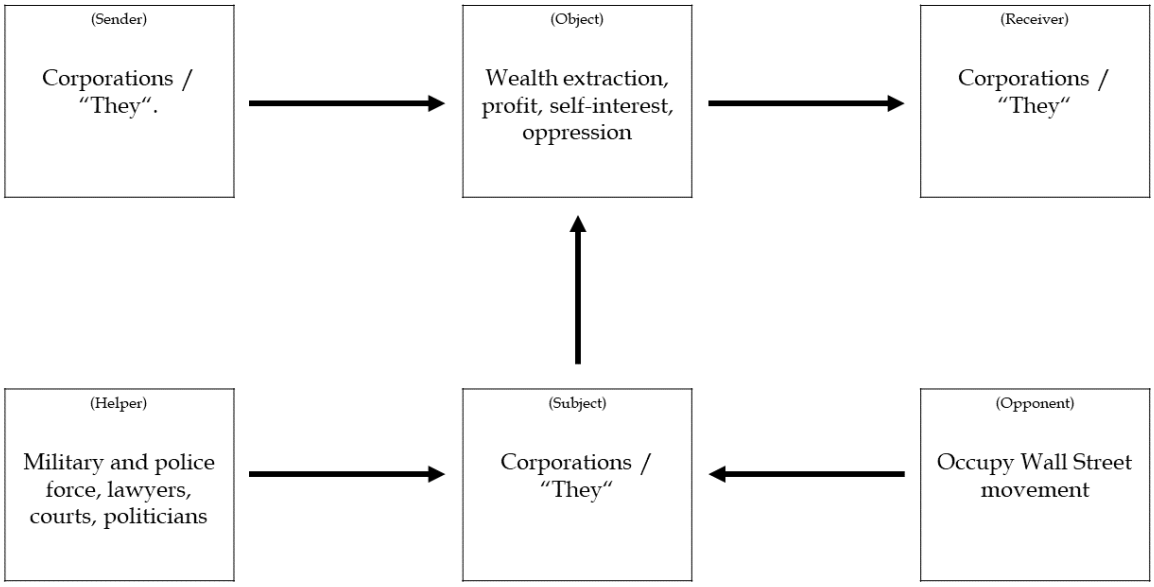
There are several movement-building relays in this structure. First, the identity of subject and helper allows activists to constitute themselves as part of the movement through their actions. This structure benefits self-mobilisation since it allows for activists to recontextualise actions and object of protest in their context and still consider themselves to be part of the same movement. Further, the identity of sender and receiver allows movements to speak for both themselves and others, identifying problems in such a way that fit their context. As such, this structure also informs the heterogeneity in demands between articulations.

Examples of recontextualization of the movement subject can be found in Occupy Stockholm's claim that "[a] society must consist of, and be managed by all in it, otherwise it is by definition not a society" (OST-GE-01), serving as its utopic goal. This statement includes those parts of Swedish society not part of Occupy Stockholm in the narrative's goal, making them sender and receiver of the movement's object. The later call to "[b]e the change you want to see in the world!" (OST-GE-01) exemplifies the identity of helper and subject; those that help Occupy Stockholm automatically

become its part. Occupy Porto Alegre puts forward a similar structure, stating that "[p]articipants of social movements and political parties can join the group *as people* […]" (OPA-GE-01), again showcasing the transformation of aides into Occupy activists. The identity of sender and receiver also becomes apparent in Occupons La Défense's statement that "[w]e are poorly housed, poorly paid, insecure, we pay with our health for the environmental crisis, the economic crisis, and the social crisis" (OLD-GE-01) with 'we' here referring to those whose suffering motivates protest, and who benefit from the movement's goal. In recontextualization, thus, the object of the juncture as well as the sender and receiver might change, but their structural relations remain similar, with an identity of sender and receiver as well as subject and helper, and a subject motivated by the sender's struggle.

The 'they' can be identified as the subject of corporations. The object here is defined in opposition movement subject's object, as can be seen in the statement "[…] corporations, which place profit over people, self-interest over justice, and oppression over equality […]" (OWS-GE-01). The identification of corporations' goals directly opposes them with the movement's object. A similar opposition can be found along the axis of power, where the *Declaration* posits 'secondary opponents' of the movement's actantial model as 'their' supporters, and thus as the helpers. The opponent is logically filled by OWS, but is presumed to have been empty before the assembly of OWS. This can be inferred from the formulation "[w]e write so that all people who feel wronged by the corporate forces of the world can know that we are your allies" (OWS-GE-01), which acknowledges past wrongs, but not past actions. The self-interest of the corporate subject, shown in formulations like "[t]hey have deliberately declined to recall faulty products endangering lives in pursuit of profit" (OWS-GE-01), further informs an identity of sender, receiver, and subject. A depiction of the actantial model of the corporate subject in the OWS narrative can be found in figure 6.

Figure 6: Actantial Model of the Corporate Subject in the Occupy Wall Street Narrative



Source: Own work based on OWS-GE-01, OWS-GE-02, and OWS-GE-03 as well as Greimas 1983.

Another movement-building relay can be inferred from the juxtaposition of the two actantial models, where the subject and helpers of one are the opponents of the other model, in the position of subjects as antagonists. Further, the identity of sender and receiver in the movement subject's actantial structure juxtaposed with the self-interest of the corporate subject exerts a moral superiority not only from the object, but through the structure itself. In recontextualization the corporate subject can thus be filled by those actors in the relevant context which are already posited as the movement's opponent. Through the structurally determined moral hierarchy between the two, then, activists that recontextualise the narrative in their terms can position themselves both opposed and above the corporate Other, making this structure a powerful inspirational tool. The recontextualization of this structure can be seen in statements like Occupy South Africa's "[t]his situation [extreme poverty] is directly linked to foreign corporations controlling our wealth" (OSA-GE-01) against which Occupy South Africa posits itself. The relationship between movement subject and corporate subject thus stays the same, even if the corporate subject has been contextualised as being especially *foreign* corporations, which were already an opponent. Furthermore, the corporate subject in the Occupy South Africa narrative includes politicians more

directly in statements like "[…] not only are our political parties unable to solve these issues but they are, in fact, direct conscious enforcers […]", with the motivation for this later being identified as wealth extraction. Thus, despite differences in content, the narrative of Occupy South Africa retains the relationship between movement subject and corporate subject, as well as the identity of sender, receiver, and subject in the corporate subject's actantial structure. Similar structures can be found in Occupy Vienna's narrative in the call to action: "[s]hall we continue to look on whilst our insufficient welfare model goes down the drain and politicians become underlings? Only so that banks and speculators […] do not need to pay back their loans" (OVI-CA-01). The recontextualization thus might change the identity of the corporate subject but retains its antagonistic structural relation to both the movement subject and its inner identity of subject, sender, and receiver.

3.4. General Assemblies and Political Autonomy

Analysing narrators, since OWS serves as a subject of its own narrative as well as its producer, we can confer that the narrative possesses an intra- and homodiegetic narrator, part of the narrative world and character within the narrative. However, narrative production in OWS needs to be regarded as a social act. This can be seen especially in affirmations that "[a]ny statement or declaration not release through the General Assembly […] should be considered independent of Occupy Wall Street"(OWS-GE-03). Conditions of narrative production within OWS are thus also part of its prefigurative politics. Through the implementation of participatory 'real democracy' within General Assemblies, control over the narrative, and thus its authorship, is diffused between OWS members. The narrator, following Walsh (1997), is thus both character and author, the first through inclusion in the narrative, the latter through institutionalised conditions of authorship. As a movement-building relay, this control over narrative allows for dynamic recontextualization in other contexts. Since movements are the authors of their own narratives, the specificities of other contexts can be included through the institutionalised practices of authorship. This is exemplified in affirmations that Occupy movements' foundational documents "will always be a work in progress" (OLO-GE-01) or that "each new meeting the group updates and reviews positions" (OPA-GE-01). Through this openness of narrative,

recontextualizations are made possible whilst the movement's control over its narrative is safeguarded by its reliance on assemblies and horizontal politics, exemplified through statements such as Occupy Central's statement that "[…] now we are together in Cental [sic!] Discussing how to strike against capitalism" (OCE-GE-01), in which access to narrative authorship is tied to presence at the occupation, or that "everyone who has sat down with us […] has had a hand in determining the way it [the occupied space] is used, experienced and imagined" (OCE-CO-01). Similar statements can also be found in other narratives such as Occupy Rio, Indignes de Belgique, or Occupons La Défense.

Finally, the OWS narrative presumes two distinct audiences. The first shows itself in statements like "[…] all the people who feel wronged […]" or "[t]o the people of the world" (OWS-GE-01) as people currently suffering from corrupting actions of the corporate subject but are inactive. This part of the presumed audience thus consists of people receiving the narrative, recognising themselves within the group of those wronged, and reacting through mobilisation. This hope of the presumed audience joining can also be inferred the definition of occupation as "constituting ourselves as autonomous political beings" (OWS-GE-02). The expected reaction of the presumed audience thus includes an affirmation of their existence as political beings through mobilisation. The second presumed audience of the OWS narrative is the movement itself. This results from statements such as "we have moved to reclaim our mortgaged future" and "we have come together as individuals […]" (OWS-GE-02) which point towards a collective shaping of movement goals through the narrative. Those already part of OWS are thus recipients and authors of the narrative, caught in continuous re-evaluation. As a movement-building relay, this structure allows those recontextualising the narrative to insert presumed audience into the role of inactive recipients relevant to their context. An examples for this can be found in Occupy Stockholm's call to its audience that "[w]e want to hear *your* opinion!" (OST-GE-01), characterising the 'you' in question as inactive recipients to be mobilised. The movement as its own audience shows itself in Ocupa Rio's affirmation that "[w]e have different ideas, plurality of thought, and we are open to any opinions. Just arrive!" (ORI-GE-01) in which the plurality of thought allows for a diverse reception of

different narratives. In its recontextualization, thus, the inactive audience of movement narratives change to fit contexts, but retain their quality as 'potentially mobilizable', similarly, the movement as recipient is, regardless of context, structurally engaged in the narrative production circle, always being author and recipient simultaneously.

SECTION IV - CONCLUSION

Despite its short lifetime the impact of Occupy's moment onto contemporary protests remains strong (Fernández-Savater and Flesher Fominaya 2016). Whilst lament of a 'missed opportunity' prevails, experiences within occupations entered the discourse of activists and 'Occupy' became a symbol for potential change, being invoked in later movements, such as the 2013 Gezi Park protests (Ng and Khan 2012; Özen 2020). The Occupy movement still serves as a model for the dynamics of contemporary social movements utilising tactics of diffusion that do not seek to establish continuously existing organisation, but rather to enable further and future moments of protest. As such, the study of the Occupy movement can help our understanding of similar contemporary movements, such as the global climate movement, and provide a better grasp of their specific modes of diffusion.

My analysis has provided arguments for two conclusions about the role of narrative in the Occupy movement's diffusion. First, that the structure of OWS's narrative aided the self-mobilisation of others through their role as movement-building relays, and second that these structures consequently serve as commonalities between Occupy movement articulations, meaning that the individual articulations of the Occupy movement do not share the same narrative, but similar narrative structures. I have provided evidence for this claim in the analysis of recontextualizations of the OWS narrative's temporal, spatial, actantial, and social structures to fit local conditions of receiving movements, whilst retaining the underlying structural relations between elements. However, when one takes a large-scale view onto their research object, such as I have done in this thesis, one is bound to lose sight of some details. As we have seen in the analysis, with a couple of exceptions, the reception of OWS has remained mainly in the Global North with strong cultural connections to its US origin. A comprehensive study of the hurdles to OWS reception could thus yield helpful data for furthering our understanding of contemporary social movements. Furthermore, scholarship that focusses not solely on narrative, as I have done, but incorporates narratological approaches into a larger picture could help evaluate the relative importance of different modes of diffusion in contemporary social movements.

In the study of social movements in international relations, their diffusion not relying on pre-figured identities or strong networks might trouble established theories and methodological approaches. But, if we want to take social movements seriously as actors on the global stage, we need to understand the dynamics through which their globality is produced. As such, it is necessary to retain reflexivity about the theories employed for grasping and researching such an elusive object as a social movement. The study of the Occupy movement can serve as a motivator to rethink theoretical assumptions and further our understanding of contentious politics in our current times. This is, to speak with Pickerill and Krinsky (2012), why, despite its end as a social movement, Occupy still matters for social movement research.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: List of Occupy Movement Documents

Code	Title	Organisation	Category	Source
BLO-GE-01	Selbstverständnis	Blockupy	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20150710042913/https://blockupy.org/blockupy/selbstverstaendnis/
OAM-GE-01	Occupy Beweging	Occupy Amsterdam	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120510051849/http://www.occupyamsterdam.nl/bezetten-beweging/
OBA-GE-01	Baluwatar Satyagraha	Occupy Baluwatar	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20130119040526/http://meroandolan.com/%E0%A4%AC%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%B2%E0%A5%81%E0%A4%B5%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%9F%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%B0-%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%A4%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%AF%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%97%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%B0%E0%A4%B9occupy-baluwatar/
OBE-GE-01	Indigné-e-s: Occupy - Démocratie Réelle	Occupy Belgium	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120210103039/http://www.indignez-vous.be/PDF/Tract-les-Indignes-page1.jpg
OCE-CO-01	An Open Letter to All from Occupy Central	Occupy Central	Communications	https://web.archive.org/web/20131027135240/http://occupycentralhk.com/?p=1222
OCE-CO-02	No, I would like to ask: Where is democracy?	Occupy Central	Communications	https://web.archive.org/web/20160519030043/http://occupycentralhk.com/?p=1165
OCE-CO-03	Statement for June 4th Incident	Occupy Central	Communications	https://web.archive.org/web/20131027133910/http://occupycentralhk.com/?p=1200
OCE-GE-01	About Us	Occupy Central	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20131027122817/http://occupycentralhk.com/?page_id=7
OLD-GE-01	Nous sommes les 99%	Occupons La Defense	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120302142003/http://www.occu

				ponsladefense.net/occupons-la-defense/
OLO-GE-01	Initial Statement	Occupy London	General Documents	https://occupylondon.org.uk/about/statements/initial-statement/
OLO-GE-02	United for Global Democracy	Occupy London	General Documents	https://occupylondon.org.uk/about/statements/global-democracy-statement/
OMP-GE-01	We are the Owners of this City!	Occupy Mashtots Park	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120203185736/http://kanachaygi.org/%D5%B4%D5%A5%D6%80-%D5%B4%D5%A1%D5%BD%D5%AB%D5%B6/
OMU-GE-01	Occupy Mumbai - What is It?	Occupy Mumbai	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120810060943if_/http://www.occupymumbai.co.nr/
OPA-GE-01	Sobre	Ocupa Porto Alegre	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120902182552/http://ocupapoa.org/sobre/
ORI-GE-01	Sobre	Ocupa Rio	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120526163753/http://ocupario.org/sobre/
ORO-GE-01	Wat is Occupy?	Occupy Rotterdam	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20140530082655/http://www.occupyrotterdam.org/wiezijnwij/#.U4hA1nbP3wM
ORO-GE-02	Belastingsparadijs	Occupy Rotterdam	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20140530082636/http://www.occupyrotterdam.org/category/multinationals/#.U4hAxHbP3wM
OSA-CO-01	Statement by Joe Hani to WBAI-NY Radio Station in the US	Occupy South Africa	Communications	https://takebacksa.wordpress.com/2012/06/28/statement-by-joe-hani-to-wbai-ny-radio-station-in-the-us-2-2/
OSA-CO-02	This Africa to Come	Occupy South Africa	Communications	https://web.archive.org/web/20120129113249/http://www.sacsis.org.za/site/article/1179
OSA-GE-01	WE are the ones we've been waiting for!	Occupy South Africa	General Documents	https://takebacksa.wordpress.com/

OST-GE-01	Kärnvärden	Occupy Stockholm	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120310050749/http://www.occupystockholm.org/kaumlrnvaumlrden.html
OVI-CA-01	Demonstration, in Solidarität mit der griechischen Bevölkerung	Occupy Vienna	Call to Action	https://web.archive.org/web/20120810060945/http://occupyvienna.at/
OWS-GE-01	Declaration of the Occupation of New York City	Occupy Wall Street	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120529040756/https://www.nycga.net/resources/declaration/
OWS-GE-02	Principles of Solidarity	Occupy Wall Street	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120529040943/http://www.nycga.net/resources/principles-of-solidarity/
OWS-GE-03	Statement of Autonomy	Occupy Wall Street	General Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120529043812/http://www.nycga.net/resources/statement-of-autonomy/
OWS-SU-01	Good Neighbor Policy	Occupy Wall Street	Supplementary Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120529044021/http://www.nycga.net/resources/good-neighbor-policy/
OWS-SU-02	Legal Fact Sheet	Occupy Wall Street	Supplementary Documents	https://web.archive.org/web/20120529044147/http://www.nycga.net/resources/legal-fact-sheet/

Note: All documents last accessed on 22 December 2023.