Protest Technologies and Media Revolutions

The Longue Durée

**Edited by Athina Karatzogianni,
Michael Schandorf and Ioanna Ferra**

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The Digital Activism and Society: Politics, Economy and Culture in Network Communication series focuses on the political use of digital everyday-networked media by corporations, governments, international organizations (Digital Politics), as well as civil society actors, NGOs, activists, social movements and dissidents (Digital Activism) attempting to recruit, organise and fund their operations, through information communication technologies.

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About the Contributors

Alberto Cossu is a Sociologist and Media Scholar whose transdisciplinary research investigates the transformation of creative work. His work has appeared in journals such as *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Social Media + Soc*iety and the *International Journal of Cultural Studies*. His monograph *Autonomous Art Institutions: Artists Disrupting the Creative City* will appear in 2020 for Rowman and Littlefield International. He currently acts as Lecturer in Media & Communication at the University of Leicester.

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Adrija Dey is currently a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow and a Senior Teaching Fellow at the Department of Development Studies, SOAS, University of London. Her research is titled Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Indian Universities: A study of Campus Life, Student Activism and Institutional Responses. She is also the author of *Nirbhaya, New Media and Digital Gender Activism*.

Ioanna Ferra is an Assistant Professor at the School of Media, at the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow. Her research interest lays in the field of digital media, social movements and collective action, especially as these developed during the global recession. Recently she published her first monograph, *Digital Media and the Greek Crisis: Cyberconlficts, Discourses and Networks*. She has keen interest on working with digital research methods and experimenting with data mining techniques and software for Semantic and Social Network analysis.

Cristina Flesher Fominaya (PhD University of California, Berkeley) is Excellence 100 Reader in Social Politics and Media at Loughborough University and an internationally recognized expert in European social movement and politics. She is author of *Democracy Reloaded: Inside Spain's Political Laboratory from 15-M to Podemos* (2020 Oxford University Press), *Social Movements in a Globalized*

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Torsten Geelan is a Lecturer in the Sociology of Work and Employment at the School of Business, University of Leicester. His primary research focusses on the media as arenas in which trade unions, employers and the State seek to control the agenda surrounding the changing nature of work. He is also co-founder and co-chair of the research network on Alternatives to Capitalism at the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics.

Sebastian Haller studied Film and Media Studies as well as Art History at the University of Vienna. His research focusses on the media history of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), theories of visual culture and photography and the discourses of New Media. Haller currently examines the media politics and representations of the State Security Service in cinema and television in the GDR.

Andy Hodder is a Senior Lecturer in Employment Relations at Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham. Andy's research examines contemporary trade unionism in a range of contexts. He is Secretary of the British Universities Industrial Relations Association and Co-Chair of the Midlands Labour & Employment Relations Society. His work has appeared in journals including British Journal of Industrial Relations, Work, Employment and Society, New Technology, Work and Employment and Industrial Relations Journal.

Kevin Howley is a Professor of Media Studies at DePauw University. His work has appeared in the *Journal of Radio Studies*, *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism*, *Social Movement Studies* and *Television and New Media*. He is the author of *Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies* (2005) and editor of *Understanding Community Media* (2010) and *Media Interventions* (2013). His latest book is *Drones: Media Discourse & The Public Imagination* (2018).

Anastasia Kavada is a Reader in Media and Politics at the School of Media and Communication at the University of Westminster. She is Co-Leader of the Arts, Communication and Culture Research Community and of the MA in Media, Campaigning and Social Change. Her research focuses on the links between digital media, social movements, participatory democracy and campaigning for social change. Her work has appeared in a variety of edited books and academic journals, including Media, Culture and Society and Information and Communication and Society.

Athina Karatzogianni is Professor in media and communication at the University of Leicester. She is currently Principal Investigator for the H2020 DigiGen The Impact of Technological Transformations on the Digital Generation, leading work on ICT and the transformation of civic participation (2019–2022). Her most recent book is *Platform Economics: Rhetoric and Reality the 'Sharing Economy'*, co-authored with Cristiano Codagnone and Jacob Matthews (Emerald, 2018).

Ilya Kiriya is a Professor and Head of the School of Media in National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow. He holds a PhD in journalism from Moscow State University and PhD in information and communication studies from Grenoble University (France). Main works of Ilya Kiriya are centred on political economy, political control of communications in post-Soviet world. His publications are published by International Journal of Communication, Russian Journal of Communications, Hermes (France), Russian Politics and others.

Galina Miazhevich is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Journalism, Media, and Culture at Cardiff University, UK. Galina has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals and co-authored several monographs. Galina currently leads an AHRC grant (2018–2020) exploring media representations of non-heteronormative sexuality in Russia. Galina serves on the editorial boards of several international journals; she is an executive board member of European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA).

Dennis Nguyen is a Senior Lecturer, Researcher and Graduation Coordinator for the study programs Data-Driven Design (MA) and Creative Business (BA) at the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht in the Netherlands. In his book Europe, the Crisis and the Internet (2017), he discusses online public spheres and political communication with emphasis placed on transnational political discourses. His current research focusses on the impact of digital media and datafication on public discourses and data ecologies.

Shola Abidemi Olabode has previously served as a Tutor for Media Movements and Radical Politics at the University of Hull, where he completed a PhD in Media Studies. His research interest is in the area of Digital Activism and Cyberconflicts. His monograph *Digital Activism and Cyberconflicts in Nigeria: Occupy Nigeria, Boko Haram and MEND* (2018) analyses sociopolitical and ethnoreligious conflicts within an African-centred context, with Nigeria as a lens to understand the digital and organizational aspects of digital media technologies.

Georgios Patsiaouras is an Associate Professor in Marketing and Consumption at the University of Leicester, School of Business. His research interests include conspicuous consumption phenomena, sustainability, cultural and historical readings of marketing practices. His work has been published in journals such as Marketing Theory, Journal of Marketing Management, Journal of Macro-marketing and Journal of Historical Research in Marketing amongst others.

Stamatis Poulakidakos is a Laboratory Teaching Staff at the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA). He holds a BA and a PhD degree from the Department of Communication and Media Studies (NKUA) and an MA degree in New Media, Information and Society (Research Track) from London School of Economics (LSE). He has published several papers on political communication, propaganda, social media and the public sphere, political advertisements, social movements and other media-related issues.

Maria Rovisco is an Associate Professor in Sociology at the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Leeds, UK. She has research interests in cosmopolitanism, new activisms, citizenship, migrant and refugee arts and visual culture. Among her recent publications are the co-edited books *Cosmopolitanism, Religion and the Public Sphere* (Routledge, 2014) and *Taking the Square: Mediated Dissent and Occupations of Public Space* (2016).

Michael Schandorf is a Lecturer in Journalism, Writing and Media at the University of British Columbia. His research and scholarship focusses on the ways in which people make meaning and the social and political implications of those processes. His most recent book is *Communication as Gesture: Media(tion), Meaning, and Movement*.

Angelos Theocharis is a PhD Candidate in Russian Cultural studies at the University of Edinburgh, studying transnational communities, cultural practices and identity construction. He holds a Bachelor degree in Law from the University of Athens and a MA in Cultural Studies and Russia from the Lomonosov Moscow State University. He has published papers in academic journals and conference proceedings, has contributed with chapters in edited volumes and has organized international conferences. His research interests include cultural theory and politics, Russian studies, digital humanities, acoustic ecology and sensory studies.

Maria Tsantsanoglou was born in Thessaloniki. She is acting general director of MOMus and the artistic director of MOMus-Museum of Modern Art-Costakis Collection. Director of the State Museum of Contemporary Art (2006–2018). Art historian specializing in the period of Russian avant-garde. Member of the Greek State Committee for the reception of the Costakis Collection (1998). Scientific advisor for cultural issues and press attaché at the Greek Embassy in Moscow (1990–2002). She has taught history of art at the Lomonosov University, Moscow (1997–2001). She has been teaching Russian Art at the University of Macedonia, Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies (Thessaloniki) since 2002. She has curated exhibitions in Greece, Russia, Germany, UK, France, Spain, Italy, China, Turkey, the countries of Caucasus and Central Asia. She is the author of two books and has numerous editions, publications and contributions in international conferences.

Anastasia Veneti is Principal Academic at Bournemouth University. Her research lays in the intersection of media and politics, including (visual) political communication, digital political campaigning, media framing, protests and social movements and photojournalism. Her work has been published in edited volumes and academic journals. She is the author of Political Advertising and Citizens' Perceptions (Nisos, 2009 in Greek) and co-editor (with D. Jackson and D. Lillker) of *Visual Political Communication* (2019).

Preface

Protest Technologies and Media Revolutions in the Longue Durée brings together 22 scholars in 17 chapters, offering a stimulating dialogue on the historical continuities and discontinuities identified in the use of protest technologies in the long-term processes of revolutions, uprisings and the media and communication infrastructures that enable and constrict them.

The book's contributors span many disciplines ranging across media and communication, cultural studies, politics, sociology and digital humanities. The majority of the contributors presented or participated at a two-day international conference called *Connecting to the Masses 100 Years from the Russian Revolution: From Agitprop to the Attention Economy*, which took place at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam (https://iisg.amsterdam/en) and the University of Amsterdam. It was a collaboration between Athina Karatzogianni from the School of Media, Communication and Sociology of the University of Leicester (MCS); Stefania Milan from the DATACTIVE research group at the Media Studies department of the University of Amsterdam; Andrey Rezaev from the Department of Sociology at St. Petersburg State University; le Centre d'Études sur les Médias et l'Internationalisation (CEMTI) at Paris 8 and the State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki.

Although only some of the conference participants contributed to this book, we would also like to thank those who, with their involvement at various stages, made this a fantastic experience: Gerassimos Moschonas (Panteion University, Athens); Mariëlle Wijermars (University of Helsinki); Aliaksandr Herasimenka (University of Westminster); Maros Krivy (University of Cambridge); Richard J Aldrich (University of Warwick); Jairo Lugo-Ocando (University of Leeds); Geert Lovink (Hogeschool van Amsterdam); Arne Hintz (Cardiff University) and Stefania Milan (University of Amsterdam); Nikos Smyrnaios (University Toulouse 3); Alexander Neumann, Jacob Matthews, Vincent Rouzé (Paris 8); Lina Dencik (Cardiff University); Alex J. Wood (University of Oxford); Gabriella Alberti (Leeds University); Thomas Poell, Davide Banis, Lonneke van der Velden and Ernst van den Hemel (University of Amsterdam); Andreas Takis (Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki and State Museum of Contemporary Art – Costakis Collection, Thessaloniki); Baruch Gottlieb (UdK Berlin, University of the Arts); Andrey V. Rezaev, Pavel Lisitsyn, Natalia Orlova, Alexander Stepanov, Valentin Starikov, Anna Andreeva and Nataliya Tregubova (St. Petersburg State University); Mathias Klang (Fordham University); Nora Madison (Chestnut Hill); Mark Halley (Gallaudet University) and Dmitrii Zhikharevich (LSE). We

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Protest Technologies and Media Revolutions in the Longue Durée

Athina Karatzogianni, Michael Schandorf and Ioanna Ferra

In November 2017, we invited contributors to 'Connecting to the Masses 100 Years from the Russian Revolution: From Agitprop to the Attention Economy'. During a two-day conference, which took place at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam, we collectively investigated historical strategies and lessons of 'connecting to the masses' considering the development of media, technology and communication strategies over the last century.

The Russian Revolution offers a particularly valuable and relatively unconsidered place to begin the investigation of the modern political communication. The Bolsheviks grasped the opportunity to change their world in the here and now, rather than trust in the tentative promises of gradual reform in the face of rapidly growing inequality and alienation. Responding to the pressures and failures of the Russian aristocracy during WW1, and in the midst of rage, desperation and harsh conditions that included food shortages and worsening poverty, the Bolsheviks felt the undercurrents in the seas of history and spoke to the people, exactly when the relationship between the Tsar and the population and between the Provisional government and the Soviets were at a crucial tipping point. They did so violently and unapologetically. The effects of their actions ran through the Cold War and the confrontation with the West, and are felt to this day in the complex and intense relations between Russia and the United States in the failed engagements since the fall of the USSR, the world's first socialist state. Many questions evoked by the Russian Revolution directly reflect those that scholars of political and media communications wrestle with today.

Do charismatic leadership and movements remain the key connections to the general population or has algorithmic communication intervened to amplify and commodify populist leaders, without bringing in fruition claims of digital democracy/reform or radical sociopolitical change? How can contemporary movements most effectively utilize media and communication technologies to advance both their short-term goals and to sustain long-term development? Are

the social media protests we now witness a flash in the pan, or are they able to sustain movements, parties, organizations in the longue durée?

The relationship between modern governments and the people they govern has been always hostage to rhetoric, propaganda and strategic public relations. Aggressive marketing and contemporary media industries have also been a consistent influence over the last century, altering the dynamics of healthy political communications. As in the Russian Revolution, the relationship between media and government has thrived on charismatic leaders, the 'avant-garde', who could feel the pulse of their population's grievances, demands and hopes for the future. Whether the Russian revolution of 1917 is interpreted as a product of class struggle, as an event governed by historical laws predetermined by the alienation of the masses as a result of monopoly industrial capitalism, or as a violent coup by a proto-totalitarian Bolshevik party, the Russian revolutionaries understood and connected to the masses in a way that the autocracy, bourgeois elites and reformists alike have consistently failed to do.

Connecting to the masses is critical for the success of any movement, insurrection, protest or revolution. The communication mechanisms for this connection have sometimes evolved and other times undergone revolutions of their own. Since the Russian centennial, scholars have examined how media and communication affect this connection to the masses in a double yet complimentary dynamic: how governments connect to the masses and how masses connect to their governments. To consider protest technologies and media revolutions in the longue durée drawing conclusions from historical trends and patterns through a longer period of time, we divide the contributions to this volume into two parts. The first part takes us from the Russian revolution to Post-Soviet Activism, while the second part focusses more on contemporary emergences of communication technologies and revolution of the last two decades.

The Volume's Structure and Contributions

Part I: From the Russian Revolution to Post-Soviet Digital Activism and the New Cold War begins with Maria Tsantsanoglou in 'Art as a Form of Social Action in the Russian Avant-garde (1905–1930)' (Chapter 2). Focussing on the period 1905–1930 in Russia, she argues that performance art in the first two decades of the twentieth century was part of the aesthetics of the historical avant-garde, especially the Russian avant-garde, Italian futurism and Dada. Tsantsanoglou examines the aesthetic and social limits of the political aesthetic that entrenched or defined the term 'performance art' as it emerged in a critical way in Russia as early as the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century.

Sebastian Haller in 'Secret Police and Public Sphere: The East German State Security Service ('Stasi') between Media Control and Public Relations' (Chapter 3) examines the control of the domestic press and West German media, television and cinema. He focusses on the work and history of the Department for Agitation, the main public relations arm of the State Security Service, which was reorganized in the 1980s under the name of Division 6/ZAIG. Haller's chapter

focusses on the activities of the State Security Service regarding (fictional) television and film production through the existing secondary literature, and also files from the Stasi Records Agency, the German Broadcasting Archive and the German Federal Archives.

In Chapter 4, 'The Russian Dream and Victor Pelevin's Generation "П": Ideology in Post-Soviet Russia', Angelos Theocharis showcases the rise of 'Russian dream' as a new form of national ethos in Russia that embraces the dreams and aspirations of Russian people, as well as the archetypes, historical cultural experience and contemporary official ideology embedded into the Russian mentality. The ideological phenomenon is approached through the analysis of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Sociological Survey on Russian Dream (2013) and Victor Pelevin's postmodern novel 'Generation "П"' (1999), a novel famous for its political and ideological character and influence on the Russian cultural scene.

Ilya Kiriya in 'Soviet Communicative Control: Some Implications on Digital Activism in Contemporary Russia' (Chapter 5) suggests that Soviet communicative control was based on a particular balance between the manipulation of mass communication (propaganda) and restriction of interpersonal communication and on particular elements of social mobility control. Kiriya argues that some elements of this Soviet system of control are reproduced in the current Russian media and social system that has formed a passive attitude towards digital activism and to political life in general among the population. This phenomenon has significantly influenced the contemporary post-Crimean social consensus and led directly to the failure of the protest movements in the first-half of 2010s, which were largely dependent on social media.

In Chapter 6, Karatzogianni, Miazehvich and Denisova analyze digital activism comparatively in three Post-Soviet regions: Russian/anti-Russian during the Crimea action and online political deliberation in Belarus, juxtaposed to Estonia's digital governance approach. In authoritarian regimes, actual massive mobilization and protest is forbidden, or is severely punished with activists imprisoned, persecuted or murdered by the state. In resistant civil societies in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, cultural forms of digital activism, such as Internet memes, nevertheless thrive and produce and reproduce effective forms of political deliberation. In contrast, Estonia, which has been celebrated for its commitment to Internet freedoms, is innovating in digital governance with its residency program. The authors affirm the potential of Internet memes in addressing apolitical crowds, infiltrating casual conversations and providing symbolic manifestation of the burning resistant debates.

In turn, Galina Miazhevich in 'Dis/engagement in Post-Soviet Communicative Ecologies: Reframing the "Chinatown" Dissent Campaign in Belarus' (Chapter 7) problematizes the 'communicative ecologies' by exploring a collective protest campaign in Belarus that involved the construction of a so-called 'Chinese industrial park' in the outskirts of the capital of Belarus. The 5-year time span (2012–2017), marking the conception of this controversial project to the actual start of its construction, is particularly suitable for tracing the dilemmas and dynamic of new-media informed and enabled civic activism. Looking at the role

of the national sociopolitical and media context, and exploring the mode of use of various media, as well as the dynamic of framing in the process of protest communication, this chapter examines public protest participation in the semi-authoritarian post-Soviet settings.

In 'Media in Tooth and Claw: Ecologies of Post-Truth Suasion in Total (Culture) War' (Chapter 8), Michael Schandorf discusses what the history of covert state influence in cultural production may tell us about the current partisan media ecology and transnational ideological media spaces. He shows that even before the Cold War, the US reaction to the rise of communism involved a drastic and militant counter-program of ideological purity beginning with the 'Red Scare' which soon involved direct and indirect influence in media and entertainment industries. In the 'War on Terror', many Cold War patterns and methods of covert propaganda and influence in media industries were reproduced in the ideological battle against a new enemy, as our late twentieth century 'filter bubbles' 'dissolved into a foam of contentious and fragmented political and media ecologies with the rise of numerous populist and other social movements.

Part II: The Road to Occupy and its Influence starts with Anastasia Kavada's 'Creating the collective: Social Media, the Occupy Movement and its Constitution as a Collective Actor' (Chapter 9). This chapter examines the process through which Occupy activists came to constitute themselves as a collective actor, and the role of social media in this process. Based on interviews with Occupy activists in New York, London and other cities, she discusses the communication processes through which the movement drew the boundaries of its environment, creating codes and foundational documents, while speaking in a collective voice. Kavada shows that social media tended to blur the boundaries between the inside and the outside of the movement, but the presence of the movement on social media also led to conflicts and negotiations around Occupy's collective voice as constructed on these platforms.

In 'Ground the Drones: Direct Action and Media Activism' (Chapter 10), Kevin Howley explores direct action campaigns and other grassroots efforts aimed at grounding the drones. He highlights the importance of alternative and activist media in the formation of an oppositional order of discourse to drone warfare. This discourse draws from news and official statements regarding targeted killing, survivor and witness testimony, as well as the language of civil liberties, criminal justice and racial inequality. Howley examines an exemplar of activist media practice – the grassroots educational organization KnowDrones – and the strategies and tactics used by this group to organize popular resistance to America's drone wars, pointing to the significance of 'ironic media activism' that generates public awareness of the (purposefully) hidden costs and consequences of drone warfare.

Alberto Cossu, in 'Beyond Social Media Determinism? How Artists Reshape the Organization of Social Movements' (Chapter 11), writes about how artists and creative workers have been engaged once more in the social and political space (e.g., Occupy, Tahrir Square), have created movements of their own (e.g., Network of Occupied Theatres in Italy and Greece), have experimented with alternative economic models and currencies (e.g., Macao and D-CENT) and have

carried out social research and radical education in partnership with institutional and social actors. In doing so, creative actors and activists have supported neighbourhoods, filled the void left by states' retreat from the social and hosted and coproduced art at a time when the budget for culture and independent art is being decreased in numerous countries across the world. Here, Cossu investigates the case of Macao, 'The New Centre for Arts, Culture and Research of Milan', which involved a two-year ethnographic study, including participant observation, digital methods and semistructured interviews.

In Chapter 12, 'The City is a Work of Art and Everyone is an Artist: Collaborative Protest Art, Participation and Space Reproduction at the 2014 Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement', Georgios Patsiaouras synthesizes empirical findings from the 2014 Hong Kong Umbrella Movement. He uses Lefebvre's (1991) theory of spatial reproduction to examine how space was reproduced through the employment of protest art, not only at the main protest camps but also throughout the city of Hong Kong. Patsiaouras finds that the strategic display of protest art's universal symbolism and multifarious creativity attracted massive audience attention and strengthened the movement's collective identity. The research indicates how a variety of spontaneous and all-inclusive collaborative arts projects shaped the city's public spaces and modified the dominant conceived spaces of public transport and commercial activity.

Adrija Dey and Shola Olabode, in 'A Comparative Study of the Delhi Nirbhaya Protests and the Occupy Nigeria Movement: Evaluating Uses of ICTs and Social Media' (Chapter 13), look through the lens of the Delhi Nirbhaya movement in India and the Occupy Nigeria Movement protests, in order to consider the use of ICTs. The comparative analysis adopts a qualitative case study approach and relies on semistructured interviews with participants in both protests and an analysis of online audiovisual and textual data about the movements. Dey and Olabode contend that digital media tools have become engrained in the general workings of social movements in developing countries, and appear to be having a direct influence on resistance and sociopolitical change in the polity.

In Chapter 14, 'From Classical Syndicalism to Spain's 15-M Movement', Cristina Flesher Fominaya tracks the tensions emerging from classical syndicalism to Spain's 15M movement. She argues that within the transition from workers' movements to the emergence of new social movements, we can witness a significant transformation in the political cultures within social movements that begin to emerge in the 1960s and that continue to develop in a progressive way today. This points to the differences between the logics of collective action between what we could call the institutional left and autonomous movements. Here Flesher Fominaya argues that the most relevant differences lay in their political cultures or their practices, which combine ideological elements and forms of practicing politics.

Torsten Geelan and Andy Hodder, in 'The Trials and Tribulations of Using Social Media to Enhance Transnational Labour Solidarity' (Chapter 15), examine the UK's largest trade union, Unite, and the founding of Union Solidarity International (USI) in 2010. After two years of planning, USI was launched in May 2012. As a new actor in the international union arena, USI presents a unique

opportunity to explore the specific advantages and limitations of using digital technologies to enhance transnational labour solidarity outside of the constraints of traditional union organizations. The case study of USI is introduced by way of a background with analysis of the USI's communication strategy and their digital media (website and Twitter) audiences.

In Chapter 16, 'The Online Communication Strategies of a Small-scale Social movement: The Case of the Greek "Do Not Pay" Social Movement', Stamatis Poulakidakos, Anastasia Veneti and Maria Rovisco investigate a small-scale, everyday form of grassroots resistance and solidarity imitative, the 'Do Not Pay' Social Movement in Greece. The intensity, frequency and size of ant-iausterity protests have been most notable in Greece, primarily as a result of the severe economic policies implemented in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis and the ensuing signing of the bailout treaty in May 2010. Despite a growing body of literature on mass social mobilizations, scant attention has been paid small-scale, everyday form of grassroots resistance. This chapter addresses this omission.

In the 'The EU Referendums in the Twittersphere: #Grexit, #Brexit and the #Catalanreferendum' (Chapter 17), Ioanna Ferra and Dennis Nguyen argue that online media as means of public engagement and tools of (mass) organization became decisive factors with an inherent unpredictability. The study develops by looking on a three-year period of the three referendums, concentrating on the evolution of the political debates that signified the dispute of the EU values. The authors examine how different actors used Twitter to engage and shape the online debate and discourse, which enables an exploratory analysis of how online media influence public discourses, as well as the organization of protest in moments of political upheaval in the European context.

In the final chapter of this book, Athina Karatzogianni and Michael Schandorf discuss agency, control and surveillance in protest movement mediation technologies (Chapter 18). They argue that activists are notably consistent on security, privacy and surveillance, and on the need for alternative protest technologies to be produced in the service of media revolutions. This is all the more remarkable when set against the broad inconsistencies in the ways that activists understand their own agency, their position in their own society and the exact ideological order of dissent to which they are pitching their ideology and organizational activities. Local and national specificity of technology use is a salient factor for social movement actors at a local level which have vastly different experiences of the actual use of technologies, of corporate vs autonomous technologies, of the digital/contemporary public square (surveillance), of the development of alternative infrastructures and of how networking (social structures) are embodied in transferable skills (digital networking and social organizing), as well as of the possibilities and limitations of f2f and digital communication.

Connecting the Mediated Masses: The Transnational Struggle

Since the contributors originally met in Amsterdam in November 2017, empirical developments in the field have been spectacular. In France, the Yellow Vests

mobilized in November 2018. They have succeeded in halting legislation that would increase fuel prices, gained a promised wage increase of €100 and won the cancellation of a planned tax increase for low-income pensioners. Their demands expanded to the return of the tax wealth, the implementation of Citizens' initiative referenda, and ranged from a reduction in presidential powers to asking for President Macron's resignation. Although the movement has not succeeded in forcing Macron to resign, the French government was forced to initiate 'the great national debate' in the hope of halting the protests. The latter escalated to levels of violence matched only by the France of the 1960s, minus the joyfulness that partly characterized the 1968 student movement. At least a couple of dozen dead and pictures of protesters with face injuries and loss of eyesight from the use of 'flash balls' were among the results of the state response, which included injuries of thousands of both protesters and the police forces. The violence prompted Amnesty International's intervention to ask the French government to end use of excessive force against protesters and high school children in France. Internationally, the yellow vest symbol has been used both by movements with similar demands (democratic representation, reversal of inequality, tax justice, relief from high-living costs) and by those movements that also use the yellow vest as a potent symbol of resistance: Yellow vest protests have erupted in Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Taiwan, Tunisia and the United Kingdom.

Typically, digital transmedia/network/distributed activism of the present platform political economy has included extensive use of petitions (change.org is where it started in France), Facebook mobilization and coordination, Instagram publicization, and Twitter amplification jump scaling to mainstream media. In the transnational digital public sphere, awesome headlines have spread in the world's most dominant news media outlets. Theories of Russian interference and manipulation of the Yellow Vest movement also circulated and were at the time considerably refuted. The digital network communication used by the Yellow Vests has been spectacular semiotically (e.g., protest photography, Instagram memes), technically (e.g., use of lapse video and novel videography techniques) and organizationally (e.g., Facebook, Twitter political economy manipulation in mobilization, coordination, publicity). The ideological production and discourses in circulation, not only in France but across the ideological spectrum that the transnational yellow movement has mutated into, are in fact rather all-encompassing. To throw-it-all-in-the-kitchen-sink: the yellow vest movement has been simultaneously characterized as accommodating both radical left and far right voters, as populist, as grassroots, as leaderless, as a movement for economic justice and as against the wealthy urban elite and the establishment. It was embraced by both the leader of the far right (Marine Le Pen) and the leader of the radical left (Jean-Luc Mélenchon) in France, and has been adapted by politically motivated groups across the globe.

The next significant protest in Hong Kong began in June 2019 when protesters successfully forced the withdrawal of the mainland extradition bill. But that did not stop the mobilization demanding electoral reforms and amnesty for

demonstrators. Hong Kong saw incredible scenes of violence and securitization across the territory, with 5000 protesters arrested and hundreds injured. Elsewhere, large-scale mobilizations by ordinary citizens' increasing intolerance of corrupt, undemocratic regimes, inequality and unemployment saw protests erupting in Pakistan, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Tunisia. In Venezuela, tens of thousands of people protested against the Maduro government, which has remained and grown in power nevertheless. Protesters in Algeria opposed Bouteflika running for a fifth term and demanded massive political reforms, while in Sudan protesters forced the resignation of Bashir, with the military council and protest leaders agreeing to create a joint military–civilian council to run the country for three years. Over one million people protested in Puerto Rico: the spark was the leak of homophobic and sexist text messages by Governor Ricardo Rossello, with demonstrators further criticizing the government's handling of Hurricane Maria and accusing officials of mishandling recovery funds, which eventually forced the governor's resignation. In Lebanon, the 'WhatsApp Revolt' was prompted by new taxes on Internet-based calls, including through WhatsApp, and saw one million people on the streets. The tax proposals were dropped, but the protests forced the resignation of Hariri and his cabinet. In Chile, protesters demonstrating against wealth inequality demanded Pinera's resignation. The government responded initially with police violence but later announced an increase in the minimum wage and raised taxes on the wealthy.

In Haiti, which remains in severe economic crisis, protests called for the removal of Moise, accusing him of corruption relating to development funds, while in Bolivia, after protests about electoral fraud, Morales was forced to resign, with the country witnessing dozens of people dying in clashes between Morales' indigenous supporters and police. In Iraq, economic inequality and unemployment led to thousands protesting and 400 killed by security forces. In Iran, hundreds were killed in protests over fuel subsidies, but quickly evolved to widespread demonstrations by low-income and working-class people to which with the regime's security forces responded with state violence that killed more than 200 people. In India, widespread demonstrations against the new Citizenship Amendment Act began in December 2019, with demonstrators opposing the law as unconstitutional and discriminatory against Muslim people, the poor and those without valid proofs of citizenship. Again here, state response has been criticized as disproportionate with thousands of arrests and nearly 30 deaths. The result of these protests, which are ongoing in the time of writing (February 2020), has included several Indian states refusing to implement the law. This long list of a wave of protests in 2018–2019 cannot but include the millions who demonstrated around the globe starting in September 2019 when Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old Swede, walked out of school to inspire the youth strikes, and with Extinction Rebellion spearheading demands for a green revolution.

This intense protest activity forces scholars to consider the use of digital technologies as widely as possible to look at broader trends and patterns, rather than focussing on events in each country separately, or the use of specific platforms by a single movement, and to conduct research within the constant transformation of digital activism beyond its symbolic and mobilizational