

# INTRODUCTION

## Introductory Thoughts on Anthropology and Urban Insurrection

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The year 2011 was a classical *annus mirabilis*. Larger numbers of citizens went onto the streets to demonstrate, to occupy, and to strike – simultaneously, in a tight sequence, inspired by each other – in more locations than perhaps at any earlier moment in human history. As such it counts among a very small collection of exceptionally rebellious years: 1848 and 1968 are the examples. The years preceding and following 2011 were also extraordinarily turbulent and politically flamboyant, forming one rolling cycle of worldwide protest, or perhaps more precisely one worldwide wave of regionally embedded cycles.

Remarkably, for the first time since a generation (since ‘1968’), capitalism was once again denounced, sometimes literally so without metaphorical digressions. True, calls for ‘democracy’, ‘transparency’ and ‘fairness’ against corruption, and increasingly ‘for the people and against the elites’, did dominate the banners, the social and public media and the wider public discourses. These were symbols, slogans and narratives shaped in earlier conjunctures, such as the protest wave against local oligarchies, governmental cliques and selfish bureaucracies in the 1990s and early 2000s. Such symbols originated partly from the 1989 ‘refolutions’ in Central and Eastern Europe, the subsequent colour revolutions in Serbia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, the pro-democracy NGO-world, and to some extent from the alter-globalist movement; but they also came from Latin America. Protesters sought to use and adapt this liberal heritage in 2011 in order to make a new context intelligible. But in particular in the Global North, with (neo-) liberalism dominant for a whole generation, neoliberal capitalism itself, as well

as its local instantiations, was now clearly under popular critical scrutiny, more directly so than ever before. The financial crisis, the credit crunch, the subsequent imposition of draconian austerity on nations that had just paid up to save the bankers and speculators, the recognition of long running social stagnation amid gentrification, the loss of popular sovereignty, and ever deepening inequalities both within cities, nations, and worldwide, particularly also within the Global North, indicated that the engine that had unified the world into a neoliberal 'free market' under US leadership since 1989 was stuttering towards the end of its shelf life.

The crisis also had profound consequences for food and energy prices, in particular in the Global South and the Middle East. The decades preceding the crisis, in addition, had witnessed a steady and sometimes explosive rise in costs associated with education and urban housing, almost everywhere, despite and because of the cheap credit boom that had sparked the crunch on Wall Street.

The worldwide mobilizations of 2011 were set off by an act of a modest person in an out of the way place: the self-immolation of market vendor Mohammed Bouazizi before the municipal building in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, in December 2010: it was a dramatic and desperate gesture against corruption and humiliation by local police officers in a context of sharply rising costs of living that Mohammed could not meet for his family. As his kin and friends mobilized, supported by the street vendors trade union of which Bouazizi was a member, the news of what seemed like a local uprising in the Tunisian provinces went viral via the new social media and Al-Jazeera. Within a few weeks, the Arab street was in revolt against their rulers: in Cairo, Damascus, Tripoli, and in many smaller places (see for good chronologies of the 2011 Arab Spring and subsequent 'world insurgency' Khosrokhavar 2012; Mason 2012; Castells 2015; Werbner, Webb and Spellman-Poots 2014).

As the Arab Spring intensified, tumultuously and increasingly bloodily, just across the water Spanish Indignados and Greek protesters followed up in the spring and summer of 2011 with massive and sustained mobilizations that continued the 'Movement of the Squares'. They were decrying imposed austerity, elite corruption, popular indebtedness and aggravating inequality; also, the handling of these syndromes of capitalist rule within an EU that was unashamedly shifting towards internal financial imperialism of the North over the South, and thus silently cancelling the ideals of 'democracy', 'social cohesion', 'ever closer union' and 'convergence of living standards' that had ostensibly driven the European project until then.

In the early fall, the Occupy Movement in the United States, inspired by all this, succeeded in mobilizing millions of citizens in dozens of cities. They occupied parks and squares – iconically so in Zuccotti Park – around the corner from Wall Street, denouncing the state socialism for the bankers who had gone bust in 2008 and who were being resurrected, along with the capitalist economy they had wrecked, by the Obama government at stupefying public costs in a social context where the ‘99 per cent’ had been stagnating for decades and financialized capitalism had demonstrably only served the ‘1 per cent’ – a powerful slogan against inequality that was popularized by Occupy, sticking ‘forever’.

Demonstrations and square occupations further proliferated as the year went by. In Israel, massive demonstrations denounced urban inequality, gentrification and rising costs of living. Moscow and other big Russian cities rose up in an almost Mediterranean mode against the usurpation of state power by Vladimir Putin in late 2011 and early 2012. North-western Europe was restive throughout, though significantly less rebellious than the circum-Mediterranean or the United States. A twin protest with Zuccotti Park emerged in London in front of the London Stock Exchange – this, after London had already witnessed its ‘feral summer’ of violent youth rioting and student protest in the spring of 2010; the German left scene followed suit with blockades of the ECB. Many places in postsocialist Europe, in particular Bosnia (see Jansen’s chapter), Bulgaria (Kofti, this volume), Romania and the Baltic countries saw sustained waves of bigger and smaller movements rocking incumbent governments in 2012–14. Ukraine had its momentous, spectacular and, in retrospect, politically disastrous Maidan moment in November 2012–February 2013. Hungary had witnessed big protests against austerity for years in a row, and was now, perhaps paradoxically, in the midst of a full scale right-wing transformation towards an ‘illiberal’ dual state (Szombati, forthcoming); Poland would follow in its wake in 2015. The French left was re-energized, as it split from President Hollande’s neoliberal accommodations with Germany, aligning itself intellectually with the new-New Lefts in the European South. Outside Euro-America, Maoist guerrillas in the central forest band of India and massive mobilizations against corruption and violence in New Delhi (see the chapter by Steur) signalled the immense stresses of capitalist liberalization cum dispossession in the second most populous state on earth, and the biggest formally democratic one. China, meanwhile, was counting 60,000 official acts of popular rebellion per year as mobile workers protested against exploitative factory regimes on the

coast and peasants and citizens mobilized against large-scale dispossession of land by industrializing local states and real-estate mafias. Hong Kong saw its 'umbrella revolution' in the early fall of 2014 against the encroachments of Main Land bureaucratic power-holders. In Thailand and Nepal (see the chapter by Hoffmann), radical popular movements were contesting the hierarchical constitutions of these states. South African workers and students, meanwhile, were mobilizing ever more vocally and systematically against durable inequalities and corruption, and increasingly running amok against the neoliberal stagnation of the ANC. Latin America (Lazar, Mollona, this volume) saw the last intense rounds of popular struggle for equality, redistribution and recognition by workers, with inhabitants of favelas and indigenous people – in Venezuela, the Andes, Brazil and the Southern cone – rounding off more than a decade of left-wing organizing – starting with the Zapatista rising in Chiapas in 1995 and culminating in the first World Social Forum gathering in Porto Alegre in 2001, iconic moments of the alter-globalist movement. Finally, break-neck urbanization in Turkey – a country that had been sucking up financial surpluses from both the West and the Gulf states – saw its own mimesis in a revolt of the great metropolises of Istanbul and Ankara as citizens rose in the Gezi Park rebellion against the unaccountable real estate development machine around prime minister – now president and all-round strong man – Erdogan (Kuymulu, this volume).

Any discussion of this unprecedented (past or ongoing?) wave of worldwide urban mobilizations at this moment of writing – early 2017 – must happen against an inescapable and paradoxical double background. First, as the democratic movements of these years failed to conquer power or enforce serious concessions in the reigning forms of rule during their ascent – and indeed they often consciously refused to want to do so – they have left a major vacuum for a resurgent right to pick up on the widespread disillusionment, anger and anxieties among the governed, signalled so incisively by the mass popular outrage. Euro-America has turned massively rightward since then. This includes North-western Europe, Scandinavia, the Visegrad countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the United Kingdom – expressed most clearly in its Brexit vote – and indeed the United States itself, with a Tea Party morphed into a Trump show that overran the Republican establishment, liberated the politically non-correct 'alt-right' in the digital media, and has ascended against all the polls and predictions – as with Brexit – to claim the US presidency. No matter how extravagant the personal liabilities of Donald

Trump, he commanded the steady loyalty of close to half the actually voting electorate, with class in all its entanglements with race and gender as a crucial driver. In Spain, the right fought off the challenge of Podemos, a new party that emerged from the Indignados movement, which in the end had to content itself with just occupying a slot in the system next to the old social democrats of the PSOE without producing a breakthrough (indeed, it took Podemos two years to admit that it was a left-wing party in the first place) – notwithstanding important local successes in cities such as Barcelona (Suarez 2017) and Madrid. In Greece, the only country with a left-left electoral breakthrough, Northern sovereign creditors and the Troika have demonstratively dismantled any semblance of popular sovereignty and have forced Syriza into a combination of stark austerity with internal reformism. Latin America, meanwhile, has been seeing a slow moving takeover by a more or less revanchist classical bourgeois right as the programmes and fiscal resources of the left began to exhaust themselves in the wake of the end of the commodities boom, and some supporters began losing belief: this, in Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela. Bolivia and Ecuador may follow suit. Russia, China, Turkey and Egypt have each bolstered local autocratic forms of rule, combined with active claims to great power status and nationalist self-celebrations, supported by conservative and hierarchical, partly fake, political parties, congeries of brokers and rent-takers of all kind. India, in its turn, has chosen the BJP of Narendra Modi to fuse neoliberal competitiveness with explicit religious-racialized hierarchy.

As compared to 2011, the world scene has descended fearsomely fast toward nationalism and right-wing populism; towards a new-old right that is drawing up clear lines of authority and hierarchy between the deserving, the undeserving and the alien. This is, however, and not only in the Global North, a right that is at the same time cognizant of some of the obvious pitfalls of neoliberal capitalism that fuelled 2011. It is often a neo-populist and ‘antiglobalist’ right, playing on popular fears of failure, stagnation and decline. It works by shifting some of those concerns onto a national security-driven reassertion of national boundaries, and towards the socio-legal recalibration, indeed reinstatement, of a ‘traditional’ or ‘natural’ hierarchy that is perceived to be evaporating; that is a crucial part of the explanation of the fast rise of the new right.

The failure of the short moment of universalist counter-politics has allowed the spread and consolidation of the particularistic quasi-counter-politics of ‘deserving majorities’ against the establishment as well as against the barbarians in, at, and outside the gate.

Significantly, the right appears to have become the one political force ready to directly address ‘the working class’ – the domestic and ‘white’ working class, that is.

The second aspect of that double background lies in the domain of intellectual history. While popular politics ultimately, and ominously, escaped the left, and was in many places usurped by a neo-populist right, the Euro-American left did celebrate a series of intellectual victories, indeed veritable public breakthroughs against what Neil Smith called a ‘dead but dominant’ neoliberalism (Smith 2008). This is most obviously illustrated by the blockbuster sales of two radical, deeply scholarly and voluminous books, for which sales figures are, like the protest wave itself, all but historically unique. First, David Graeber’s anarchist world historical anthropology of debt (2011) sold more than 100,000 copies in English within two years and was translated into more than twenty-five languages after its release by a minor publisher. Second, economist Thomas Piketty’s *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013), a rather technical, social democratic argument for high taxation of wealth – wealth that Piketty argued would always grow faster than the economy as a whole, leading therefore inevitably to plutocracy and oligarchy – sold more than a million copies and won unlikely prizes such as the Financial Times Business Book of the Year Award (2014), sponsored by the global capitalist consultancy McKinsey. These are the publicity peaks – both of them, we note, avowedly non-Marxist – among what has become a vibrant field of left-wing writing in journals, websites, books and blogs, where radical economists mingle with social scientists, philosophers, Marxists and anarchists, and where capitalism as such, in its multiple manifestations – its class inequalities, its current oligarchic and rent-taking tendencies, its plutocratic, finance-driven post-democratic forms, its recurrent resort to primitive accumulation, dispossession and disenfranchisement – is facing more serious intellectual scrutiny than at any time in the last generation. The intellectual omnipresence of neoliberalism, in short, has been broken, both from the left and from the right – though probably not quite its practical dominance and its dead weight of governmentalist ritual excess: dead but dominant, and now in many places in a rocky alliance with the populist Right.

### **Idealists and Realists**

This is the context in which, in the field of anthropology, the subfields of political anthropology, economic anthropology and

anthropological political economy have been drawing closer together. Economic anthropologists, while still indebted to Polanyi or Mauss and often more interested in circulation than in production, have started to talk about the state, austerity, inequality, labour, democracy, resistance, and even class (Hart and Sharp 2016 is perhaps the best example).<sup>1</sup> Political anthropologists felt they had to begin to deal with issues of capitalist crisis, austerity and neoliberalism, while continuing to engage with manipulation of political symbols in circumscribed political arenas (Alexandrakis 2016). Anthropological political economists felt compelled to turn more decisively towards urban study and social movements (recently for instance: Kalb 2009; Kalb and Halmai 2011; Kasmir and Carbonella 2014; Narotzky 2015, 2016a, 2016b; Gill 2016). Dominant neoliberal capitalism and its crises and contradictions have brought them together. Similarly, in the neighbouring field of the sociology of social movements there has arisen a belated awareness that one cannot continue to ignore the issue of capitalism and class any longer (Della Porta 2015). This issue has been pushed aside as impractical and old-fashioned during the growth and professionalization of this subfield in the last thirty years, not entirely unlike what has happened in anthropology (Kalb 2015a).

However, rather than leading to consensus, this mingling forces us to have more explicitly different things to say on roughly shared issues. One particularly important dividing line when it comes to the popular risings of 2011 and their aftermath is, obviously, how we should study and explain them. What is worth revealing and discovering? Roughly, there are two approaches in anthropology, which for heuristic purposes may be divided between a realist-materialist school and an idealist school; the first derives more from anthropological political economy, the latter more from both economic anthropology and political anthropology.<sup>2</sup> In anthropology, the idealists, as always in this discipline, seem to be more numerous than the realists.<sup>3</sup> These contrastive approaches to 'rebel cities' come interwoven with competing ideas about the place of ethnographic fieldwork, history and comparison in anthropological research, including the uses of theory. Realists or materialists incline strongly towards building history, process, spatial linkage and comparison into their ethnographic interests. Idealists tend to embrace a more exclusively ethnographic approach, driven predominantly or singularly by participant observation. This also has consequences for the mode of generalization or universalization scholars are likely to deploy. Idealists often universalize from small observations to

deeply ontological or cosmological generalities – that is, towards philosophy, ontology, to ‘what it is to be human’, or to esthetics, ethics, affect or to basic local senses of temporality and futurity: the singularly atmospheric stuff that strikes you when you are there. Alternatively, they may generalize towards protest tactics or the use of social media or humour or music. Realists tend to universalize towards what Charles Tilly called meso-level relational mechanisms, such as class experiences and trajectories, processes of class or class-alliance formation, recurrent ideological tropes and memes, and in particular to the wider spatiotemporal conjunctures within which events, processes and outcomes take place – more in the direction of historical sociology or macro-anthropology.

Idealist work tends to draw a lot on the political anthropology of symbols, spectacles and communication – indeed, crucially, on the supposedly uniquely human capacity of the ethical and esthetical imagination (for instance Graeber 2012; Werbner, Webb and Spellman-Poots 2014; Alexandrakis 2016). Its mission in the preceding period of political turbulence can be summarized as discovering the ethical imagination at work among small groups of activists while such groups engage in a collective project to imagine other futures and engage in collective action esthetics that seek to bring change to their immediate worlds. Their ideal method has accordingly been the classic long and close-up participatory immersion among circles of activists during periods of localized fieldwork, the quintessential research mode of anthropology since Malinowski. Their key rationale: discovering alternative senses of the future, ‘futures’, non-capitalist moralities, moral economies of the gift and of everyday communism as described by Marcel Mauss (2016), and alternative forms of personhood as sought by Marilyn Strathern (1992). The work of David Graeber and the new journal *HAU*, launched in 2012, both ostensibly inspired by Mauss more than by any other scholar, has given this stream a forceful jolt – even though, somewhat paradoxically, the journal itself hardly engaged with the popular risings (but see Corsin Jimenez and Estalella 2013). There is an affinity in this work with an ethical anarchism and with horizontalist forms of ‘spontaneous’ organizing as epitomized by Occupy and the notion of popular assemblies. Networks of activists are being followed and participated in as they claim and create ‘free spaces’ and new ‘intimacies’ against capital and the state – spaces where ‘everyday communism’ can flow freely and creatively, and a more relational personhood can be realized in rejection of the acquisitive individualism supposedly reigning in Western capitalist

space.<sup>4</sup> Such experiments are sometimes seen as more consequential for imaginative social change in the long run than confrontative public engagement with the state on behalf of desired, willed and enforced social transformation. Idealists, therefore, tend to subscribe to the ‘termite theory of revolution’: revolutionary change will ultimately result from the growing number of people whose daily practices amount to the ongoing rejection of hegemony (James Scott is the key representative, 1987, 1992, 2014). They share in an optimistic theory of a culturally creative multitude that simply overwhelms the state through their active rejection of obedience and hierarchy, à la Hardt and Negri (2011; for a discussion of Hardt and Negri in anthropology see *Focaal* 2012, No. 64). Idealists often see the state as an almost inherently evil homogenizer of the cultural difference and freedom they cherish above all (see Graeber 2016 for example). Zuccotti Park, then, is the model and the horizontalist creative collective the practice that needs to be captured ethnographically for posterity. The style of writing is that of cultural critique.

Realists, in contrast, seem less in thrall to the moral imaginations and creative practices of small avant-garde groups or momentary gatherings. Nor do they succumb as quickly to the idea that all of this, the context, the experience, the agency, is new. Crucially, they tend to have a more historical, and in particular a structurally differentiated vision, of the wider capitalist environment of those protesting groups. For them capitalism is not first of all an objectionable expressive moral universe, a practised ideology of possessive individualism and associated forms of acquisitive personhood, for instance. Above all, capitalism is not seen as being of one cultural piece, an expression of one particular spirit. It is for them, rather, a structured relational universe with a plethora of dominant and subordinate, but always potentially competing, embodied subject positions, ‘structures of feeling’, ‘traditions’, moral codes, knowledges and practices, including, of course, the idealist rejection of hegemonic values by particular groups of actors so cherished by the idealists. For them, ‘really existing capitalism’ is, rather than a disliked coherent culture, a contradictory ensemble of social relationships and practices, vertical dependencies and potential horizontal solidarities, an ensemble shot through with lived contradictions that often become openly exposed as times change and are pushed to a tipping point. Realists are looking for ways to account for why large masses of people become willing to engage in risky political confrontations with capital and the state. They are interested in the changing popular sensibilities of ‘common people’. For that

they may use ethnographically generated intimate insights into the biographies, practices, solidarities and livelihoods of particular groups or segments, small or large – though they may be less driven towards the small political avant-gardes of the idealists, and indeed tend to have a more explicit interest in workers or peasants of all kinds than in the cultural becoming of small bohemian clubs. For that they rely on other sorts of data than just participant observation; in particular data that can be made to reveal the ‘hidden histories’ and lived realities of social groups and classes in situ. They will also seek to understand more in detail, and above all more analytically, the exact contradictions in a wider urban political economy, and will seek to show how such contradictions play themselves out in the histories, livelihoods, moral economies and hopes of the people they are working with. Realists, finally, spend a lot of time documenting actually existing hegemonic as well as submerged political traditions, assuming that histories of moral and political contestation continue to be available for re-articulation and re-signification – also under capitalism, despite, and often precisely against, the homogenizing capacities of the capitalist state. In short, they emphatically invest themselves in spatiotemporal process or trajectory, in addition to the gatherings and events of the moment.

In sum, and provocatively: if the imaginative capacities, ethical visions and protest practices of small experimental avant-garde groups, or larger protesting crowds, are what drives the interests of the idealists, the realists seem rather mesmerized by the historical conundrums of class and hegemony, in their existential, relational, discursive and political sense (for example: Smith 2013; Kasmir and Carbonella 2014; Carrier and Kalb 2015; Kalb 2015a; Crehan 2016; Gill 2016). It is this that the realists see as key to understanding and explaining large-scale political phenomena, such as worldwide urban insurrections, but also for understanding shifts towards and within the right, which are seen as an equally important topic for analysis, one that seems often conveniently ignored by the idealists (Kalb 2009; Kalb and Halmai 2011). Marx, Gramsci and sometimes Polanyi may serve as key inspirations.

While any good analysis combines these two approaches, this book leans, as the reader may have sensed, towards the side of realism. It builds on the anthropology of labour and class, in which both editors have been intensely involved since their early work (Kalb 1997; Mollona 2009). And it seeks to extend that subfield to the more directly political terrain of contemporary urban politics, including large-scale protest. Building among others on Eric Wolf,

David Harvey and Manuel Castells, as well as on Kalb's notion of 'critical junctions' (2005, 2011), what is ultimately at stake for us is a new gusto for urban political class analysis (see also, Epilogue).

## Conundrums of Class

When we say that the realists are mesmerized by the conundrum of class, what exactly might we mean? The coded answer is that we suspect that any necessary explanation of the ongoing urban insurrections places them, concretely and analytically, within and against the forces, multi-scalar as well as situated, of a transforming global capitalism – the accumulation of capital structures and restructures, the conditions and forms of livelihoods, as well as the attendant politics of social reproduction – and it does so in particular ways in particular world regions.

But let us begin at a less elevated level. Sian Lazar, for example, has been making the timely case (2017) that supposedly 'old' class organizations such as labour unions and labour federations played a considerable role in the making, sustaining and outcomes of the worldwide urban mobilizations of 2011. Indeed, Bouazizi's self-immolation in Sidi Bouzid would not have been so consequential had it not been for the sustained support of his labour union of street vendors for the public expression of the outrage of his friends and family; and for the subsequent facilitation and translation of local popular indignation towards collective action at the national level (see among others Mason 2012; Beinín 2015; Castells 2015). Similarly, in Egypt, Greece, Istanbul and ultimately also the United States, labour organizations were in all sorts of ways important vehicles for protest articulation in 2011 and after, as well as before.

Arguably, the relatively peaceful and consolidated democratic outcome in Tunisia, as compared to Egypt and Libya, was in significant measure due to the role of labour (Beinín 2015). The dramatic shift to the right that happened during the Ukrainian Maidan rebellion in February 2013, as barricade fighters and state security police were pitched against each other, might have been channelled differently had efforts at union support for a national strike been more successful (Kalb 2015b). Even OWS was allowed to continue because of the support of local unions. Also, it can be argued that in cases where 'old' labour refused to align with new protest movements, such as in Spain and the United Kingdom, the political punch and mobilizing force of such protest was in the end severely

weakened. And who would deny that the working-class vote for Trump in Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania in the fall of 2016 – as critical for his election as the weak turnout of black voters for Clinton – was an expression of the proven powerlessness of ‘old’ labour in its alliance with Clintonite democrats in the face of economic globalization (combined with concerted attacks by Republican governors to weaken labour). This is one aspect of what we mean with ‘the conundrum of class’.

Lazar (2017), and many others including our authors here, also emphasize that protest cultures are never created just from scratch but have longer local histories that younger participants, including the imaginative avant-gardes of the idealists, may not always be aware of. In those longer histories, ‘old’ labour may or may not play an important role. But where it does so, the likelihood increases of the presence of a common tradition, a public legacy, not a template, but what Eric Wolf called ‘an engram’ (1982), a shared, remembered and somehow practised basic script of potential common claim-making, indeed of ‘commoning’ as an active everyday practice (Harvey 2014).

Together with Susser and Tonnelat (2013) and Kalb (2014a), we describe working-class struggles as forms of ‘commoning’. Paraphrasing Kalb (2017) – ‘over time, no commons without commoning’ – we could braid these historical trajectories and practices even tighter: over time, no class without commoning (with the reverse being equally and perhaps even more urgently true). While such a rapprochement seems politically savvy in light of the contemporary urban mobilizations that are the focus of this volume, we suggest also that the two forms of historical action take shape out of similar processes of laminated contradictions. In other words, commoning shares in the conundrums of class; it is, in fact, ‘deeply entangled historically and in the present with formal politics, the state and capital, in antagonistic as well as collusive ways’ (Kalb 2017). The following chapters address, explicitly or implicitly, these intersecting entanglements of class and commoning. Mollona (this volume) offers a stark and persuasive summary of the stakes of such a potential collusion and/or collision: ‘There has always been a great deal of overlap between the struggles of the urban poor, those of civic movements and those of the industrial or postindustrial proletariat. Perhaps the biggest challenge posed by contemporary urban movements worldwide is precisely the way in which they bring together all these different components into a composite class articulation, the understanding of which is fundamental for the future of class struggle.’

Commoning practices seek to enact shared rights to livelihoods for all and embody and express a popular sense that such rights should be protected and be enforceable. They also rest in a structure of feeling that people should be entitled to claim the right to moral outrage and the right to take to the street and occupy public space if the supposed commons is systematically violated or recurrently threatened. In other words, the importance of public traditions of critical activism goes far beyond ‘mere events’ and beyond the political arithmetic of protest in the here and now, a point easily missed by the idealists. Of course, this popular claim to social justice can also be usurped and articulated by the neo-populist right, as Trump, the Brexit campaigners, Marine Le Pen and the Polish and Hungarian new right know all too well, and as history shows abundantly. The historical engrams of labour are real but they are also highly malleable.

When we write this, it is obviously not intended as a political defence of ‘old labour’ versus ‘new social movements’ or even ‘the imagination’. We think discussions in such general terms are futile. We say this, rather, in order to work towards an understanding of ‘labour’ as ‘a political category’ (Kasmir and Carbonella 2014): as a set of practiced political claims, identities, and indeed imaginations, that prioritize the dignity and the interests of those who cannot live and reproduce themselves from profits and rents that are derived from control over substantial property and wealth, that is, from the accumulation of capital – the big majority of mankind, ‘the 99 per cent’. Further, following Kasmir and Carbonella (2014): the difference between being in work, being unemployed or being practically relegated to a ‘workless’ surplus population is of little conceptual consequence here; indeed, on a conceptual level – though not on a practical one – it is spurious. They all face the possibility of ‘wagelessness’, even while their exposure to it may in practice be extremely uneven. In a similar way one should refuse to magnify the importance of the supposed boundary between production and reproduction, classically between the factory and the home – men’s and women’s labour under Fordism. Rather than emphasizing the separations between production and reproduction, being in labour and being out of labour, or material labour versus immaterial labour, etcetera, we are picturing whole livelihoods that are dependent on their capacity to work or care for others, or be taken care of. Their opportunities of labouring and caring are in a fundamental sense dependent upon the sale to, or exchange with, others. It is that existential dependence that is fundamental to our argument.

To them, the conditions under which that exchange happens matter vitally and immediately, as do the conditions under which they can make themselves a home or a meal or become educated and so on. So this is not about 'old labour' versus all the old-new stuff of movements or imaginations or commons, it is about the key conditions of the social reproduction of life as we live it.

Now, prioritizing these steps in the 'conundrum of class' suggests that we think a Marxian idea of class is far more to the point in the present conjuncture of forceful capitalist globalizations and class formations than a Weberian one (see Carrier and Kalb 2015 for a recent discussion). That is indeed what we argue; it is the necessary perspective, even though not necessarily sufficient. Marx did not use the concept of class a lot, and when he used it, he deployed it rather loosely. The obsession with defining classes, and layers within classes, as exactly as possible comes more from positivist sociology or economics than from Marx. What defines the Marxian vision is an idea of class as thoroughly relational; a relationality that emerges from the way the reproduction of 'classed' livelihoods is, under capitalism, fundamentally entangled with those of other classes, and with, indeed within, the accumulation of capital. Livelihoods are therefore by definition fully embedded in the particular spatiotemporal fixes – the particular regional structures – that capital produces, reproduces, transforms, devalues and discards in its quest for endless accumulation. This is often understood in terms of the 'swirl of markets', or of 'economic growth', or 'de-industrialization' or 'precariatization' etcetera. But independent from the empirical processes one sees at any place and at any one moment in time, the deeper Marxian point is that these transformations of livelihoods and the transformation of the class relations within which they are lived are recurrent, inevitable and profound, and indeed systemic. This is not to deny the usefulness of an additional and somewhat Weberian perspective on stratification, status or consumption. As Jeff Maskovsky has pointed out, '... expulsion and precariatization are not in themselves politically unifying developments' (Maskovsky 2017). There is no reason to assume that current transformative processes, even when they lead to the decline of a more encompassing hegemony and to the production of surplus populations, to Saskia Sassen's expulsions (2014), will lead to political unification. Indeed, Weberian dynamics of cultural closure may well in these supremely Marxian moments paradoxically, and as a rule, become powerful competitors to inclusive class solidarities. Szombati's (forthcoming) analysis of the rise of Jobbik in provincial

Hungary is a good example, though he leans more on Polanyi than on Weber. He explains the rise of the right precisely from what he sees as the emergence of rural Polanyian countermovements against the market seeking 'to protect society'. Polanyi never said that such movements had to be egalitarian. On the contrary, he was equivocal whether they might be on the left or the right. In the Hungarian case, one segment of society protects itself against the market via protection against another segment, the surplus population, whose rights it ostensibly takes away. And the demarcation lines between those segments are being drawn by, and through, culture, ethnicity, race and gender. Weberian hierarchies within what, theoretically speaking at least, could also have united as a class. In other words, on class we need to cast Marx and Weber into their respective roles: Marx the overarching and structuring one, Weber the politically and culturally contingent one. The dialectic is what matters. Class formation and class segmentation are the processes through which that dialectic touches the ground.

But there is more to the conundrum of class. This includes a fascination with the imagination, but one that is different from the indulgence of the anthropological idealists with the imaginative avant-gardes. As the urban insurrections went rolling in 2011, journalists were struck by how they appeared to be driven by the new social media. Typically, reporters of *The Economist* or the *Financial Times* would find one or another demonstrating software programmer working on and off for Google in Cairo or Athens who would steadily upload YouTube videos, Facebook pictures and generally Twitter his or her way around the world, calling for further outrage and action. And this is how the masses came on to the street, the story implied. The public media, but also researchers of digital communication, quickly decided that the unprecedented wave of urban protests must have been conditioned by the quick spread of digital social media in the preceding years (Mason 2012; Wolfson 2014; Castells 2015). Since they also assumed that the social media had not yet reached the global working class, or in any case that the use of them did require some digital and technical literacy, and therefore some further education, they also swiftly surmised that they were witnessing a middle-class revolution, see the Google programmer. Ergo, the logic went, these were revolutions not about bread but about ideals of freedom. Indeed, as we well remember reading of 1968, they were about the liberation of the imagination. This allowed commentators to arrive at a known and reassuring liberal figure of thought: rather than social insurrections driven by anger, failure and

need, these were 'democratic revolutions' driven by the desires of the rising networked global middle classes. The founding myth of the West was at once reconfirmed. All the classic liberal, and indeed liberatory, fantasies of a virtuous circle uniting capital, technology, the Internet, the middle class, democracy and liberty that has always marked capitalism in its millennial moment were projected onto the worldwide urban mobilizations. Here was the Whig version of 2011.

Unsurprisingly, our realist and materialist approach, 'mesmerized by the conundrums of class', rejects such readings, even though it recognizes them as significant public myths in their own right. Rather, we like to take as a clue Paul Mason's (2012) quote of an operator from the British secret services, confiding in the middle of the 2011 uprisings to Mason that 'this is 1848 all over again'. It is not difficult to see how this is a point about historical class formations. '1848' summarizes nothing less than the shock appearance of the working class as a political category on the public stage: the massive Chartist mobilizations in the United Kingdom in the years preceding 1848, demanding the vote and regulation of the labour market – interpreted by Marx in the *Manifesto* as the historical forerunner of the exploited but organized working class that industrial capitalism was about to bring into being; the February revolution in Paris, where a working class, organized in tighter ways than the sans-culottes of 1789, appeared on the street in numbers and with a readiness to fight off state repression and defend the bourgeoisie and its claims for democracy in a way the middle classes themselves would not dare to; a bourgeoisie that was then going to betray them a few months later. In England, the working class was already an industrial one; in France, it was still mainly artisanal but it was in the process of a swift and uncertain transformation. The wider context of 1848 both in the United Kingdom and on the continent was one of uninterrupted price rises of basic food supplies, rapidly rising costs for living in the fast growing and increasingly overcrowded and dangerously unhealthy cities, steadily declining real incomes, ever rising competition for declining resources for living in a context of visibly increasing class divisions of wealth, power and prestige – sound familiar? And after Paris, the whole continent went into insurrectionary mode, after which the reactionary forces in most cases re-established themselves via repression, and prepared for another round of accumulation under the autocrat Louis Bonaparte. That was '1848'. And of course it was also Marx and Engels's '*Manifesto*', and all the left learning and organizing that followed; and then 'The Eighteenth Brumaire'.

What can we surmise if we take the idea seriously that 2011 was indeed '1848 all over again'? What if we start to think about 2011 in terms of a set of territorially differentiated but deeply interconnected and interlocking longer run global social transformations of livelihoods plus the associated transformations of political and cultural frameworks; transformations that are simultaneously generating new needs, anxieties and grievances, as well as helping to assemble the collective will to articulate such needs and grievances in the form of a new common sense, or better, as Gramsci would have it, 'a good sense', and in spectacular ways (see Crehan 2016 on Gramsci's 'common sense' and 'good sense')? What if 2011 were in fact an empirically contingent but nevertheless structured concatenation of planetary social changes – call it global capitalism – with different sites and different instantiations of protest encapsulating the locally and regionally differentiated experiences of that connective larger story? How would we seek to talk about class in a crucible such as this?

Mao Mollona writes in his chapter on Brazil that the old parameters of classes do not work anymore in contemporary metropolitan Brazil. In the new class scenario, the old and 'embourgeoisified' industrial working classes coexist with a younger and expanded cyber-proletariat, casualized service workers, and a socially mobile 'lumpen' lifted up by Lula's famous cash transfer programmes for poverty reduction. Parts of the new middle classes, meanwhile, have been proletarianized and they and their children are facing concrete threats of precariatization. The way in which the protest actions of these segments were coming together and then grew apart in these years can be read like a collective, always incomplete and provisional, effort at making some political sense of these uncertain transformations. As in 1848 these are classes and segments of classes, literally 'in the making', reaching out for a collective politics of life that might suit them, that might articulate meaningfully with their livelihoods, and respond more or less adequately to the contradictory reconfigurations of their habitats and probable futures. Mollona's sense about the contradictory uncertainties of Brazilian metropolitan life may serve as a guide for our other cases. When we talk about the conundrum of class we seek to emphasize once more the rejection of essentialism, reification, reductionism and groupism that has sometimes, rightly or not, been associated with historical versions of class thinking. Both of us, and many others, have repeatedly pointed at and rejected those errors, and have programmatically transcended such problems supposedly associated with 'class' in our earlier work

on European working classes. Class, in anthropology more than anywhere else, calls for conceptual subtlety and flexibility, and for an agenda of historical and empirical discovery (Kalb 1997, 2011, 2015a).

Here is where our notion of critical junctions comes in. Operating, rather eclectically, in the space between Trotsky's 'uneven and combined development', McMichael's 'incorporated comparison' (1990), and Ernst Bloch's 'asynchronic simultaneity', it urges us to focus on the structured contingency of emergent hybrid class formations as they crystallize within the dialectics between local and global histories concatenating into the insurgencies of 2011 and after. As with '1848', we know that the urban mobilizations emerged at least partly from their mutual inspiration and transfer of personnel. As in 1848, they also developed in a now amply enlarged space of territorial and social differentiations. We should refuse to see such differentiations as contingencies based in cultural difference. These are relationally structured contingencies of combined and uneven development organized within a tightly synchronized process of global accumulation, much more tightly now than in 1848. This is not the place to work this out at length, nor does the present collection sufficiently address the full range of significant variations to require such an excursion. But we do not need a fully developed argument in order to make a suggestion: the nature of all these rebellions, the composition of insurgent groups, their claims, scripts, theatrics, discourses, actions, the histories and policy actions against which they came together can only become understandable against their common global-local contextualization; a contextualization that is realized within their particular regional histories of accumulation, development, class formation and urban change. That is, through their specific insertion into the post-1989 Pax Americana and its now accelerating push towards disentanglement. It is exactly at this point, where local rebellion, urban-regional change and global transformation meet, that our realist analyses can make a political difference.

In chapter two, Baris Kuymulu studies the Gezi Park protests in Istanbul and in Turkey at large. Kuymulu engages directly with the 'middle class' narrative taken up by the media and pundits and shows that not only a majority of participants were in fact of working-class background but also that what is usually assumed to be the middle classes are in fact much poorer, much more precarious, more downwardly regulated by the neoliberalizing state and, in particular, more indebted than is generally understood by the liberal 'commentariat'. The protesters also sought and practised forms of urban 'commoning' that cannot be captured by the stories

of economic growth, private lives and rising consumer expectations associated with the middle-class narrative. Most importantly, perhaps, he traces the emergence of the massive all-Turkey protest wave of 2013 to the 'aggressive urbanism' that has been the key engine for economic growth of the AKP regime. He then goes on to show how what he calls a 'frictional heterogeneity' developed among protesters of very different persuasions, such as anti-capitalist Islamists and LGBT activists. This practice of frictional heterogeneity helped different actors to identify and negotiate their differences and commonalities in the face of violent police actions. Kuymulu's chapter is an excellent example of class analysis in the critical junctions mode we are advocating.

Stef Jansen's analytically rich analysis of the Bosnian revolt of spring 2014 continues and further refines this approach among others in a dialogue with the work of Ernesto Laclau on populism. Starting from a workers' uprising in Tuzla, demanding payment of wages, the Bosnian revolt quickly spread throughout the Muslim part of the country, including Sarajevo – where Jansen did his observations. It mobilized thousands of assumed to be 'a-political' and 'apathetic' postsocialist citizens in a protest against 'hunger'. It organized plenums against 'the politicians' who were failing 'the people'. An echo here of Kuymulu's 'frictional heterogeneity', but in this case a heterogeneity less about identity issues than about class differentiations, as more secure citizens found themselves fearing reputational contamination by aligning themselves on the streets with 'the losers of transition', a category long publicly attacked for their supposed refusal to change their purportedly 'socialist' outlooks (Kalb 2009, 2014b). Jansen explicitly deals with the wider critical junctions, both local and global, of this transformative experience, which he expects has definitely opened the window for a popular and political concern with social reproduction that seemed absent as a public discursive possibility in 'identity-scripted' Bosnia Herzegovina before. These critical junctions importantly include social memories of Yugoslav worker-managed socialism. With its emphasis on social security and vertical mobility, socialism is increasingly endorsed positively in post-Yugoslav societies, slowly turning a popular nostalgia into a potential source for political claims. This memory-production turned into political claim-making in 2014 and is feeding into a popular 'commoning' around issues of social reproduction that, during this protest wave, combined the innovation of popular assemblies with small work groups and new labour union formations in making explicit, though hard to satisfy,

claims on the state. Here too, as in Istanbul, a mobilization that targets the core of the accumulation regime: in this case transnational financial linkages and the associated neo-patriarchal redistributive arrangements within the state machine.

Sian Lazar's chapter looks at political mobilizations in Argentina. She draws on Chantal Mouffe's (2005) distinction between an agonistic politics that sets adversaries against each other and respects pluralism, and an antagonistic politics where adversaries appear as enemies. Lazar explores the link between collective identities, antagonism and the moralization of politics by looking at the history of political mobilizations in Argentina from the mid twentieth century to the present, particularly focusing on the 2001 debt crisis. She identifies two types of urban protest. One is the 'self-convened', 'spontaneous' and nationalistic series of protests of the middle classes associated with a morality of outrage and exemplified by the 'cacerolazo' (people who take to the street banging empty pots and pans). The other kind of urban mobilization is that convened by organized social forces – principally trade unions and workers' confederations but also neighbourhood associations and political parties, based on explicitly specified and concrete social demands. These two different moralities of protest emerge in the different forms of, respectively, denunciation and demand-making. In line with Mouffe's analysis, Lazar argues that the political friend/enemy discrimination and the degeneration of politics from a more preferable agonistic mode to one that is antagonistic is a defining feature not only of contemporary Argentinian or Latin American politics but also of the mass mobilizations in recent years in Southern Europe. Lazar warns against mapping her typology of urban mobilizations onto a straightforward left and right taxonomy. Lines between left and right are blurred Lazar argues. Besides, for middle-class protesters each demonstration is a new beginning, she claims. But the question remains: Are these forms of protest an expression of different class interests? Perhaps by looking at the new articulations of politics and protests under Macri, a regime clearly attuned to the morality of the middle classes, we will find some answers.

Loperfido's chapter focuses on the fascist ex-militants from the 'Spontaneista groups', an extra-parliamentary group that was active in Italy in the late 70s. Loperfido starts the chapter by identifying the historical roots of spontaneism in the anti-materialist philosophy of Le Bon, Pareto, Mosca and Sorel, which was later appropriated by fascism. Besides, two common features of historically diverse experiences of spontaneism are anti-rationalism (the primacy of action

and instinct over reason) and distrust of the state, which is seen as an enforcer of rationality. Loperfido then looks at the development of spontaneism in Italy in the 1970s. The cycle of political turmoil that started in 1968 led the Communist Party (PCI) to nearly win the elections in 1979. But when the PCI eventually managed to accede the governmental area by supporting a Christian Democrat-led cabinet, the well-known 'historical compromise', the expectations of left-wing young militants were crushed. Splinter groups from the extra-parliamentary left and neo-fascist groups started a self-organized movement, the so-called 'movement of 1977' against the whole political system. Such radical left-wing and right-wing groups shared a similar violent, spontaneist and identity-driven approach to politics and constituted a common front against both the parliamentary left and the parliamentary right, which they considered equally corrupted. Particularly striking was that the slogan 'neither Left nor Right' was endorsed at both ends of the political spectrum. Reflecting on the weakness of the Italian political system, Loperfido argues that the violent anti-establishment and post-ideological attitude of these radical groups of the past dangerously returns in the populist Movimento 5 Stelle (5 Stars Movement) run by ex-political satirist Beppe Grillo, which is now the second biggest party in Italy. The chapter is intended more to raise questions than give easy answers. For instance, what is the relationship, if any, between past forms of fascism and present forms of populism? And more importantly, what are the class implications of the current wave of spontaneism and anti-state posture across the political spectrum? More importantly, what can we infer in terms of class struggle from spontaneist forms of political action and philosophy?

Mollona's chapter moves the analysis to the present again. It analyses closely the so-called Brazilian 'June Revolution' of 2013. This revolt consisted of an escalating series of massive gatherings and demonstrations, initially against the looming rise in the cost of public transport, led by the Free Fare Movement (Movimento Passe Livre – MPL), which spread across 400 cities and towns, brought millions of people onto the streets and forced President Dilma Rousseff to start a process of constitutional reform. The chapter starts by engaging critically with two readings of the June events. Göran Therborn (2012) reads them as an example of cross-sectional 'bricolage socialism' or a 'movement of movements' that characterizes contemporary working-class mobilizations in Latin America. Unlike him, Saad-Filho argues that the June events are the consequence of the new democratic accountability of the Brazilian state

under the Workers Party (PT) as well as of the restrengthening of middle-class power in Brazil, which had opposed the PT in a dormant form since the party first gained power. Bridging these two views, Mollona relates the demonstrations to the sudden end of the commodity boom, which had fuelled the PT's neo-developmental policy combining pro-labour and anti-poverty measures (such as a 70 per cent increase in the minimum wage and the very effective programme of poverty reduction, Bolsa Familia) with a pro-finance and pro-business stance. For Mollona the June revolution reflects, as said earlier, a complex class scenario where the old and bourgeoisified industrial working classes coexist with a younger and expanded cyber-proletariat, casualized service workers, and a socially mobile lumpen. In spite of the absence of the traditional left (the PT and CGT trade-union confederation) from the initial phases of the demonstration, the events of 2013 led to a successful rearticulation of the left towards more radical left-wing trade unions (such as CONLUTAS) and parties (such as the MPL and PSOL). In the concluding part Mollona recontextualises the 2013 events in the light of the impeachment of President Rousseff, the deep crisis of the PT, and the abrupt end of the Pink Tide in Latin America in 2016. He argues that, unlike the movement of 2013, the demonstrations against the government in 2016 – leading to the impeachment of Rousseff – were led by middle-class parties and their ideologies of austerity, anticorruption and free markets.

Analyses of political mobilizations tend to focus on those who take active part as protesters or on those who actively stand against the protests, but they rarely acknowledge the point of view of those who make a conscious decision not to care much. Based on extensive industrial fieldwork in Bulgaria, Dimitra Kofti discusses the refusal of factory workers in Pernik to join the waves of protest that took place in Bulgaria in 2013 and 2014. Workers in Pernik, an industrial town near Sofia, expressed a general distrust in any kind of political participation. They did so in the motives and claims of the 'protesters' as well. Kofti focuses especially on the second wave of protest from 2014 onwards, which was widely described as middle class and was mainly directed against the new postsocialist left-wing government. The term 'communists', or 'red trash' had come to signify those pseudo-communist governments who wildly privatized, liberalized the market, and demolished anything that was left of the welfare state over the course of the last two and a half decades of capitalism in Bulgaria. During these protests demands and slogans varied – from wanting 'real capitalism' to banning

foreign investments. Besides, these protests often had deep xenophobic and nationalist undertones, showing growing hostility in particular against the Roma community, which is viewed as responsible for Bulgarians' 'negative' image in 'Europe'. The steelworkers of Pernik went through a long period of industrial decline, experiencing precaritization, informalization, worsening working conditions and increasing indebtedness. In a context of outmigration of people as well as capital, social reproduction has become a struggle in itself. They are also deeply disillusioned with trade union politics and the new post-communist establishments and have a strong sense of corruption all around. They claim to have no money and no time to think of other things than their daily sorrows. Urban commoning requires resources. Kofti describes how these structural factors affect the steelworkers Mariana and Penko. Feeling lonely and isolated, and disillusioned with communism as well as capitalism, they withdrew from all activism, which, like their workmate Ivo, they consider as 'just playing the game of the political parties'. Rather than as political apathy, though, Kofti reads their abstention as an active refusal to align with any of the modern teleologies of communism and capitalism, a sensibility explained by the particular trajectories of Bulgarian 'transition' into globalized capitalism.

Michael Hoffmann, in his chapter on ex-bonded labourers' protests in urban Nepal, reminds us of two things that the current focus on urban activists and protests in relatively developed societies tends to neglect. First, armed struggle, such as the Maoist uprising in Nepal, may still be one of the few ways for marginal people to fundamentally reform the state in the poorest developing countries (see also Feuchtwang and Shah 2017). Secondly, for them it is indeed the direct confrontation with the state, almost as a citizenship entitlement, which matters most directly. In this high-risk continual struggle, strong leadership – in contrast to the 'leaderlessness' arguments of the horizontalists – is essential. Hoffmann's activists engage in public and highly visible ritualistic confrontations with the state, among others, to gain and keep public attention for the unfulfilled promises of the new post-revolutionary state concerning the rehabilitation and compensation of former bonded labourers. That does not mean they are beholden to leaderships and cannot change them. But centralized hierarchies are crucial to plan and sustain the ritual confrontations. They also facilitate bargaining with the local state and offer a certain protection for activists. Here no populism and 'empty signifiers' of the Laclau type, as in Jansen's study of Sarajevo, but concerted bargaining about focused issues

within established democratic procedures and legal frameworks. Those procedures and frameworks, however, are themselves still remarkably fluid and changeable: 'open signifiers' rather than the 'empty' ones of Laclau as it were. This is another stark contrast with the highly legalistic, security-driven bureaucracies of contemporary developed states. Hoffmann's chapter testifies to the overriding importance of contextual critical junctions in understanding and explaining specific insurrectionary practices. It also brings to the fore the uneven and combined nature of current worldwide political turbulence.

Such contextual critical junctions come once more to the fore in Luisa Steur's chapter on the tumultuous rise of the urban Aam Aadmi Party, the Common Man Party, in New Delhi in 2012–2014, which emerged from the mass protests around Anna Hazare's weeks' long, 'spontaneous' Gandhian hunger strike against corruption in central Delhi. Here we have a chapter that actually looks closely at some activists in classic ethnographic mode as they are building a city-focused political party out of the sentiments and energy generated during mass mobilizations. But rather than magnifying their imaginative prefigurative practices, Steur grounds them firmly in the actual class backgrounds, histories, relationships and expectations that bring these different people together and from which these practices arise. The Common Man Party's core tenet of 'anti-corruption' was and is a symbol highly prone to cross-class and indeed potentially class-denying populist mobilizations and alliances (as are similar anti-corruption symbolisms in the chapters of Jansen, Lazar and Mollona). Steur dissects the contradictory ideas and interests aligned around the anti-corruption symbol. She suggests that in the Indian neoliberal context anti-corruption tends to acquire an upper-class, Brahmin, strictly ethical, anti-political connotation. It deeply suspects the state, and the lower orders that are increasingly inhabiting and claiming it, of being corrupted/polluted by something as dirty as material self-interests. While left-wing activists began catering to the Common Man Party in order to secure rights to affordable utilities for slum dwellers, for example, wealthy patrons of the party, working in the stock markets, were emphasizing its useful function in teaching the poor responsibility and accountability in paying their utility dues. Working through the critical junctions behind this populist cross-class alliance, Steur shows the dynamic contradictions underlying a project that, not unlike OWS and other recent popular insurgencies, emphatically embraced practice and practical solutions over theory.

With Ida Susser's chapter we come back full circle to the New York of OWS. Susser does not focus on OWS so much but looks at the variable 'class compasses' expressed in a long trajectory of mobilizations in NYC over time, starting from the late sixties. She sees these class compasses as embedded in and responding to the ongoing political economic transformations of the city. She wonders whether OWS and the subsequent election of the democrat Bill de Blasio signal a similar sort of coming together of middle-class activists and (black) working-class protestors as in the 'public service' activism of the early 1970s, classically described by Piven and Cloward (1971). The 99 per cent of OWS and Bill de Blasio should perhaps be seen as a new class formation in this increasingly unequal world, not unlike E.P. Thompson's early nineteenth-century artisans, who began to see more commonalities than differences among themselves when they were making the English working class.

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## Notes

1. There has also been an effort to keep the focus of economic anthropology on circulation and moralities rather than production, extraction and exploitation; for example Appadurai 2015; Graeber 2011; Karatani and Bourdagh 2014. Other works adroitly straddle the classic divides, such as: Bear 2015; Carrier and Kalb 2015; James 2014.
2. This is not a hard division. For example, Steur's chapter in this book can be seen as a combination of the two, as are many articles referred to in note 3, even though idealism clearly prevails. The opposition is made for the sake of distinguishing between competing forms of knowledge and theory, and indeed competing political sensibilities and visions. For good statements of the idealist approach see Ciavolella and Boni 2015; Graeber 2008, 2009; Melenotte 2015. See also Jansen, this book, for a similar discussion.
3. Several journals in anthropology published theme sections on the global insurrections: *Critical Inquiry* (2012) on the aesthetics of rebellion; *American Ethnologist* (2012, no. 1 and 2) on the Arab Spring and Occupy; *Critique of Anthropology* (2012) on anarchism and anthropology; *Focaal* (2015) on 'alterpolitics'. An incomplete list of articles in anthropological journals includes: Bayat 2015; Caldeira 2015; Collins 2012; Corsin Jimenez and Estalella 2013; Dole 2012; Frug 2013; Gray 2016; Hirschkind 2012; Juris 2012; Lazar 2015; Maskovsky 2013; Massad 2014; McQuarrie 2013; Narotzky 2016a, 2016b; Nugent 2012; Parla and Ozgul 2016; Philips 2014; Razza and Kurnik 2012; Susser 2016; Tambar 2016; Theodossopoulos 2013; Thorkelson 2016; Winegar 2016. See also the excellent cultural anthropology blog 'hotspot' on Occupy: <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/63-occupy-anthropology-and-the-2011-global-uprisings>.
4. For an elaboration of this critique see Kalb 2014b.

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