Space in a Social Movement: A Case Study of Occupy Central in Hong Kong in 2014

Xu Wang[1], Yu Ye[2], and Chris King-chi Chan[3]

Abstract

Few studies have examined the role of space in social movements. The existing studies have primarily emphasized the physical nature of space (e.g., space as distance) and overlooked other attributes of space, such as space as the materialization of power relations and space as lived experience. In this article, we explore the role of space in social movements based on a case study of the Occupy Central in Hong Kong in 2014. During the protest, the organizers occupied and reconfigured the campuses and mobilized the participants both through and in space. We find that the campus space helped stimulate the feelings and emotions of the students and increased their enthusiasm to participate in the demonstration. The participants were then sent from the campuses (mobilization spaces) to the demonstration spaces where they occupied and transformed the urban public spaces into private spaces, thus leading to contention over and of space with the state powers. Our findings reveal that the campus space is an important resource that organizers can use for mobilization. We also find that the special features of a campus, including aggregation, networks, isolation, and homogeneity, can facilitate the formation of social movements. We argue that the three attributes of space interact with one another in facilitating the social movement. Thus, our findings suggest that space acts as not only the vessel of struggle but also a useful tool and a target of struggle.

Keywords

social movement, space, Occupy Central, campus, Hong Kong

Introduction

Until the 1960s, the research on social movements was primarily based on social psychology because researchers regarded the movements as manifestations of "irrationality" (Blumer, 1946; Le Bon, 1897; Smelser, 1962). After the late 1960s, many scholars began to challenge these traditional theories (Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 2003; Von Eschen, Pinard, & Kirk, 1971). In recent years, the research focus has gradually shifted to the theory of resource mobilization. From this perspective, the driving force of social movements is identified as "rationality" rather than emotion. Social organizations and networks have attracted a large amount of attention within the framework of

[1]Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Sichuan Province, China
[2]Tongji University, Shanghai, China
[3]City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR

Corresponding Author:
Yu Ye, College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University, 1239 Siping Road, Shanghai, 200092, China.
Email: yye@tongji.edu.cn

social movement studies (Zhao, 1998). However, studies in this area have largely ignored the role of space. According to Martin and Miller (2003), the lack of research in this area stems from the absence of geography as a discipline in the privileged centers of U.S. intellectual life.

Recently, this lack of consideration of spatial issues has received increased attention (Feigenbaum, Frenzel, & McCurdy, 2013; Kavada, 2015; Rovisco & Ong, 2016; W. H. J. Sewell, 2001; Tilly, 2003; Zhao, 1998). Many of these studies have provided insights into the role the physical nature of space (*space as distance*) plays in social movements. However, other attributes of space, such as *space as the materialization of power relations* and *space as lived experience*, have been overlooked in the research (Taylor & Spicer, 2007). Moreover, the mechanisms through which space influences the development of social movements have not been thoroughly discussed to date. Some studies have emphasized the premovement processes (W. H. J. Sewell, 2001; Zhao, 1998), while others have focused only on the emergence of social movements (Feigenbaum et al., 2013; Hammond, 2013; Nicholls, 2009; Wahlström, 2010; Zajko & Belandô, 2008). In recent years, increasing numbers of social movements have formed around the world, such as Occupy Wall Street (the United States), Occupy Gezi (Turkey), the "Nuit Debout" or "Up all Night" movement (France) and other movements. Scholars have increasingly focused on *the demonstration space*. However, the question of how space is used and influences the *mobilization* process remains unexamined.

Therefore, the role of space in social movements warrants further exploration. This article aims to fill abovementioned two research gaps by the case of Occupy Central (OC) in Hong Kong[1]: First, it examines how university campuses were used as *mobilization spaces* for organizing students to participate in the occupation of urban public spaces (*demonstration spaces*); second, it explores how the organizers occupied and redesigned campuses (*space as the materialization of power relations*) to influence the feelings, emotions, and passion of the individual participants (*space as lived experience*).

In short, we argue that the three attributes of space interact with each other in facilitating social movements. First, spatial proximity helps strengthen social networks and makes it easier to assemble people. Second, organizers can use space as an important resource in influencing people's experiences and emotions and to promote mobilization. By generating passion for the movement in the campus space, organizers can then send protesters to occupy public spaces in the city and to confront the public authorities. From this perspective, space acts as not only the vessel of struggle (*social movement in space*) but also a useful tool and a target of struggle (*space in social movement*).

Space and Social Movements

The earliest study of social movements can be traced back to the work of Le Bon (1897), which was rooted in social psychology. Based on this foundation, Blumer (1946) further proposed the theory of circular reaction. A more systematic theory known as the value-added model was developed by Smelser (1962). In general, these social movement studies were based on the contemporary social psychology, which focused on emotions and irrationality. In the late 1960s, scholars began to question the traditional theories (Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1973, 1978; Von Eschen et al., 1971). As a result, theories of resource mobilization and political processes were gradually developed to justify the rationality of social movements (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Marwell, Oliver, & Prahl, 1988; McAdam, 1986; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Oberschall, 1973; Snow, Zurcher, & Ekland-Olson, 1980). These studies maintained that social movements emerged only after certain resources such as time, leadership, money, networks, and other factors were obtained.

However, Gould (1991, 1993, 1995) challenged the conventional wisdom and argued that neighborhoods had a significant influence on mobilization. This led many scholars to realize that such spatial factors had been largely ignored in the social movement research (Marston, 2003;

McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2003; W. H. J. Sewell, 2001; Tilly, 2000, 2003; Zhao, 1998). However, studies have shown that spatial proximity can enable the convenient aggregation of participants (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). Proximity has also been found to be highly positively correlated with the likelihood of mobilization (Tilly, 2003). Empirical studies have shown that the urban spatial geography in London has had a significant influence on worker mobilization (Tilly & Schweitzer, 1982). Burt (1992) claimed that the relationship between active participation and dormitory- and class-based networks constituted a structural hole. Zhao (1998) posited that campus space facilitated mobilization by facilitating tight networks and endogenous solidarities. The strong space-based (dormitory-based) networks play an important role in mobilization. Chan and Pun (2009) found that the dormitory spaces in China helped mobilize migrant workers to participate in collective protests. Nicholls (2009) and Lacey (2005) maintained that place-based relationships contributed greatly to the formation of social movements. Overall, the aforementioned studies were primarily based on political process theory and attempted to link space to other key elements, such as social organization and networks.

The relationship between space and social movement has been increasingly explored in recent years due to the rise of the occupy movements (Sotiropoulos, 2017). Recently, scholars have begun to analyze how protesters behave and how they spatially interact with the police during social movements (Feigenbaum et al., 2013; Hammond, 2013; Rovisco & Ong, 2016; Wahlström, 2011; Zajko & Belandô, 2008). Contention over space is regarded as an important way to challenge state power. In addition, social media are increasingly being used to facilitate social movements, thus generating new experiences of public space (Feigenbaum et al., 2013; Gerbaudo, 2012; Min & Liu, 2015; Rovisco & Ong, 2016). However, physical space is still an important factor in social movements because face-to-face interaction remains a powerful motivating force (Gerbaudo, 2012).

Although previous studies have provided useful insights into the role that space plays in social movements, several areas remain relatively underresearched. First, most studies have focused only on the physical dimensions and ignored other attributes of space because the effects of the physical attributes of space are easy to observe and identify (Taylor & Spicer, 2007). However, the multifaceted attributes of space, such as time–distance, the built environment, the spatial scale, meaning, and the spatiality of power, can have various effects on social movements (W. H. J. Sewell, 2001). Second, the literature does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of space within social movements. Specifically, some scholars have emphasized the pre-movement process (W. H. J. Sewell, 2001; Zhao, 1998), whereas others have paid attention to the outbreak stage (Feigenbaum et al., 2013; Hammond, 2013; Kavada, 2015; Nicholls, 2009; Rovisco & Ong, 2016; Wahlström, 2010; Zajko & Belandô, 2008). Although the space of demonstration has received increasing attention following the rise of the occupy movement, the question of how space is used to mobilize participants remains unexamined.

Nevertheless, the literature does provide some insights into the effects of space (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986; Harvey, 1982, 1996; Lefebvre, 1991, 2004; Soja, 1989). For example, Lefebvre (1991) argued that space was far more than a neutral container of activity. Foucault (1980) also stated that space was not dead or fixed. Thus, the influence of space on social movements should go beyond its physical effects (as a type of vessel). Social movement researchers should therefore pay more attention to other dimensions of space. Lefebvre (1991) proposed the following three dimensions of space: *spatial practice, the representation of space*, and *the space of representation*. Accordingly, Taylor and Spicer (2007) suggested that the literature on space could be divided into three categories: *space as distance, space as the materialization of power relations*, and *space as lived experience*. Similar concepts were proposed by Tilly (2000) and W. H. J. Sewell (2001). Furthermore, Soja (1989) suggested there was consistent dialectical or trialectical interplay across the three categories of space. Lefebvre (1991) suggested that the first dimension of space was disappearing and that the latter two were intensifying. However, the latter two attributes of space have been overlooked in social movement studies.
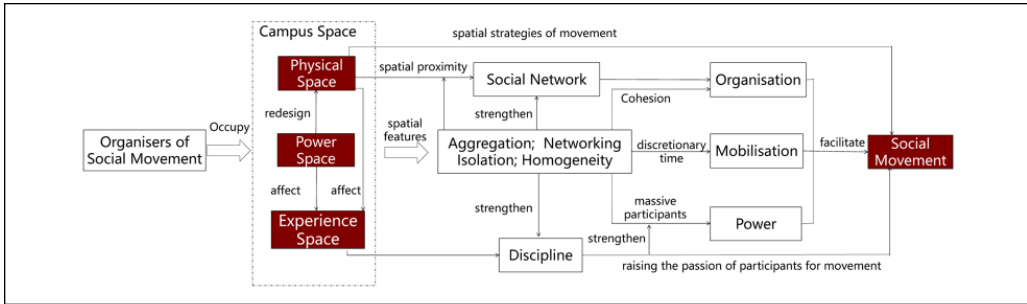
Figure 1. Framework of the role of space in social movements.

Therefore, in this article, we focus on the latter two dimensions: *space as the materialization of power relations* and *space as lived experience*. By determining individual segments and establishing operational links, the division of space promotes social obedience. The governmentality of space is based on monitoring and discipline.[2] For instance, factory spaces are organized and designed to help employers better monitor and control their workers (Markus, 1993; Thompson, 1967). Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that the spatial layout, architecture, and environment are central to enabling this process (G. Sewell & Wilkinson, 1992). Harvey (1982) argued that capitalism realized capital accumulation through a "spatial fix." Tuan (1977) stated that our experiences and perceptions enlivened and animated space. Certain symbolic elements in space, such as decorations and artefacts, convey stories and thus affect our experience and the meaning of space (Gagliardi, 1990; Strati, 1999). In short, *space as lived experience* can influence people's feelings and emotions and even their behavior.

All in all, space plays a far greater role in social movements than simply intensifying networks and facilitating assembly. Indeed, the aforementioned three attributes of space interact with each other and contribute collectively to the development of social movements. Space can act as a tool or a resource (Lefebvre, 1991) and can be intentionally exploited by protesters to promote social movements (Zhao, 1998). Moreover, the feelings and behavior of the participants can be affected by space. Therefore, in this article, we attempt to integrate space into the framework of social movements and analyze the role that space plays in social movements (Figure 1). We first introduce the development of the Hong Kong OC in 2014 and our methodology before discussing the role of the campus space in OC.

The Development of Occupy Central

In this article, OC refers to the campaign in Hong Kong in 2014, which was initiated by a law professor at the University of Hong Kong (HKU), Benny Tai Yiu-ting, and it aimed to pressure the PRC government to introduce universal suffrage for the election of the chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region (SAR) in 2017. The central government regarded that OC, which broke Hong Kong basic law and the principle of "One Country," was an illegal activity (Min & Liu, 2015). Although OC was initiated at the beginning of 2013, Beijing's rejection of the proposed electoral reform on 31 August 2014 served as the movement's catalyst. Although a protest campaign was initially planned to begin on 1 October 2014, the OC emerged earlier on September 28 following a heated week-long class boycott (September 22-26) organized by two student organizations: the Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarism. Student activists began to enter "civil square," an open space in front of the SAR headquarters in Admiralty, on the evening of September 26. On September 27, thousands of citizens came to Admiralty to support the students. On September 28, Benny Tai announced the start of OC at an assembly organized by students outside the SAR government headquarters. Student leaders subsequently replaced
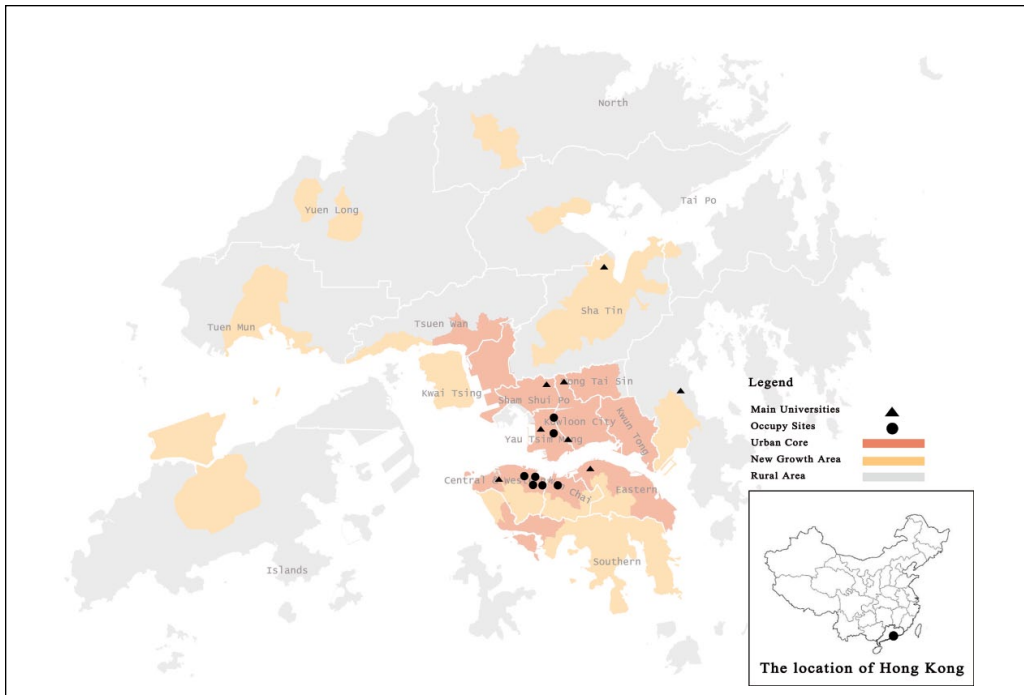
Figure 2. Distribution of the primary participant universities and the occupied sites.

Tai and his allies and began to play an increasingly dominant role within the movement. The OC also spread from Admiralty to other areas of Hong Kong, notably Mongkok and Causeway Bay (Figure 2). The movement ended in the middle of December 2014, when the last occupied zone in Causeway Bay was cleared peacefully on December 15.

Social movements generally have several stages, including propagation, mobilization, breakout, and antagonism. The OC movement lasted for 79 days and went through many waves of these stages. At the beginning of September, in response to Beijing's rejection of the request for universal suffrage, student organizers began to promote OC on a large scale to mobilize more participants. During this period, the campus provided an important space for propagation and mobilization, which is the focus of this article. After OC was officially launched on September 28, large numbers of participants became involved, and the antagonism toward the government became very intense.

Methodology

Research Methods

Observations and interviews with students are the two main data collection methods used in this article. As the witnesses of OC, the authors observed how OC developed in space, how this space was used to mobilize protesters and how the protesters and police contended for and over space. The mobilization of the protestors and demonstrations occurred at sites where we studied, worked, and lived, thus providing us an opportunity to conduct close and continuous observations, which helped minimize the possible biases in analyzing our data.

As the authors were also members of the campus community, it was easier for students to share their experiences and ideas with us when we conducted our interviews. Interviews were conducted between October 2014 and January 2015. The interviews usually lasted around 30

minutes. Cantonese, the native language of Hong Kong, and Putonghua, the native language of mainland China (PRC), were used in the interviews with local students/citizens and nonlocal students, respectively. All of the original records collected during the interviews were converted to Chinese transcripts after the interviews. However, the coding and indexing processes were conducted in English. All of the spatial issues mentioned in the transcripts were indexed under the heading of "space" to allow the role of space in the social movement to be clearly identified. The editing approach of conceptualizing headings from the transcripts was subsequently applied (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

Sample Selection

We conducted semistructured interviews with 52 informants. Forty-four interviewees were students from the eight primary universities in Hong Kong.[3] Nine interviewees were from HKU, and five interviewees were selected from each of the other seven universities. More participants were chosen from HKU because it played a leading role in the movement[4] and was likely to offer more detailed information on the role of the campus space in mobilizing students. Students were selected from different departments to collect diverse comments about OC with respect to their different knowledge backgrounds. Of the 44 interviewees, 36 were local students and 8 were nonlocals. To triangulate the data, we interviewed eight local citizens who were not from the universities.

Social Movements and the Features of Campus Space

OC was not the first case in which the campus space played an essential role in nurturing a social movement in China. Throughout the modern history of China, many large-scale social movements have originated on university campuses and been organized by college students, such as the May 4 movement and the December 9 movement. This tendency can be attributed to the unique living and learning environments of the campuses, which facilitate the formation of social movements. We identified the following four important characteristics of university campus spaces that facilitate the formation of social movements.

Homogeneity

Most students from the same university are of a similar age and share similar living and studying experiences. They attend parties together, use the same canteens, and attend similar courses. In short, they interact with each other through the same social networks. Research suggests that long-term communications and interactions tend to cultivate homogeneous groups with similar viewpoints (Tilly, 1978). As a result, mutual trust and loyalty are easier to build, which strengthens the organizational capacity and sense of identity among individuals. As four of the interviewed students stated (Nos. 3, 7, 22, and 36), "we were asked to participate in OC by our classmates, which was hard to refuse." Moreover, college students have large amounts of discretionary time to participate in social movements. For instance, OC formed on a weekend, on 28 September 2014, when the participants had sufficient free time. Later, OC usually intensified on public holidays, when the students were available. More than half of the students interviewed reported that they chose to attend OC and asked friends to sign in for them during their lectures.

Networks

As Gould (1991) and Zhao (1998) noted, spatial proximity tends to promote interaction between people, who thereby form relationship networks based on space. Even authoritarian states find it
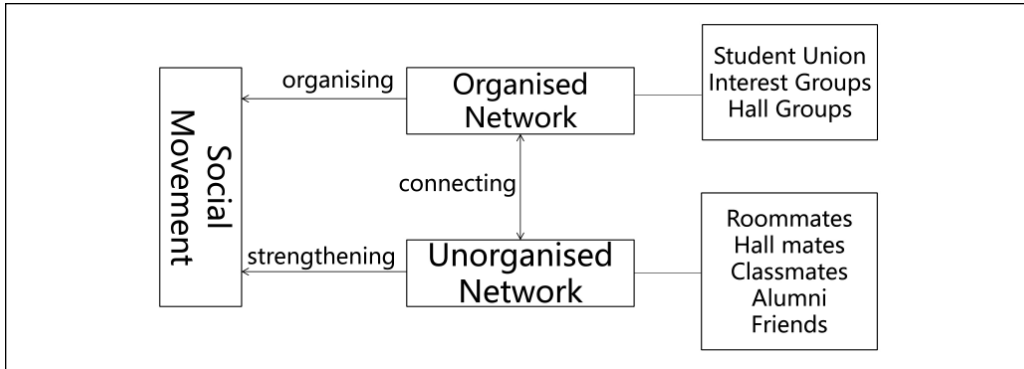
Figure 3. Intertwined organized and unorganized networks.

difficult to break these networks. These types of networks based on spatial proximity are frequently found among classmates and hall mates in universities. Accordingly, many of the student participants in OC encouraged their network friends to take part.

However, most of the space-based networks discussed in the literature are unorganized and thus may not help in the planning and organization of large-scale social movements. Unlike neighborhoods, the networks inside campuses are complex and multidimensional (Lacey, 2005). In addition to daily communication networks based on spatial proximity, students tend to participate in a variety of formal and informal organizations, such as student unions, study associations, interest groups, and halls. For example, the universities in Hong Kong have a strong hall culture. Undergraduates normally spend large amounts of time engaging in hall activities. The halls are also home to numerous internal groups, such as residential committees, interest groups, and student tutors. Although the residential halls in Hong Kong are well organized and connected, this factor was ignored in previous studies (Gould, 1993; Zhao, 1998).

In general, the influence of these internal networks became apparent after the outbreak of OC. For example, the HKU Student Union and its affiliated student associations played a crucial role in organizing students during OC. These organizations were experienced in organizing extracurricular activities, which proved useful in promoting the movement. The union members knew how to use the available space to mobilize and organize students. Similar to their regular union activities, the HKU Student Union members distributed leaflets, displayed posters, and broadcasted promotional videos and music during OC. In short, these organized networks helped plan and organize the movement and strengthen the unorganized networks. The interaction between the two types of networks increased the connectedness of the overall social network (Figure 3). One student (No. 8) said,

> I was mobilized to participate in OC by many other students. Some were my friends and classmates who invited me to attend the movement. Some were members of my hall and student union. They strived as much as possible to persuade me to do so. I had to follow them and attend it.

Aggregation

Campuses usually have a high population density, which reduces the cost of face-to-face communication and makes it easy to assemble students for meetings or protests (Fogelson, 1971). As one student (No. 17) said,

> Since it only cost me 10 minutes to go to the meeting place, I would attend the mobilizing meetings and have a look. I chose to go there no matter if I had decided to participate in OC or not.
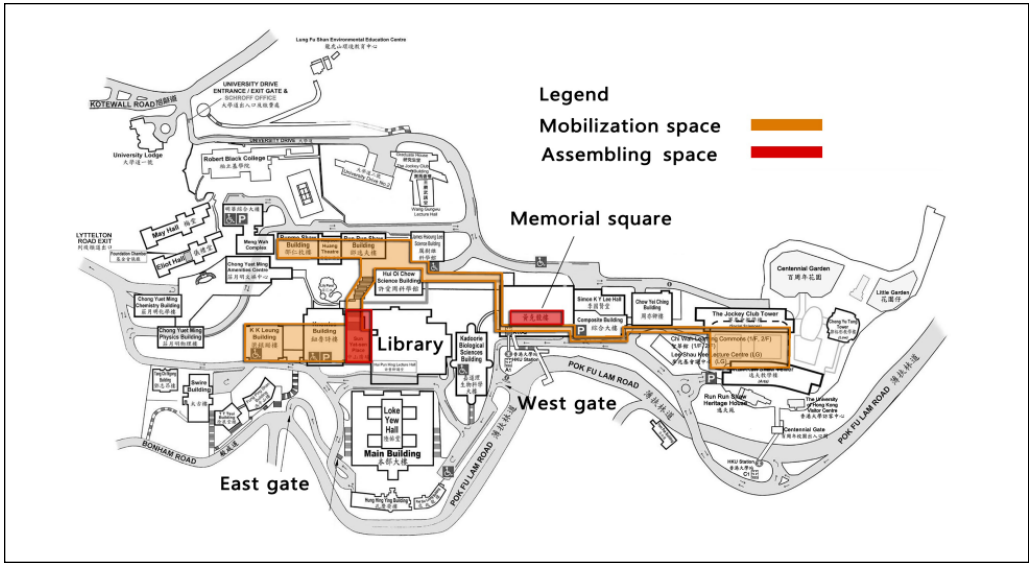
Figure 4. Primary outdoor mobilization space for Occupy Central in HKU.

If the other factors are under control, the higher the population density, the more contacts and exchanges there will be among individuals (Case, 1981). In general, this tendency toward aggregation caused the information about OC to spread quickly among college students. It also lowered the cost of resources required by the movement because it made it easier to post posters, hold mobilization meetings, and perform other activities.

Insulation

Although the campus spaces in Hong Kong are part of the city, they are relatively independent compared with other urban spaces. Most of the universities in Hong Kong have physical boundaries, that is, walls or green spaces that separate the campus from other urban spaces. The administration and security of universities are also relatively independent. For example, during OC, the SAR police would not enter the campus in response to student actions. As Zhao (1998) noted that the campus wall indicates that the university does not completely belong to urban space. Therefore, local authorities tend not to enter campuses to arrest students to avoid intensifying the conflict. University security officers also prefer to avoid direct conflict with students. In short, the campus space provides students with a protective space free from outside interference. Thus, during OC, the campus became an effective space for mobilizing participation in the social movement.

Occupy Campus and the Discipline of Space

Research has primarily focused on the demonstration space because it is the area in which direct conflict occurs between the movement participants and state power (Arora, 2014; Hammond, 2013; Zajko & Belandô, 2008; Zhao, 1998). However, the mobilization space has been relatively ignored by researchers because it is usually hidden or behind the scene. During OC, the campus served as the primary mobilization space (Figure 4). In fact, students occupied the campus spaces to mobilize before occupying Central. Thus, the occupation of the campuses played a significant role in OC.

The "Alienation" of Campus Space

The capacity to mobilize social movements depends on the following two issues: the factors that are controlled by the participants, such as human resources, capital, and techniques, and their ability to convert these factors into resources (Tilly, 1978). On campus, the space factor is readily available, even free, in relation to the other factors. Students are free to use public squares and lecture rooms, and thus space inevitably serves as a valuable resource for social movements if necessary.

To promote mobilization, the student organizers occupied the campus space and "redesigned" it before they occupied Central. Specifically, many localized discourses, for example, "fighting for your hometown" and "freedom," were used in every corner of the campus space. These discourses were transmitted through many different means, including leaflets, posters, videos, and broadcasts. It is difficult to disregard these discourses because they appeared on the facades of buildings and in corridors, study rooms, and even lavatories. As one student (No. 5) reported,

> During that time, the campus space was not a normal public space anymore. In turn, it had been taken over by organizers and filled with a revolutionary atmosphere. Your eyes and ears were flooded by all kinds of posters, leaflets and slogans. Automatically, you would get excited by those influences.

In short, the campus space served as a privileged instrument of the movement organizers, and became an essential but low-cost resource of the social movement. This space not only affected the social movement through the social networks but also played a direct role in the mobilization process. As Le Bon (1897) stated, individuals tend to think simplistically when they are in groups. In this context, articulating and repeating the same information can make it more powerful. The students were enveloped in this type of campus atmosphere before the launch of OC.

The "Discipline" of Campus Space

The alienation or contention of the campus space serves as a means or strategy rather than a final purpose. The discipline and networking promoted by the confines of the campus space can help mobilize participants to partake in social movement. The organizers of OC, the hidden power holders, were the redesigners of the spaces inside the campuses. The "disciplining" effect of the specific designs of campus spaces can affect an individual's perceptions and experience. During OC, the enthusiasm of the students was maintained via this mechanism, thus producing numerous movement participants. As one student (No. 12) stated, "I was completely moved by the banners and repeated videos in the campus and decided to join them. . . . We were extremely excited when the music was on." It is clear that the enthusiasm of the students was inspired by the discipline of the campus space, thus leading to more individuals enthusiastically supporting OC. Lefebvre (2004) stated that the political powers knew how to use and manipulate space to realize their goals and mobilize the populace. The organizers of OC used the space to achieve eurhythmia between mobilizing space and demonstration space. The alienation and discipline then converted the previously neutral space of the campus into a machine for producing OC supporters. Therefore, the campus space had a strong political significance during OC.

In addition to the "discipline of space," the "discipline inside space" can be identified on campus. This form of discipline is generated through intensive social interaction and is prominent in the many contact points on campus, including cafeterias, lecture rooms, residential halls, and other areas that provide places for sharing and communicating information (Nicholls, 2009). More than half of our interviewees mentioned meetings in the lounges of student halls as an important node. The active members of the student unions were typically also activists in the residential halls and frequently met with their friends and hall mates in the hall lounges. Thus, the opinions of the active members strongly influenced the willingness of the other students to participate in OC.

Nevertheless, the discipline in space still requires assistance from the discipline of space, especially during important mobilization meetings. The mobilization meetings at all of the universities were held in the most important squares, such as the library square and square of the goddess of democracy, all of which were associated with freedom and democracy. In addition to exploiting the capacity of these large open spaces, the primary reason for choosing these squares was to use the meaning and significance of the spaces to influence people's feelings and experiences. During the mobilization meetings, the significance and symbolism of the spaces in terms of struggle, freedom, and democracy had the effect of increasing the levels of individual excitement and passion, which thus facilitated mobilization. One student from the Chinese University of Hong Kong noted that, "In addition to its high accessibility, the reason why mobilizing meetings were organized in the square of the goddess of democracy was that it could increase our determination and passion to struggle." In short, the sense of space helped strengthen the sense of identity and enthusiasm among the participants (Tilly, 2000). It is also necessary to mention the important role that virtual space played in OC. Information technologies virtualize space and provide more means of connecting with others on the Internet. The virtual connections built through Facebook, Twitter, and Google Talk also played an important role, although a less crucial one in comparison with that of physical space (Arora, 2014; Gerbaudo, 2012; Hammond, 2013; Kavada, 2015; Min & Liu, 2015).

In general, the "discipline of space" and "discipline in space" interact with each other and promote mutuality. The discipline of space affects individuals directly, whereas the discipline in space works through social networks.

Occupy Central and the Contention of Space

During OC, the campus space functioned like a machine in producing numerous supporters of the movement through the discipline of space and the discipline in space. After becoming mobilized, these participants joined the demonstrations.

Contention of the Demonstration Space

OC was far more than a contestation over space. Rather, it was a contestation of space (the struggle to gain spatial controlling power) between the movement participants and the representatives of the governmental authority (Lefebvre, 1991). Essentially, public spaces belong to the public but are controlled by the state. After the outbreak of OC, the participants occupied numerous urban public spaces and made them into private spaces, thus excluding other users. As this type of exclusion threatened the normal operation of the city, the occupation was intended to pressure the authority to meet the requirements of the participants. The participants were inclined to occupy as much space as they could. The more space they occupied, the greater the exclusion effects and the more bargaining power they could attain, which is why OC occurred in the core public areas of the city, such as Central, Tsim Sha Tsui, Admiralty, Mong Kok, and Causeway Bay. Occupying these spaces threatened and applied pressure on the state.

The demonstration spaces also worked as mobilization areas. The participants in OC spent considerable periods together in the demonstration spaces and formed living communities by interacting with one another (Feigenbaum et al., 2013; Gerbaudo, 2012; Hammond, 2013). One citizen (No. 43) said that, "When I stayed in the occupy site we were inclined to pass the time via some activities, such as sharing our stories and playing cards. We understood each other better through the intense communications over those days."

The demonstration space was decorated with numerous banners to establish a sense of place. Lectures and slogans were broadcast through shouting to maintain participant enthusiasm. Therefore, the demonstration space also played a role in mobilizing the participants. Nevertheless,
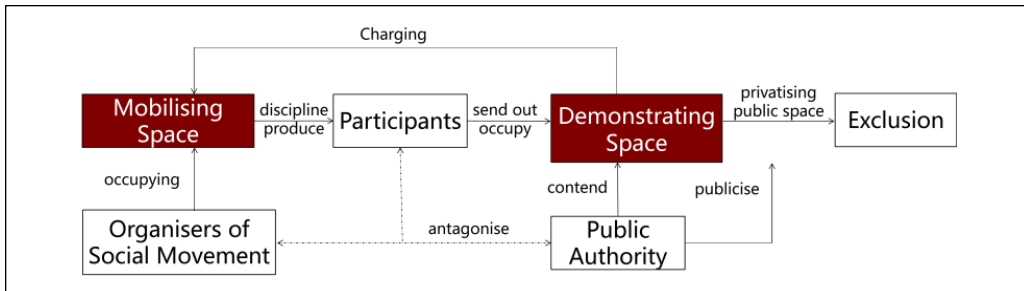
Figure 5. Interaction between the demonstration and mobilization spaces.

the campus was the key mobilization space for the student-oriented movements because the networks that were built in the demonstration spaces were weak compared with those formed on campus.

Interaction Between the Mobilization and Demonstration Spaces

After individuals became eager to participate in OC while in the campus space, they were sent to the demonstration space, where the integration of mobilization and demonstration occurred (Figure 5). In mainland China, the benefits of the wide urban streets enabled this process to happen quite easily, with demonstrators tending to engage in group processions and march toward the demonstration space (Zhao, 1998). Long processions helped maintain the enthusiasm and excitement of the participants and enhance their expectation of success (Le Bon, 1897).

However, the urban space in Hong Kong is quite compact and the pedestrian spaces are too narrow to allow processions to gather. Therefore, the transportation between the mobilization and demonstration spaces during OC was fragmented. When the OC demonstrations became intense, the organizers provided free shuttle buses between the student halls and demonstration space to improve integration.

Social movements require enormous amounts of resources, especially in terms of enthusiasm (Corsín Jiménez & Estalella, 2017). After the participants in OC expressed their enthusiasm in the demonstration space, they returned to the mobilization space to recharge, leading to a system of circulation between the spaces. This was the mechanism through which the campus spaces were used to "recharge" the students' enthusiasm (Figure 4). One student (No. 6, 23, 37, and 41) mentioned that

> In the processes of OC, we [the participants] often felt mentally and physically tired. We were exhausted after staying at the occupy sites and struggling against policemen for a long time during that hot summer. We also needed to finish our homework and attend examinations afterward. But the mobilization meetings at the campus helped us to persist.

Therefore, when the mobilization space was operating in full swing, the demonstration space also experienced the greatest conflict, and vice versa. Thus, the two spaces interacted and supported one another. The two spaces gradually returned to the calm of the past after the decline of the occupying movement.

Conclusion

The effects that spatial factors have on social movements have long been downplayed in the social movement research. However, scholars have begun to pay more attention to this issue in

recent years. Nevertheless, studies have primarily emphasized the physical attributes of space (space as distance) and overlooked other important factors. In this article, we explore the role that space plays in social movements beyond the physical viewpoint of the production of space. Drawing on empirical data collected on OC in Hong Kong in 2014, we argue that three specific attributes of space (*space as distance, space as the materialization of power relations*, and *space as lived experience*) interacted with each other during different stages of OC.

During OC, the special features of the campus space that were primarily based on *space as distance* (i.e., spatial proximity, frequent contacts, and high density) facilitated the formation of tight space-based networks and laid a solid foundation for mobilization. Before OC formed, the organizers sought to generate resources to become better prepared, that is, money, goods, and networks. Compared with other factors, space was easily available, even free, for the students, and inevitably became a resource for mobilization. From the perspective of *space as the materialization of power relations*, the organizers facilitated the occupation and redesign of the campuses by using specific techniques (i.e., distributing posters and leaflets, exploiting symbolic sculptures and spaces, and encouraging the production of videos and songs) to facilitate the organization of individuals and the mobilization of more participants. These efforts deeply affected the feelings and emotions of individual students and ignited their passion. This passion was, in turn, transmitted through the participants' networks, thereby intensifying this effect. Thus, *space as experience* can be seen as playing a significant role in stimulating emotional engagement in social movements.

When OC began, the passionate individuals who were inspired to participate on campus were transferred to the public spaces of Hong Kong with the aim of taking over these spaces. These actions placed pressure on the state, thus causing the contention over and of space between the protesters and state. During this stage, the campus continued to play a role. After the protesters' energy and passion declined, they would return to the campus to recharge, and the campus space played a prominent role in disciplining the protesters.

All in all, space plays a significant role in social movements. Space acts as not only a vessel of struggle (*social movements in space*) but also a useful tool and target of struggle (*space in social movements*). First, space can facilitate social movements by influencing networks, which play a significant role in mobilizing participants. Second, the effect of space has a direct influence within social movements, and is especially useful as a resource of mobilization and as a privileged instrument for engaging in struggles with state powers.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

Notes

1. OC initially occupied Central district, the most important financial and official center in Hong Kong. However, the participants spontaneously occupied many other important commercial centers such as Causeway Bay, Wan Chai, and other areas. The term "OC" was subsequently used to represent the whole movement, which was also called the Umbrella Movement.
2. According to Foucault (1980), discipline enables the meticulous control of the operations of the social body and ensures that the populace is constantly subjected to the power of the state.

3. Namely, the City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Lingnan University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, the City University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, The University of Hong Kong, and Shue Yan University.

4. In addition to Prof Benny Tai, the initiator of OC, the Secretary General of Hong Kong Federation of Students, Alex Chow, was an HKU student.

References

Arora, P. (2014). Usurping public leisure space for protest: Social activism in the digital and material commons. *Space and Culture*, *18*, 55-68.

Blumer, H. (1946). *Elementary collective behavior*. New York, NY: Barnes & Noble.

Burt, R. S. (1992). *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Case, F. D. (1981). Dormitory architecture influences patterns of student social-relations over time. *Environment and Behavior*, *13*, 23-41.

Chan, C. K. C., & Pun, N. (2009). The making of a new working class? A study of collective actions of migrant workers in South China. *China Quarterly*, *197*, 287-303.

Corsín Jiménez, A., & Estalella, A. (2017). Political exhaustion and the experiment of street: Boyle meets Hobbes in Occupy Madrid. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *23*(Suppl. 1), 110-123.

Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (1999). *Doing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). London, England: Sage.

Feagin, J. R., & Hahn, H. (1973). *Ghetto revolts: The politics of violence in American cities*. New York, NY: Macmillan.

Feigenbaum, A., Frenzel, F., & McCurdy, P. (2013). *Protest camps: The political and organisational form of protest camps*. London, England: Zed Books.

Fogelson, R. M. (1971). *Violence as protest: A study of riots and ghettos*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*. New York, NY: Random House.

Foucault, M., & Miskowiec, J. (1986). Of other spaces. *Diacritics*, *16*, 22-27.

Gagliardi, P. (1990). *Symbols and artifacts: Views of the corporate landscape*. Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter.

Gerbaudo, P. (2012). *Tweets and the streets: Social media and contemporary activism*. London, England: Pluto Press.

Gould, R. V. (1991). Multiple networks and mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871. *American Sociological Review*, *56*, 716-729.

Gould, R. V. (1993). Collective action and network structure. *American Sociological Review*, *58*, 182-196.

Gould, R. V. (1995). *Insurgent identities: Class, community, and protest in Paris from 1848 to the commune*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Hammond, J. (2013). The significance of space in Occupy Wall Street. *Interface*, *5*, 499-524.

Harvey, D. (1982). *The limits to capital*. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1996). *Justice, nature and the geography of difference*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Kavada, A. (2015). Creating the collective: Social media, the occupy movement and its constitution as a collective actor. *Information, Communication & Society*, *18*, 872-886.

Klandermans, B., & Oegema, D. (1987). Potentials, networks, motivations, and barriers: Steps towards participation in social movements. *American Sociological Review*, *52*, 519-531.

Lacey, A. (2005). Networked communities social centers and activist spaces in contemporary britain. *Space and Culture*, *8*, 286-301.

Le Bon, G. (1897). *The crowd: A study of the popular mind*. London, England: T. Fisher Unwin.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Oxford, England: Blackwell. (Original work published 1974)

Lefebvre, H. (2004). *Rhythmanalysis: Space, time and everyday life* (S. Elden & G. Moore, Trans.). London, England: Continuum.

Markus, T. A. (1993). *Buildings and power: Freedom and control in the origin of modern building types*. East Sussex, England: Psychology Press.

Marston, S. A. (2003). Mobilizing geography: Locating space in social movement theory. *Mobilization*, *8*, 227-233.

Martin, D. G., & Miller, B. (2003). Space and contentious politics. *Mobilization*, *8*, 143-156.

Marwell, G., Oliver, P. E., & Prahl, R. (1988). Social networks and collective action: A theory of the critical mass. *American Journal of Sociology*, *94*, 502-534.

McAdam, D. (1986). Recruitment to high-risk activism: The case of Freedom Summer. *American Journal of Sociology*, *92*, 64-90.

McAdam, D., Tarrow, S., & Tilly, C. (2003). Dynamics of contention. *Social Movement Studies*, *2*, 99-102.

McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. N. (1977). Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, *82*, 1212-1241.

Min, D., & Liu, R. (2015). The application of new media in Occupy Central in Hong Kong. *The Journalist Monthly*, *383*(1), 65-73.

Nicholls, W. (2009). Place, networks, space: Theorising the geographies of social movements. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *34*, 78-93.

Oberschall, A. (1973). *Social conflict and social movements*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Rovisco, M., & Ong, J. C. (2016). *Taking the square: Mediated dissent and occupations of public space*. London, England: Rowman & Littlefield International.

Sewell, G., & Wilkinson, B. (1992). Someone to watch over me: Surveillance, discipline and the just-in-time labour process. *Sociology*, *26*, 271-289.

Sewell, W. H. J. (2001). *Space in contentious politics*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Smelser, N. (1962). *Theory of collective behavior*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Snow, D. A., Zurcher, L. A., Jr., & Ekland-Olson, S. (1980). Social networks and social movements: A microstructural approach to differential recruitment. *American Sociological Review*, *45*, 787-801.

Soja, E. W. (1989). *Postmodern geographies: The reassertion of space in critical social theory*. New York, NY: Verso.

Sotiropoulos, G. (2017). Staging democracy: The Aganaktismenoi of Greece and the squares movement(s). *Contention*, *5*, 84-107.

Strati, A. (1999). *Organization and aesthetics*. London, England: Sage.

Taylor, S., & Spicer, A. (2007). Time for space: A narrative review of research on organizational spaces. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *9*, 325-346.

Thompson, E. P. (1967). Time, work-discipline, and industrial capitalism. *Past & Present*, *38*, 56-97.

Tilly, C. (1973). Does modernization breed revolution? *Comparative Politics*, *5*, 425-447.

Tilly, C. (1978). *From mobilization to revolution*. New York, NY: Random House.

Tilly, C. (2000). Spaces of contention. *Mobilization*, *5*, 135-159.

Tilly, C. (2003). Contention over space and place. *Mobilization*, *8*, 221-225.

Tilly, C., & Schweitzer, R. (1982). How London and its conflicts changed shape: 1758-1834. *Historical Methods*, *15*, 67-77.

Tuan, Y-F. (1977). *Space and place: The perspective of experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Von Eschen, D., Pinard, M., & Kirk, J. (1971). The organizational substructure of disorderly politics. *Social Forces*, *49*, 529-544.

Wahlström, M. (2010). Producing spaces for representation: Racist marches, counterdemonstrations, and public-order policing. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *28*, 811-827.

Wahlström, M. (2011). *The making of protest and protest policing: Negotiation, knowledge, space, and narrative* (Doctoral dissertation). Department of Sociology, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden. Retrieved from https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/25025/2/gupea_2077_25025_2.pdf

Zajko, M., & Belandô, D. (2008). Space and protest policing at international summits. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *26*, 719-735.

Zhao, D. (1998). Ecologies of social movements: Student mobilization during the 1989 prodemocracy movement in Beijing. *American Journal of Sociology*, *103*, 1493-1529.

Author Biographies

Xu Wang is a senior staff in the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Sichuan Province, PR China. He obtained his PhD degree from The University of Hong Kong. He was a visiting scholar at the Law School of Harvard University, and worked as a post-doctoral researcher in City University of Hong Kong. His research interests include spatial political economy and economic upgrading.

Yu Ye is an assistant professor in the Department of Architecture, College of Architecture and Urban Planning at Tongji University, PR China. He gained his PhD degree from The University of Hong Kong and he had worked as a post-doctoral researcher in Future Cities Lab, ETH Zurich. His research mainly focuses on urban morphology, urban design and place-making.

Chris King-chi Chan is an associate professor in the Department of Applied Social Sciences at City University of Hong Kong. He gained his PhD in sociology from University of Warwick, UK. He has published widely on labour and social movements in China, including "The Challenge of Labour in China" (Routledge, 2010) and many journal articles.