Postsecularity, Political Resistance, and Protest in the Occupy Movement

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Paul Cloke, Callum Sutherland (University of Exeter) and

Andrew Williams (Cardiff University)

Abstract

This paper examines and critically interprets the interrelations between religion and the Occupy movements of 2011. It presents three main arguments. First, through an examination of the Occupy Movement in the UK and USA—and in particular of the two most prominent Occupy camps (Wall Street and London Stock Exchange)—the paper traces the emergence of postsecularity evidenced in the rapprochement of religious and secular actors, discourses, and practices in the event-spaces of Occupy. Second, it examines the specific set of challenges that Occupy has posed to the Christian church in the UK and USA, arguing that religious participation in the camps served at least in part to identify wider areas of religious faith that are themselves in need of redemption. Third, the paper considers the challenges posed by religious groups to Occupy, not least in the emphasis on post-material values in pathways to resistance against contemporary capitalism.

Postsecularity and Political Protest

This paper examines and critically interprets the interrelations between religion and the Occupy movements of 2011. The Occupy movements have been recognised (see, for example, Smaligo 2014) as a coming together of radical currents of political activism in a series of local public assemblies to experiment with a prefigurative politics that opposes the globalised power of the 1% over the "multitude" (Hardt and Negri2004) and champions economic democracy and social liberation. Although Occupy has subsequently been recognised as more of a "moment" than a "movement" (Calhoun 2013), we argue that it remains significant as an indication of a wider progressive political movement that is still emerging. As active participants in Occupy Exeter (Williams) and Glasgow (Sutherland), and as researchers with specific interests in politically progressive responses to social welfare cuts and neoliberal austerity more generally (Cloke, Sutherland, Williams), our own interest was broadly inspired by Occupy's anti-capitalist and pro-democratic aims. However, reflection on the horizontal and pluralistic character of Occupy and other social movements (Pickerill and Krinsky2012; Routledge 2003) soon led us to question the incorporation of religious people, organisations, spaces, rituals and symbols into the everyday practices and events of Occupy, and the ways in which Occupy offered hospitality and acceptance to progressive religious people and ideas. Drawing on extensive documentary evidence[i] we suggest that through these interconnections and involvements, a set of mutual challenges occurred: Occupy mounted a significant challenge to key aspects of established religion; and in turn some of the theological and ethical principles of religious participants, along with more general forms of religious imagery, symbolism and discourse, helped to shape Occupy. In view of the mutuality of this shaping-and-being-shaped, we argue that Occupy represents a series of event-spaces that can usefully be understood in terms of the emergence of postsecularity, co-constructed as mutual tolerance, crossover narratives and forms of partnership and rapprochement in praxis.

Recent theorisation of emergent geographies of postsecularity (see, for example, Beaumont and Baker 2011; Cloke and Beaumont 2012; Williams 2014) suggests the possibility of new forms of partnership between the religious and the secular. These geographies have been recognised principally in social and political contexts in Europe and America where Christianity has been the dominant religion, although ideas of postsecularity may also provide some analytical purchase on other dimensions of religious and multi-faith activity in the public sphere. If secularity has been broadly understood as the separation of religion from public and political spaces and concerns (albeit in various complex forms—see Taylor 2007), postsecularity suggests, in Eder's (2006) terms, that religion has found its public voice again, and has begun to frequent the public sphere making confident and multifaceted contributions to public affairs. Although these processes vary geographically (see Berger et al. 2008), it can be suggested that some religious groups may have an increasingly significant role to play in what

Routledge (2003)–following Harvey's (1995) work on militant particularism—has termed "convergence spaces" in which a diversity of social movements associate to engage in discursive articulations of resistance.

These ideas about postsecularity have been problematized by a range of commentators. Aside from arguments that postsecular frameworks lack relevance and innovation (Kong 2010; Ley 2011), present a short-sighted view of history and secularity (Beckford 2012; Wilford 2010) and reify the role of religion (Dalferth 2010), attempts to investigate the postsecularity evident in particular events and spaces have been seen as the product of acritical naiveté (Lancione 2014). However, an alternative and more positive grammar of interpretation has emerged in recent research in human geography that has pointed to some significant and perhaps fresh expressions of partnership between faith-motivated and other people, both in the embodied living out of religion (Olson et al. 2013), and in the emergent subjectivities and spaces of third sector activity, often prompted by the neoliberal shrinkage of the formal state, and subsequent forms of engagement with, or resistance to, regimes of austerity welfare (Beaumont and Baker 2011; Beaumont and Cloke 2012; Cloke 2010; Cloke et al. 2010, 2013; Jamoul and Wills 2008; Williams 2014; Williams et al. 2012). The distinctiveness of these emergent partnerships is not connected to any grand claims about an epochal postsecular era or a totalising postsecular city. Rather, such partnerships are significant because they exhibit some of the key discursive technologies presented by Habermas (2002, 2005, 2006, 2010; Habermas and Ratzinger 2006) through which postsecularity might be discerned (Cloke 2015; Cloke and Beaumont 2012). In particular, Habermas points to a learning process in which secular and religious mentalities can be reflexively transformed rather than maintained in dominant and subaltern positions respectively. Although the divide between secular knowledge and revealed religious knowledge cannot be bridged entirely, Habermas envisages both a framework of mutual tolerance as the foundation for emerging postsecular rapprochement, and the possibility of distinct crossover narratives between the religious and the secular that serve as mutually translating technologies on which to found the assimilation necessary for such rapprochement.

Although Occupy represents a highly significant series of event-spaces in its own right, we suggest that it provides a significant opportunity both to examine emergent postsecularity in political protest, and more generally to reconfigure the hegemonic grammars by which relations between politics and religion are typically understood. Political economic analyses of contemporary globalisation and governance tend to associate religious belief, ritual and institutions as natural collaborators in the promulgation of the logics, spatialities and subjectivities of neoconservativism and neoliberalism (see, for example, Dittmer and Sturm 2010; Goode 2006; Hackworth2012; Jordan 2010; Sturm 2013). Drawing on imaginaries that are disproportionately fuelled by the strange and widely mediated antics

of "Tea Party" Republicanism in the US (Rosenthal 2012; Skocpol and Williamson 2013), some political geographers seem prone to assume that the role of religion in Western Europe and America is to shore up and inspire the political right as part of the Evangelical-Capitalist resonance machine(Connolly 2008), and thus to serve as significant "little platoons" that simply perform the inherently problematic duties of neoliberal revanchism and global injustice (Peck and Tickell 2002; Smith 1996). The criticality of such assumptions is beginning to be questioned in recent accounts of the relationships between religion, spirituality and political activism (see, for example, Cloke 2011; Dylan and Coates 2012; Habashi 2013; Hutchison 2012; Sheridan 2012) on at least two grounds.

First, it appears that institutional memory has quickly overlooked the key involvements of religion in particular political protests of the past. For example, Semmel (1974) has recorded the religious impact of 19th century Methodism on the emerging Labour movement in the UK, including reforming legislation, the growth of trades unions and the cooperative movement, and the foundation of the Labour Party itself (see Scotland 1997). The history of the UK peace movement is also tangled up with religious participation and contribution, with, for example, the Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament representing an influential formal and informal source of theo-philosophy and activism in the wider CND movement to the present day (Flessati 1997). Further afield, religious groups have been credited with significant involvement in international geographies of peace and reconciliation (Megoran 2010; Megoran et al. 2013). Perhaps the most important social protest movement of the 20th century—the American Civil Rights movement—benefited significantly from the religious leadership provided by African-American clergy who became the spokespeople in a Holy Crusade to force America to live up to its promise of non-discriminatory democracy (see, for example, Bellah 1992; Marsh 2003). And perhaps the most influential theological prompt to political action of the 20th century—liberation theology (see, for example, De Temple 2012; Gutierrez 2001; Rowland 2007; Tombs 2002)—has used theological resistance to oppression, violence, domination and marginalisation to provoke radical political agency for the promotion of social and individual liberation, and continues to be invoked in contemporary 21st century circumstances (see Howson 2011).

Second, there is compelling contemporary evidence that religious articulation of morality and politics continues to be an explicit contributor to social movements, ranging from the initial postsecular character of the so-called Arab Spring (see Barbato 2012; Dabashi 2012; Mavelli 2012) where religious forces have helped to overthrow secular political regimes without seeking religious autocracy (thus combining strong religion with democracy),[ii] to collaborations between Catholic activists and the secular left in the Italian peace movement (Tosi and Vitale 2009), and Pussy Riot's protest against the non-separation of church and state in Russia (Denysenko 2013). In the UK, political spaces of welfare

and protest have been increasingly populated by faith-motivated organisations dealing with the needs of, for example, homeless people, trafficked people, undocumented migrants, welfare reform victims and those suffering from addiction, low wages, hunger, indebtedness, unemployment, and the aftermath of violence. Often dismissed as co-optees carrying out the work and purpose of the neoliberal state (see for example the discussion summarised by Hackworth 2012), an alternative interpretative logic would suggest that these interventions potentially represent a resistance to the politics of the status quo (see Williams et al. 2012). And often dismissed as merely charitable or caring so as to moralise the self (see Allahyari 2000), there is more than a shrewd interpretative suspicion that the phenomenology of this care is integrally intertwined with the rising up of political protest in ways that draw religious charity and compassion directly into progressively politicised fields of policy concern (May and Cloke 2014).

Religion, then, continues to bring theological and activist contributions to contemporary social movements. Naturally such contributions will vary widely (Megoran et al. 2013), ranging from politics of the common good (Bretherton 2010) to the potential for religiously motivated anarchy (Bartley 2006). However, such contributions are spilling out into the mainstream of political thought. A recent report from Birdwell and Littler (2012) advises the political left to take full account of faith-inspired involvement in welfare and protest, suggesting that such initiatives offer hope for new political ideas and responses. Seasoned secular commentators (see, for example, de Botton 2012; Eagleton 2010) also find aspects of religion and faith to be politically inspiring for left-leaning social mobilisation (Cloke and Beaumont 2012). More generally, it would seem that citizens are more prepared to accept religious traditions as relevant provided that they are not accompanied by the establishment of a dominant religious creed or civil religion. These conditions of potential postsecularity are formed from at least two major transformations: the rediscovery of prophetic religious praxis (Bartholomew and Goheen 2006; Bell 2006; Cloke et al. 2012; Wright 2011) that in turn opens out a wider willingness to participate beyond religious circles; and the shift in traditional labour and social movements towards more loosely connected and horizontal forms of organising (Graeber 2013). It is these conditions that have opened up the possibility in Occupy for a further reinvigoration of historical political radicalism on the part of religious groups within a postsecular social movement. In this way the specific event-spaces of Occupy are also illustrative of the wider postsecular configuration of religion and political protest, and as such provide both specific and wider contextual evidence for understanding the contemporary relations between religion and political protest.

We develop these ideas through three interrelated discussions. First, through an examination of the Occupy Movement in the UK and USA — and in particular of the two most prominent Occupy camps (Wall Street and London Stock Exchange) — we discuss the emergence of postsecularity evidenced in

the rapprochement of religious and secular actors, discourses, and practices in the event-spaces of Occupy. By grounding discussion in these two empirical sites we offer an analysis of cultural specificities that shape the relationship between religion, politics and activism. Whilst we consider the contributions of different religious groups, in this paper we predominantly focus on the place of Christianity, given the significance of ecclesial space under occupation, and subsequent theological discourses and symbolism that helped characterise a number of Occupy encampments. Our decision to focus on Christianity comes from a concern not to speak of "religion" in general. Instead, following Connolly (2008) and others (Dittmer 2007; Pabst 2011), we find it more productive politically to examine the specificities of different theological expression as a means to ascertain and disrupt the principal fault-lines in the "evangelical-capitalist resonance machine". Second, we examine the specific set of challenges that Occupy has posed to the Christian churches in the UK and USA, arguing that religious participation in the camps served at least in part to identify wider areas of religious faith that are themselves in need of redemption. Our use of this term —"the church"— is deliberate despite its inherent complexity and internal contradiction. In one sense the concept of one all-embracing Christian church has theological credence metaphorically as the performative body of Christ on earth, united by adhesion to the moralities and ethics suggested by biblical texts. In another sense, however, such adhesion is characterised by multidimensional diversity, resulting in a spectrum of theological expression, political affiliation and faith-based practice (see, for example, Bartley 2006; Bretherton 2010; Dionne 2008; Oakley 2007; Wallis 2005). The church in practice, therefore, embraces both a manifestation of "conservatism at prayer" and a source of inspiration for radical faith praxis in various forms of social action (Cloke et al. 2012). In this way, the church represents both an institution and a series of communities, variously challenging and being challenged by Occupy. Third, therefore, we consider the effect and challenges posed by religious groups on Occupy. We conclude by arguing that more careful attention is needed to the progressive potential brought about through the blurring of religious and secular boundaries at work in contemporary protest movements, suggesting that emergent postsecularity provides an analytical frame through which to analyse the ethical and spiritual geographies of political acquiescence and resistance.

Religion and the Occupy Movement

Although the Occupy Movement of 2011 appears to have been founded on nonreligious foundations and motivations (inspired as it was by solidarity with the Arab Spring, with broad-based protests in Greece and with the movement of Indignados in Spain and Portugal; see Juris and Razsa 2012) it should

not be construed as a purely "secular" movement. To do so would be to disregard the distinctly plural sensibilities that co-constituted the movement, and to underemphasise the role played by religion in co-producing the spaces, events and emergent subjectivities of the camps. Yet many existing academic accounts of the Occupy movement downplay the importance of religion even within an emphasis on the spatiality of the occupations (see, for example, Halvorsen 2012; Pickerill and Krinsky 2012; Sparke 2013). We want to argue, however, that the presence of religious spaces, discourses and actors became an active constituent in the emerging discourse, praxis and character of Occupy encampments, albeit in different locally contextualised ways.

Occupy Wall Street (OWS)

OWS began on 17 September 2011, in Zuccotti Park, located in New York City's Wall Street financial district. It was initiated by a campaign by Adbusters, and later joined by the hacker group Anonymous. The goals, achievements, and origins of the movement have been documented elsewhere (see Halvorsen 2012; Juris and Razsa 2012; Kiersey 2012), but our emphasis here is on the religious institutions, practices and symbolism that helped to characterise OWS through its ephemeral journey. For example, during the initial occupation of Zuccotti Park, an adjacent church (Trinity Episcopalian Church Wall Street) provided meeting spaces, resting areas, pastoral services, electricity, bathrooms, and even blankets and hot chocolate for the protesters, and many Christian and Muslim congregations also supplied shelter and resources to OWS. Following the eviction of OWS from the park, a number of churches (including the Park Slope church, West Park Presbyterian Church, Judson Memorial Church in Greenwich Village, Riverside Church and St Paul and St Andrew on the Upper West Side) offered sanctuary to displaced activists for up to a period of two months. Smith and Smythe (2013:12) note that "[c]hurches helped mobilise congregations to march to Zuccotti Park bringing, for example, African-American churches into a space that was overwhelmingly white and middle class". The "reaching out" to OWS by local churches was engendered by a recognition of mutual motivations and narratives; a deep desire to collaborate with like minds, characterised by "frustration with an unjust society … desire to speak truth to power and … hope that a better world is possible" (Judson Memorial Church 2011). This triangulation of common desires and motivations illustrates the kind of "crossover narratives" that are essential in the construction of a postsecular space marked by collaboration and mutual translation across assumed divides between faith and secularity (Cloke and Beaumont 2012). However, in practice, direct collaboration waned over time; church leaders decided that religious space was not conducive to continuous habitation, and initial hospitality soon dried up after a number of thefts and vandalism of church property (see Firger 2012; Giove 2012).

Over time, then, OWS developed a more complex relationship with previously hospitable and comradely religious institutions. Some of the churches concerned found their own values and foundations disturbed by what OWS was arguing and demanding. For example, the previously supportive Trinity Church became disaffected when displaced occupiers demanded that the church (one of the city's largest landholders) should hand over Duarte Square—a vacant gravel lot—for use as an alternate campsite and organising hub. The church declined, calling the proposed encampment "wrong, unsafe, unhealthy and potentially injurious". Trinity's rector, Rev. James Cooper, wrote:

> Calling this an issue of "political sanctuary" is manipulative and blind to reality. Equating the desire to seize this property with uprisings against tyranny is misguided, at best. Hyperbolic distortion drives up petition signatures, but doesn't make it right (quoted in Flegenheimer 2011).

The church's position vis-à-vis OWS changed when the desire to support the protesters came into conflict with its role of landownership and control of six million square feet of property, much of it lucrative office space around Hudson Square. As if to affirm geographical understandings that hospitality is both conditional and temporal (see Barnett 2008; Dikec et al. 2009), Trinity's community-level support for Occupy, and its theological embrace for biblical ethics of social justice, proved to be irreconcilable with its institutional resistance towards having to make economic and political sacrifices. So, since 8 June 2013, at least four (and as many as 60) men and women have slept (legally under US constitution) on the steps of Trinity church, under the banner "Occupy Trinity Church Wall Street" (OTWS). What is significant about this development is the explicitly religious character of protest, both in terms of the spaces it seeks to occupy, and the religious backgrounds and discourses of the protestors. According to the OTWS website the sleep-in is an act of "prophetic activism" that seeks to:

> bear witness to the inequities wrought by the greed of Wall Street calling attention to a deformed capitalism that does not respect the dignity of every human being but looks on all Creation as a source of personal profit and production. For Episcopalians the significance of this sleep-in is sacramental. Yet rather than welcome the presence of these prophets or offer any kindness, TWS has harassed, humiliated, and sent protesters and homeless youth to jail and the hospital. This was done in the name of the Episcopal Church, notably with the tacit acceptance of the Diocese of NY (Mortimer 2013).

Clergy from across the denominational spectrum have joined OTWS, and some have been arrested climbing over the fences erected by the church to stop people occupying the gravel lot. Protest signs are directed at the ecclesial authorities: "Who Would Jesus Prosecute?" and "Trinity Church: Real Estate Company or Church?". The claim here is not that these events are somehow exclusively religious in nature; to do so would misrepresent the plurality of Occupy participants. Rather we are recognising here a significant religious element within the wider protest, given the prominent positioning of the political outworking of theological precepts and commitments which helped to co-produce the articulation of the movement's aims.

On the other hand, and in contrast to this antagonistic counter-positioning, there is evidence of OWS venturing into new alliances with black churches in Baltimore and 16 major cities in the USA. "Occupy the Dream" is a movement led by Dr Ben Chavis and Rev. Dr Jamal Bryant that aims to mobilise African-Americans around the socioeconomic and political vision of Dr Martin Luther King Jr.OWS has offered solidarity with this new movement, whose strategy "uses the pulpit" to awaken black congregations through proclamation of a theologically grounded message of income equality, economic justice and empowerment. Through Occupy the Dream, OWS has attracted support from unusual partners—including mega-churches, Pentecostals and other religious groups—which had initially appeared to go along with the largely dismissive media representation ofOWS protestors. In January 2012, Occupy the Dream organised a national broad-based day of action outside Federal Reserve Banks where black churches, OWS groups and labour groups joined to protest the bank's monetary policy and income inequality (see Galindez 2012; Oleszczuk 2012).

Alongside these alliances, two particular modes of religious practice and discourse helped to shape the character and expression of OWS. The first involved a deliberate invocation of pastoral care. Early on in OWS, a group consisting of Harvard Divinity School students and members of an experimental Episcopal congregation in Boston travelled to OWS with the desire to communicate the Christian narrative of injustice and counter the media's tendency to conflate Christianity with the Christian Right (The Protest Chaplains 2011). Wearing full liturgical vestments and calling themselves "protest chaplains", members provided pastoral care and (non-proselytising) spiritual support for activists. According to participants, the pluralistic sensibilities of Occupy meant "people with deep spiritual struggles found a safer space to talk about those struggles in the occupation than at church" (McKanan 2011). As such, many of the protest chaplains came to welcome Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, and Unitarian Universalist protest chaplains to their work and loosely affiliated groups were set up in other

occupations. A "sacred space" tent was established where protestors could find a diverse schedule of ecumenical and multifaith mediation and spiritual reflection. These multifaith spaces were deeply pluralistic in character, less out of a consumerist logic to cater for all religions and none, but based on an explicit recognition, even celebration, of the different motivational prompts—religious and ideological—that led people to come together in common action. Temporary "sacred" spaces not only brought religious ritual, mediation, liturgy and singing into prominence within Occupy, but also prompted elements of postsecular praxis and ethos, especially an openness to plurality, dialogical learning and non-proselytisation. In this way, new religious practices and liturgies emerged that held together diverse religious and ideological motivations; for example, many Occupy participants felt able to accept the offer made by protest chaplains to anoint people, "for wholeness", with an equal sign (rather than a cross) on their foreheads, as part of a communion ritual. Equally, rituals and processions harnessed the performative power of spectacle in order to demonstrate spiritual discernment of economic landscapes. As a notable example, during the evictions of encampments, Protest Chaplains formed a cordon between the police and the occupiers, thus placing themselves in the full glare of the media at the forefront on non-violent confrontation with establishment forces.

The second significant religious modality in OWS concerned the use of religious symbolism, as the event-space of Occupy protests became marked by a "crossing over" of religious and secular narratives, symbolism, practices and performances in public space. As a key example, OWS harnessed the symbolism of the "Golden Calf" (Exodus 32:4, ESV) as a symbol of protest,[iii] in the form of a papier-mâché representation of the Wall Street Bull monument on which was written "False Idol" (Matthews 2011). Building on work on protest art and connective aesthetics (Burton 2012), these symbols performatively posed powerful questions about the moral and spiritual trappings of late capitalism. By reframing unrelenting consumerism in the language of idolatry, an ideological critique of capitalist political-economy became translated into moral and ethical registers of the self. Many of these images went viral on the internet and in mainstream media reporting. In each of these cases, religious narrative and famous religious discourses were used by the movement to help illustrate more wide-ranging arguments and at the same time pose questions for the institutional church. In another example, OWS protestors set up an Occupy Nativity scene[iv] in front of Trinity Church, in an attempt to convince the church to "start acting less like a real estate corporation and more like a church, and to let the movement use a vacant property that Trinity owns" (Schneider 2012).

Religious memes were therefore deployed instrumentally to spotlight the domestication of religion within the politics of status quo. Even Žižek's speech to OWS on 9 October 2011 appropriated religious language to encapsulate the movement:

> They are telling you we are not American here. But the conservative fundamentalists who claim they really are American have to be reminded of something: What is Christianity? It's the holy spirit. What is the holy spirit? It's an egalitarian community of believers who are linked by love for each other, and who only have their own freedom and responsibility to do it. In this sense, the holy spirit is here now. And down there on Wall Street, there are pagans who are worshipping blasphemous idols (quoted in Sarahana 2013).

In other cases, the performative and prophetic lexicon of religion itself was parodied and put to work to unsettle political orthodoxies. This is most visible in the dramaturgy of Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping, which was performed in various Occupy locations. Although not religious himself, Reverend Billy adopted the persona of a charismatic Pentecostal preacher and conducted exorcisms inside sites of consumerism. These kinds of carnivalesque activism deliberately adopted and performed religious practice and ritual in order to critique and untangle the deep resonances between possessive consumerism and Christianity in the American context (Brueggemann 2007b; McClish 2009).

Occupy London Stock Exchange (OLSX)

On 15 October 2011, as part of an international day of solidarity with OWS, 2500–3000 people gathered outside London Stock Exchange. As police swiftly moved protestors away from the site, a camp was set up next to St Paul's Cathedral, and by occupying physical religious space, Occupy LSX and others opened up a series of discursive spaces for people of faith who identify with leftist politics to enter. What resulted was a postsecular event-space, similar to that of OWS, characterised by the "crossing-over" of religious and secular narratives. Early on in the occupation, Occupy Faith was set up as a broad-based affinity group within the Occupy Movement seeking to connect the values of faith communities with those of other spiritual and political faiths in order to work towards common issues of social, economic and environmental justice (Occupy Faith 2012). Given both the mutuality of purpose that quickly diffused throughout the Occupy movement, and the highly mediated nature of Occupy protests, it is unsurprising that many of the practices, rituals and postures recognised in OWS were also prevalent in OLSX. For example, a radical commitment to democracy created spaces of

tolerance for interfaith and religious Services to be held in OLSX. On 28 October, Jewish groups held Occupy Shabbat at St Pauls which entailed a song-filled service, interspersed with teachings of Judaism and justice. During these services and others, scripture was invoked to legitimatise and confirm the actions of Occupy. Presler (2011) notes the direct scriptural basis that was presented for Occupy:

> Old Testament reading from Amos put the church's call into dramatic relief as Amaziah the temple priest at Bethel is depicted as telling Amos to leave the premises and prophesy elsewhere because his declamations were disturbing Jeroboam of Israel. "O seer," he tells Amos, "go, flee away to the land of Judah … and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom" (see Amos 7:10–17). Right there we see the intertwining of religion and state power that chokes off religion's ability to challenge economic, cultural and political structures that reserve power to elites and oppress the rest of the population, especially the poor.

In these ways, religious ritual and meditation on scripture became part of a discursive galvanising of participants, drawing inspiration from directly following in the footsteps of both Old Testament prophets and the incarnational life of Jesus within the multitude. A further similarity to OWS was the ritual positioning of faith-motivated participants in a "Ring of Prayer" during the eviction from St Paul's. At least five members of Christianity Uncut[v] were dragged from the steps of the cathedral by police as they knelt in prayer,[vi] thus generating a political spectacle of praying Christians dragged from the steps of Britain's most famous cathedral.

However, OLSX also provided a context in which more particular crossover narratives emerged to blur religious and secular boundaries. A key example here was the frequent invocation to scriptural verses relating to "throwing the money changers out of the temple".[vii] In a complex dialogue between religious sincerity and political parody, religious and secular identities intersected in articulating a shared phenomenology of injustice, and achieved a particular resonance as a metaphor for purging the economic system of greed and returning it to its intended purpose of supporting human flourishing. This parallel helped capture imaginations more widely and open out a normative debate about the function of the economy. It also provided the inspiration for direct action. On 14 October 2012, in a Sunday Service before the anniversary of Occupy LSX, Christianity Uncut co-organised a peaceful disruption and alternative sermon inside St Paul's Cathedral. In a similar vein to Pussy Riot in Moscow, four women dressed in white, chained themselves to the pulpit and read out a statement encouraging the church authorities to follow Jesus' example of siding with the poor. Meanwhile, on

the cathedral steps, other Christianity Uncut members, including Ekklesia's Symon Hill,[viii] held a banner which read the caption "Throw the Moneychangers Out of the Temple". Several worshippers and tourists were reported to have spontaneously expressed their support (Ekklesia 2012). Alison Playford, one of the four activists addressed the congregation during the protest:

> In the fight for economic justice Jesus threw the money changers out of the temple, but you invited them in and instead evicted us … Your collusion with the City of London Corporation led to our violent eviction on your doorstep … You testified against us which acted to uphold injustice and inequality that is growing by the day (quoted in Topping 2012).

The protest sought to offer the Cathedral authorities an opportunity to speak out against austerity welfare governance and the sins of usury—an opportunity that went begging, but which sparked a series of symbolic attempts to engage religious and other authorities in dialogue.

An interesting example of this process occurred on 29 October 2011, when OLSX hosted the "Sermon on the Steps" where representatives from a variety of different faiths and none gave short talks on what they all had in common and the aims of the Occupy protest. The event represented a response to the Bishop of London's "ultimatum" to "pack up your tents" and "join the Dean and Chapter in organising a St. Paul's Institute debate on the real issues here under the Dome" (Ekklesia 2011). Occupy campaigners stated:

> rather than inviting us to a debate on Sunday, why not come to this already organised event. Rather than inviting Occupy London and its supporters to "a panel from across the political and business spectrum … [to which you] … invite the protesters to be represented" we urge you come and meet some people in a non-hierarchical forum–where no one person's view is privileged over another's (Occupy London 2011).

During the event, arguments about idolatry were repeatedly rehearsed in an attempt to redefine not only the purpose of economy but its role in the definition of what is a meaningful life. Sitting on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral, occupiers listened to representatives from the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, the British Humanist Association, the National Black Students Alliance, Ekklesia, Pax Christi, London Catholic Worker, and local synagogues. By seizing this "religious" space, Occupy did not just draw in the institution involved but turned it into an opportunity to let more people answer the question "whose side are you on?", creating the potential for a tide-turn in

hegemonic conceptions of economics, governance, and ethics. By singling out the common and general practice of sermonising associated with the ecclesial space, a whole host of alternative interlocutors familiar with that communicative genre could feel included in the movement. Additionally, like the peace movements beforehand (Tosi and Vitale 2009), the aims of the movement in declaring the idolatry of capitalism, and in finding new ways to affirm and not ignore common humanity were sufficiently general to include contributions from many faith backgrounds and create common ground on which to foment, strategise and discuss. Again the theme of domestication of the politics of Jesus by Christendom became a recurrent message in the Sermon of the Steps:

> The Christian movement has been around for 2,000 years—so that's a lot of time in which to get co-opted. We had a pretty good run for the first 300 years, before the Roman Emperor Constantine legalised us, patronised us and co-opted us. Radical Christianity had, and has, an anarchist orientation towards power and a pacifist orientation towards violence. Jesus has no truck with violence and exploitation (Ciaron O'Reilly, London Catholic Worker, quoted in *IndyMediaUK* 2011).

The emergent publics (Barnett 2008) generated in this protest enabled postsecular spaces of reflexive engagement to be forged through which participants assessed how to remake the world in a way that can accommodate the ethical desires of both religiously and secularly self-identifying citizens. Consequently, religious and secular discourses crossed over from one to the other in order to ask the questions of powerful institutions (banks, governments, churches) necessary for advancing the goals of the movement. These practices included use of Biblical texts and narratives by those of no religious persuasion in pursuit of highlighting contradictions in the hegemony.

The Challenge from Occupy to the Church

In the remainder of this paper we examine two sets of challenges that emerged from relations between occupy and religious interests: the troubling questions posed by Occupy to contemporary religion; and the challenging contributions of radical theology and faith-motivated participation to the nature and direction of Occupy. Although relationships between Occupy and religion were multifaith in nature, we explore the first of these challenges through the lens of high-profile and often institutionally blatant relations with the Christian church. Here we review the claim by Rieger and Pui-lan (2012) that Occupy held up a mirror to those parts of religious doctrine and teaching that themselves needed redemption, arguing that the church's preoccupation with delimiting sacred

space, the orthodoxy of top-down theologies of God and church and the under-emphasis on prophetic purposefulness have all been significantly troubled during the Occupy protests.

Perhaps the iconic clash between Occupy and religious interests came in decisions on whether to welcome or oppose the occupation of what were assumed to be "sacred spaces", typically reserved for orthodox rituals of worship and contemplation (see MacDonald 2002). The officials of both St Paul's Cathedral in London, and Trinity Episcopal Church in Manhattan (and indeed other churches in more provincial locations such as Exeter) were faced with the dilemma of how to respond to Occupy camps within or surrounding their space. In both cases, after initial welcome from particular church leaders, institutional pressure to remove the camps resulted both in very public U-turns by church authorities, and in well publicised legal and enforcement action designed to restore the sanctity of the spaces concerned. A range of reasons were given for this response—including health and safety issues, the need to restore access for worshippers and the supposedly "hollow", "opportunistic" and "cynical" nature of the protest (words used by former Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, writing in the Daily Telegraph; see Carey 2011). However, it is hard to escape the conclusion that in these responses the church was making a choice in favour of one kind of sacred space over another: a space in which to conduct traditional liturgies of worship rather than a space that welcomes the coexistence of such worship with the political protests arranged by others. From their position of privilege, church authorities showed themselves to be more concerned with the disruption of their spiritual and economic practices than with the economic and social damage being inflicted by the financial institutions that surrounded them (see Hill 2012).

Sennett (2012) reminds us that the Occupy movements have dramatized debates about public space, and one of the key dramas involved different faith-based models of how space should be sacralised. The preservation of a "within-these-walls" approach to sacred Christianity was directly challenged during Occupy, not so much in a religious-versus-secular engagement but by the enfolding of radically different Christian faith discernments and practices into protests that challenged public/private and secular/sacred spatial distinctions and rendered them ambiguous and hybrid. The discursive siloing of faith within church buildings represented a religion that was synonymous with the powers and subjectivities authorised by global capitalism—the heresy of seeing oneself as isolated, insulated, and individual. This stereotype of the silo is uncritical, given the burgeoning concern within a wide range of Christian thinking to connect faith to social action against injustice (see, for example, Cloke et al. 2012; Goudzwaard et al. 2007; Howson 2011; Ivereigh 2010; Myers and Colwell 2012), but Occupy gave expression to a very different idea—a faith-without-walls. When the police and bailiffs arrived to

reinstate the orthodox sacredness of the space of St Paul's Cathedral, they were met by what were reported to be hundreds of people kneeling or standing in prayer—practising an alternative sacralisation of public space and suggesting a radically different political positioning for Christian people. Christian groups supporting Occupy London (such as Christianity Uncut, Student Christian Movement, London Catholic Worker, Society of Sacramental Socialists, the think-tank Ekklesia, the magazine Third Way, and so on) published a statement of solidarity, expressing a desire to stand alongside people of all religions and none who are resisting economic injustice with active nonviolence (see Townsend 2011). In so doing they pointed to the sanctity of the camp as opposed to that of the cathedral, invoking a Jesus-figure who dwelt in everyday places of need, who critiqued the religious institutions and practices of his time, and is more easily imagined and understood in the context of a protest camp than in an establishment temple (Lane 2002). This contrast between privileged temple-worship and engagement in a postsecular shared-space represents a very significant challenge posed by Occupy to the Christian church. Indeed, it can be argued that Occupy's challenge to hierarchical, undemocratic, even authoritarian tendencies that prevail in some modern churches today (Fox 2006) constitutes a movement that seeks to reawaken a "spiritual democracy" that is deeply ecumenical and re-enchants material quest for justice with the theo-poetics of love (Bucko and Fox 2013).

Sparke's (2013) analysis of Occupy activism highlights how the movement spurned clunky top-down interpretations of societal structures and power in favour of multiple local meanings, diverse global relations and complex layers of activist space. For religious participants and observers, these assumptions about the nature of authority resonate strongly with the need to challenge theologies of power that prefer top-down governance that maintains the socio-economic status quo. As Rieger (2012:1) has argued, "today, dominant religion imagines God, often by default, as the boss who calls the shots and rewards religious shareholders", seen perhaps most notably in prosperity theology which accentuates the power of God to bless and prosper those who follow him (Jones and Woodbridge 2011). Accordingly, we argue that Occupy's second challenge to the church is deeply theological, questioning whether top-down images of God have any relevance to the role of faith as an intentional adherence to God's kingdom-practices that join with the multitude (Hardt and Negri 2004) of common people in order to resist the forces of empire, to prioritise the needs of the poor and to dance on injustice. Rieger and Pui-lan (2012) argue that images of God as omnipotent and immutable too easily fuel an identification of God with dominant powers, and that these top-down theologies have been directly promoted by a self-interested 1% through the ages. The challenge from Occupy is to rethink divine power from the bottom up, through the incarnational narrative of Jesus, the provincial carpenter's son whose humanity and divinity entered into solidarity with the multitude

and whose on-the-ground kingdom involved good news for the poor, freedom from oppression and release for captives. In so doing, people of faith can join with others to reject both political oppression and falsely theistic theology that upholds those oppressions through models of dominant power; joining postsecular forces to identify and live out mutual principles (see Cloke and Beaumont 2012) that permit rapprochement between faith and no-faith around politics and ethics that oppose injustice and oppression.

This theological reorientation towards a "God of the multitude" presents parallel challenges in terms of identifying possibilities for a theology of the "church of the multitude". Graeber's (2013) analysis of the Occupy movement notes how over the past 30 years much of the Christian church in the US has fused right-wing political ideology with a theology of the church based on a supposedly Christian principle of supply-side economics. He suggests as a consequence that liberal theology has been emptied out of the church, and replaced by critical social theory and philosophy in universities— which have become in effect the church of the liberals. Again, we suggest that this claim represents something of an uncritical stereotype that is contradicted by a stream of American theology that clearly advocates a return to the revolutionary message of Jesus (see, for example, Claiborne 2006; Myers 2008; Wallis 2005; Yoder 1994), and the longstanding presence of liberationist and black theological involvement in community organising and political activism in the American city (Marsh 2003; Pattillo-McCoy 1998). However, it is nevertheless the case that Occupy both challenges and exposes the messages of certainty and the crystal clear boundary-setting that emanate from many evangelical churches whose core identity seems restricted to moral issues of sexuality and abortion (Smith 1998), and urges liberal churches to express their politics within the theology of the church rather than simply as politically progressive citizens who happen to go to church (Lichterman 2005). The theology of a church of the multitude will inevitably include a return to the principles of the decentralised, counter-cultural and international early church, that, as Barrett and Haag (2012) explain, promoted forgiveness of debts, interest-free lending, mutual support and common ownership—an ekklesia of people in community wanting to influence corporate lives for good.[ix] Here, the Occupy movement yet again provides many potential parallels with the early church; Bloomquist (2012) lists a series of such characteristics—connecting people across boundaries, envisioning change, lamentation, naming and speaking truth to power, linking the local with the global, compassionate caring, and so on. Although Occupy is not a church movement, it challenges churches to:

> learn from what appeals and is effective in a post-modern movement that is mostly led and
> organized by young adults, as well as being inspired by their audacious courage to name what

is occurring, to lament, and to articulate subversive versions of reality. These also permeate the biblical witness, but often have been forgotten or overlooked (Bloomquist 2012:64).

Rediscovery of the ekklesia of the multitude (Rieger and Pui-lan 2012) means to borrow from Occupy's example to recognise theologically God's kingdom as a nonviolent movement (McLaren 2011)—a movement that eschews the reinforcement of the privilege of the powerful and instead enacts the conviction that God prioritises the needs of the poor, excluded and oppressed. It may also very well mean joining with like-minded people to achieve forms of postsecular dialogue, solidarity or even polydoxy (Keller and Schneider 2010) in order to embrace plurality, diversity, and difference.

This propensity to act is the third challenge from Occupy to the church. Recent evidence (see, for example, Beaumont and Cloke 2012; Burke and Pepper 2003; Cloke et al. 2013; Curran 2011; Radner 2004) suggests a groundswell of radical faith-based activity aimed at tackling exclusion in the city, but given the inequities of globalised capital and the regimes of welfare austerity inherent in current neoliberal governance, a more general call to arms/alms is required. There are at least two elements to this challenge. The first involves "subversive remembering" (Bloomquist 2012) of the Church's identity and calling, a declaration of identity and purpose in amongst the forces that would dominate and oppress:

> More than only words, it is a stance of defiance in the face of these realities. It is inevitably contextual and political. It emerges from beyond what is, as an effective power that activates us with new life, and gathers us together as the body of Christ, empowered to cooperate and organize with others to resist these powers reigning over our lives and world. The church as the body of Christ is called to embody and live out this power of powerlessness, in testimony to the incarnation. The incarnation—in which God in Christ pitched God's tent among us—is itself God's supreme "occupation" (Bloomquist 2012:65).

The Occupy camp-space is a symbolic and dynamically performed reminder of the incarnational and subversive pitching of God's tent in the world. Subversive remembering of the liberation of the poor, excluded and victimised must be re-enacted and lived out if it is to mean anything in the contemporary age. The subversive language of "Occupy" provides a lens through which to grasp anew the inherent political radicalism of Jesus' articulation of "the Kingdom of God is at hand"—a statement which would have prompted much fear and hope in the context of first century occupied Palestine. As much as

original listeners would have interpreted this as a call to secede from the exclusionary religious praxis of the Temple and the logics of Pax Romana—"peace" maintained by the injustice of slavery, militarism, patriarchy, public torture and execution—the provocative discourse and event-space of Occupy might inspire a similar reaction among people today who might be led to question, perhaps for the first time, the domestication of Christianity within empire logics of consumerism and individualism that leads to disempowerment and depoliticised hope.

The second element to the challenge is prophetic purposefulness (Brueggemann 2007a). The call to the Christian church is to address the theological crisis of faith and hope; to name and speak truth to powers and to move into spaces that subvert those powers. Worship of the gods of materiality represented by structural greed, and carrying an unquestioning faith in the gods of absolute economic and political ideology are matters of spiritual idolatry requiring purposeful prophetic action. The church needs to open up its sanctified spaces to forward-looking conversations that expose the idol-worship of success, consumerism and prosperity blessing, and that propose self-emptying practices of embrace, companionship, solidarity, caritas and agape. And as Laarman (2011) has indicated, these processes of opening up and acting should not be colonised as the somehow exclusive territory of the newly progressive church, for fear of erecting yet more idols. Rather, with likeminded others, Christians are challenged by Occupy to enter into postsecular spaces of partnership; and even to declare themselves with their partners as atheists to the god of the market in order that they can credibly confess faith in the incarnate deity of Christ (see Rieger 2009).

The triple challenges presented to the church by the Occupy movement—moving out of sacred silo-spaces, rediscovering the ekklesia of the multitude and taking action shaped by discursive remembering and prophetic purposefulness—each suggest moves towards the emergence of postsecular spaces of partnership and rapprochement (Cloke and Beaumont 2012). Moving out of silo-spaces into more hybrid or even ambiguous spaces permits a theology of incarnational praxis to develop in amongst the multitude, which in turn prompts an enactment of subversive and prophetic solidarity with those who are oppressed and marginalised. Although Occupy is by no means a church-led movement, it demonstrates the potential for what Habermas (2010) has termed "crossover narratives" between secular and religious parties seeking more progressive expressions and actions. Such partnerships are inevitably political as well as ethical, and as such have the capacity in return to help challenge the emerging nature and direction of progressive movements such as Occupy.

The Challenge from the Church to Occupy

Just as the Occupy movement held a mirror up to the church, so, we would argue, the incorporation of religious motivation, discourse and symbolism helped to coproduce the cultural politics of Occupy. Four such contributions are immediately apparent. First, as established churches reneged on their initial welcome shown to the protestors, other kinds of religious actors rose to the challenge of sustaining a religious presence in, and support for, the occupations. Here the radical Left bore witness to established religion being undermined by non-established religion, and in so doing became important collaborators in OWS and OLSX. On one level, this shift illustrated the enduring picture of mainstream religion as institutionally embedded in economic and political privilege, offering charity but falling well short of radical commitments for justice. On another level, however, development of unusual alliances with progressive religious actors, and a new-found appreciation of their pastoral and prophetic presence and praxis, presented a challenge to any blanket dismissal of religious values as being inherently complicit with neo-conservative moralism and neoliberal values of individualism.

Second, the presence of religious actors, combined with the material and cultural significance of ecclesial occupation, created a rich discursive space in which to debate religious belief and political theology; so much so that they became prominent motifs in the everyday discourses of the movement. The presence of diverse religious and secular perspectives on injustice, and the accepted norms of mutual tolerance and agnostic respect that constituted consensus decision-making,[x] resulted in a hybrid space of translation where people's rational and visceral understandings towards the religious or secular "other" began to change (Forgue 2013). By taking up dual identities as insiders of both occupy and the church, certain religious individuals undertook the task of being Habermasian translators between the two camps, taking on the burden of loving both sides and attempting a reconciliation and enhancing understandings on both sides of "the divide". This achievement is akin to that of Christians in the abolitionist movement too (Bebbington 2004), who also acted as organic intellectuals (as Gramsci [2009] might call them), convincing people that the system unwittingly upheld by their passivity is in fact an evil. In doing so, religious actors helped the Occupy Movement adopt a more refined sense of religion, encouraging hopefulness in the movement instead of a cynicism regarding religious folk, and helping to transform processes of solidarity through the potential identification of potential comrades. The commitment to participatory democracy within Occupy resulted in an openness to understand the spectrum of moral and religious beliefs that compelled other participants to act, and to learn these perspectives, even in the case of respectful disagreement, in order to discern shared values that fuel cooperation and negate division.

Third, we suggest that the influential presence of religious people and practices within Occupy helped to co-constitute what might be regarded as thirdspaces of spirituality in the Occupy encampments. Through events such as Sermon on Steps, participation in symbolic protest of the Golden Calf, or interfaith mediation in the Sacred Space tent, the blending of diverse religious and ideological imaginations created hybrid spaces whereby new expressions of spirituality could be explored and practiced. The Protest Chaplains noted that in order to bring their traditions to the occupation, they have to contort them a bit, and do something truly new, and the same applied to non-religious participants who felt able to engage in and with religious ritual and symbolism. It follows, fourth, that rapprochement between the religious and secular proved capable of generating new narratives of injustice rooted in theo-ethical traditions—concepts of usury, languages of caritas among all people and the elevation of transcendental values of human dignity were all used in innovative ways to trump economic metrics of value. As a result, Occupy represents a coming together of diverse religious and secular perspectives to bring a fundamental challenge to conventional secular political engagement, drawing on religious and spiritual resources to articulate deeper moral intuitions (Habermas 2006) that have been domesticated by the hyper-individualism of wealth, power and status.

These challenging contributions appear to stem in no small way from the coming together of people whose faith is a source of activist commitment with those whose activism is a source of faith (McKanan 2011) in order to discern the spiritual and moral characteristics of late capitalism that inculcate desire and individuation. To be clear, this is not an argument that religious people somehow enjoy a kind of monopoly on postmaterial values, or that secular motivations are entirely materialist. Rather the profile of postmaterial values was significantly enhanced by religious participants and became an integral part of the critique by Occupy of capitalism and its prefigurative practice. According to Helmiere (2012:22):

> [t]he spirituality of the Occupy movement is not one that references God, the Divine, or even the numinous, but instead is found in the imaginative transcendence of the consumerist, individualistic, hierarchical constructions of the self and society that we in America are spoon-fed from birth.

The notion of "temporally autonomous zones" has been widely used (see, for example, Bretherton 2011), to conceptualise the significance of Occupy as a temporary wrong-footing (rather than total secession from) market state logics and norms, and as a space where subjects—with the will and/or

ability to slip the grip of capital discipline—could participate in direct democratic processes. Much attention has been given to the material and discursive dimensions of this autonomous politics. However, we argue that Occupy should also be understood to have carved out a spiritual autonomous zone—not exclusively in the sense that religious voices and actors were tolerated and welcomed, although this was part of it, but rather because the practices of Occupy centred on naming and discerning the co-option and satiation of the human spirit against the trappings of late capitalism. There has been much recent interest in these affective and spiritual aspects of neoliberalism (Jensen 2011; Vrasti 2009; Ward 2009), recognising the importance of the affective register as a site of capitalist inscription—working through the freedoms, emotions, affective labour (having the "right attitude")—and establishing the possibilities through which we narrate our relation to life itself. As Derrick Jensen (2006:552) explains:

> It would be a mistake to think this culture clearcuts only forests. It clearcuts our psyche as well. It would be a mistake to think it dams only rivers. We ourselves are dammed (and damned) by it as well. It would be a mistake to think it creates dead zones only in the ocean. It creates dead zones in our hearts and minds. It would be a mistake to think it fragments only habitat. We, too, are fragmented, split off, shredded, rent, torn.

And "[w]hen these territories of desire and imagination are stolen, ravaged, and toxified it becomes that much easier for the theft and destruction of natural landscapes to go uncontested, unnoticed" (Jensen 2011).

Tim Jensen (2011) argues that the hegemony of neoliberalism is not simply maintained through a common economic logic, but also through a common sensorium that trains us to experience certain emotions over others, suggests rules for their expression, and even tries to define what one is "allowed" to feel for. These everyday flows of affective and emotional feeling habituate us to the cadence of neoliberal subjectivity, but can in turn prompt a "hopeless vacuity, as the new weak mysticism of the age becomes characterized by endless self-serving acts of negation and denial … [and a] dreary acceptance in some quarters that how we live is circumscribed by the marketstate's ability to shape how we govern ourselves" (Philip Blond, quoted in Cloke and Beaumont 2012:13). Critchley (2012) and Ward (2009) talk of the paralysis of empty nihilism associated with the contemporary political-economic predicament, whose only discernible telos is the individual pursuit of pleasure. However, postsecular styled practices of "going-beyond-the-self" co-constituted in part by theo-

ethical notions of the incarnation (Thomas 2012) provide a counter-cultural ethic that confronts, and secedes from, the widely hegemonic priorities of wealth, individual gain and pleasure. This creates a context in which alternative futures can be imagined (Brueggemann 1978), encouraging the creation of new ways of living that expand in the cracks of capitalism bringing hope and healing alongside a rigorous critique of the status quo. Perhaps the most significant challenge from the church to Occupy is to insist that it is not just a material life that needs to be reclaimed from the neoliberal paradigm, but affective psycho-spiritual life as well.

Conclusion

This paper has suggested new ways of exploring the relationship between religion and contemporary activism. We argue that dominant typologies developed in the 20th century to describe the different ways churches, or religions more broadly, relate to society may have become somewhat outdated. Instead, our interpretation of the relationship between Occupy and religion suggests the need for new grammars that can attend to the increasing blurring of religious and secular ethics in contemporary social life. Through an illustration of OWS and OLSX, we contend that religious actors, discourses, and practices that played a significant role in co-constituting the ethos of the Occupy Movement. Our aim here is not simply to affirm that the relations between capitalism, religion and spirituality are paradoxical and contested, and as such should not be conflated to a narrow discussion of religio-ideological neo-conservativism in the USA and elsewhere. Rather we suggest, following Habermas (2006), there may be an opportunity for religious involvement to facilitate progressive crossover narratives that discern the spiritual aspects of capitalism, and galvanise prepolitical values of hope, faith and love for prefigurative projects of economic democracy and social liberation. Although this may appear to some readers as a bold claim, our examination of documentary evidence, along with our participatory involvement within and alongside particular Occupy sites, convinces us of the significance of public theology and faith-based practice as significant factors in the emergent postsecularity exhibited by Occupy. We argue that in providing the contrasting spectacle of tents outside major civic cathedrals and churches, Occupy made theology public. By this we mean two distinct things. The first, and most obvious, concerns the spotlight Occupy shone onto the allegiances of the institutional church, which served as a proxy for wider debates about the political theology of Christianity. Public disagreements, most notably the resignation of senior clergy who disagreed with the initial plans to evict peaceful protestors, catapulted the politics of Christianity from the margins of public discussion to the centre of media reports. For this reason, many of the protestors felt media attention was so swept up with the story of the potential eviction that the original issues of reckless financial capital and corporate lobbying lost all prominence in public discourse. Second, the

contribution of religious actors, discourses, and practices helped co-constitute a postsecular event-space within the Occupy movement. Religious participation helped open out a discursive space that focused on the spirituality of Occupy—recognising that the ethical and moral values underpinning practices of banking and corporate business have percolated into the formation of modern subjectivity. Furthermore, Occupy's commitment to prefigurative politics afforded a culture of hospitality and in a large part welcomed the contribution, alongside others, religious voices brought to articulations of love and hopefulness, when detached from any particular doctrinal belief or obligation to believe.

As such, Occupy addressed a crisis of secular consciousness which is marked by an increasing fragmentation of values and an underlying incapacity, or lack of belief, in addressing pressing ethical and political questions. However, it can also be conceptualised as a spiritual disobedience—opting out of the satiation of imperial religion, with its domestications; and experiencing a temporary autonomous space where existing hierarchies, dispositions, and deeply held beliefs can be reworked. During the Sermon on the Steps, Ciaron O'Reilly of London Catholic Worker articulated the spiritual aspect of activism by contrasting it with the passive neoliberal subject-citizen:

> Why those in power find this encampment, your presence, so abhorrent is that you are exercising active citizenship, not playing your designated role as passive consumers in this Square Mile. A "Shock Doctrine" place that has historically been cleared of residents and citizenship. Those in power don't want you to be active citizens, they want you to be passive consumers. They want you to think that the only freedom you have is at the point of consumption. The freedom to choose between Coke and Pepsi, Nike and Reebok … Don't entertain the thought that you have any freedom at work or in your community or on your campus. They don't even want your active support for their wars any more. All they want is your silence and sedation, your resignation. This camp is a movement of a holy spirit at the centre of empire against the spirits of resignation, cynicism that facilitate war and global exploitation (quoted in *IndyMediaUK* 2011).

So much work that has focused on the territories of the Occupy movement (Halvorsen 2012) has neglected these realms of the spiritual and the invisible terrains of activism. We suggest that Occupy needs to be understood at least in part as a deeply spiritual and sacramental protest, not solely in its aims and objectives, but in its practices, its hospitality to otherness, and its offer of direct experience

of mutualism and radical democratic forms of organising. The solidarity practices within encampments offered a deeply spiritual counter-formation to the affective repercussions of capitalist liturgies (or discourses) that saturate our everyday lives. Counter-neoliberal liturgies that enforce an alternative spiritual and ethical worldview to the neoliberal entreaty to consume, behave and be comfortable can be a pragmatically meditative resource for producing a hopeful subjectivity, that operates beyond a symbolic understanding or attachment to the capitalist order, recognising its perversity, and more able to imagine and embody prefigurative possibilities for living.

From our own reflections, these spiritual liturgies had a temporality that existed inside and outside the camp, which can be best summarised in the words of Butler et al. (2011):

> These occupation sites are vortexes of reinvention, where you have to run on instinct because, when there, you realize that all the features of ordinary religion—and, yes, I said "trappings" earlier in part because it includes the word "trap"—just stink of the demonic possession that infects the whole society outside. At least that's how it can seem in the kairosphase of revolution.

Participation in Occupy often emphasised the ways in which "spending time" at the camp re-sensitised the body to the corporatised presence in the affective landscape of the city. Capitalist rhythms and habits socialised onto the body became made known as the camp offered new forms of social relationships premised on logics of sharing what is in common. Occupy in this sense represented a spiritual space of secession and exorcism of consumer capitalist enculturation, fostering the possibility of another discipleship into postcapitalist citizens. If so, then, Occupy is not only about how religious space provided a symbol of ethical debate from which to launch a new set of questions, and how religious discourses percolated through the movement to create new metaphors, attach meaning to performances, capture imaginations, and create new narratives through shared religious stories in order to challenge the status quo. It is also about the affective and emotional contribution of religion in opening out alternative psycho-spiritual resistance to the inscriptions of capitalism.

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[i] Following our involvement in the two Occupy camps, we began to analyse the academic literature on Occupy as well as blogs, newspaper articles, and other journalistic sources to discern whether the postsecular ethos we experienced was indeed evident in the more high-profile Occupations such as Occupy Wall Street and Occupy London Stock Exchange. The internet survey, conducted on Google, used the following search terms to identify material on the relations between Occupy and religion in different cities (Occupy + city name; Occupy + Religion; Occupy + name of religion; Occupy + Spirituality; Occupy + church). Results were traced across seven pages for each search term, with each relevant entry identified via their websites or through cross-

checking with other sources (for example, references to events found in websites and social media facilitated by Occupy participants).

[ii] The violent events in Egypt in July and August 2013 highlight the contingency and plasticity of what might be thought of as postsecular revolutions.

[iii] See, for example, the image of the golden calf on Wall Street from Bud Meyers' blog: http://bud-meyers.blogspot.ca/2011/10/99ers-join-billionaires-tour-nyc.html (last accessed 27 August 2015).

[iv] An image of the nativity scene at OWS can be accessed at http://www.utne.com/politics/how-occupy-got-religion.aspx#axzz2Z82aUUdV (last accessed 27 August 2015).

[v] Christianity Uncut is an informal network of Christians campaigning against the UK government's cuts agenda and the injustices of capitalism.

[vi] A photograph of this scene is available at https://christianityuncut.wordpress.com/ (last accessed 27 August 2015).

[vii] Images of the OLSX and Christianity Uncut demonstration inside St Paul's Cathedral can be accessed at http://godandpoliticsuk.org/2012/10/15/was-yesterdays-demonstrationat-st-pauls-a-valid-protest-or-just-a-stunt/ (last accessed 27 August 2015).

[viii] Ekklesia is a think tank and news service that seeks to bring Christian theology into politics and public life.

[ix] The Greek word ekklesia is often translated in the New Testament as "church", but more properly refers to a local congregation or assembly meeting together for a common purpose.

[x] Pickerill and Krinsky (2013:282) rightly warn against any over-romanticisation of the consensus decision-making process, and highlight the gendered and racialised exclusions active in the Occupy movement.