Structural Approaches in the Sociology of Social Movements

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Sociological research emphasizes how social institutions, such as the family, religion, corporations, and governments influence people's choices about how they live. While acknowledging that individuals have some freedom to pursue different paths, sociologists argue that this freedom is limited in important ways by forces outside the control of individuals. Sociology, therefore, asks how these broader forces operate to affect the actions and beliefs of individuals and groups. As the editors have noted, sociological research on social movements can be classified as adopting either a structural or cultural emphasis. While the former focuses on the distribution of material resources and the organizations and institutions that govern such distribution, the latter approach emphasizes questions about how individuals and groups perceive and interpret these material conditions.

In practice, distinguishing between actual material conditions and popular understandings of these can be difficult. For instance, categories of individuals such as gender, class, or ethnicity are structurally defined, but their sociological relevance grows not simply from their existence bur rather from the cultural work of individuals who help define group identities according to these structural categories. As Buechler observes, "[c]ollective identity and political consciousness are thus decisive factors mediating

structures of power and collective action" (2000:123). In other words, a group must somehow come to perceive itself as both distinct and subject to unjust material or social conditions. Such "collective identities" are far from automatic, because the "interlocking systems of domination" embedded in broader political and economic structures affect possibilities for social groups to articulate and mobilize around social movement identities. Thus, any attempt to understand social change requires attention to questions about how the resources and power needed to define and defend group interests are distributed within a society. Structural approaches recognize that inequalities are closely linked to macro-level factors such as a country's position in the world economy or to meso-level ones, such as class, race, and gender. Thus, any attempt to reduce inequalities in society must be mindful of how these broad structures are shaping broader power relations.

A key starting point for much sociological work is the observation that virtually all societies experience inequality. The benefits and risks of society are nowhere near equally distributed, and therefore we would expect that particular clusterings of people would be more likely candidates for participation in social movements. In particular, more aggrieved groups might be expected to be engaged in protests against the status quo. Important debates have taken place among social movement scholars regarding the role of grievances in the generation of social movements. Early research in social movements saw political protest as emerging from groups that were relatively disadvantaged by the status quo. Structural inequalities generated strains that led individuals to protest their conditions (e.g., Davies 1962; Gurr 1970; Rose 1982; for a review, see Gurney and Tierney 1982). But while it made intuitive sense to argue that

relative or absolute deprivation is a *sine qua non* of movement emergence, in reality very few of the most deprived groups actually engaged in protest. And while social scientists did quite well at mapping the causes and dimensions of deprivation, they were less successful at predicting when and where resistance to structural inequalities would emerge.

Other analysts criticized deprivation theories for failing to consider how individuals experiencing deprivation are embedded within broader social structures. Society's weakest and most marginalized people are typically not well placed to engage in what can be highly risky political actions. Lacking secure economic opportunities and savings, they cannot afford to take many risks. Facing discrimination from a more powerful majority, they may be seeking to remain invisible or to engage in symbolic forms of resistance as they go about their efforts to survive (e.g., Scott 1985). These people also tend to lack the time and political skills required to work for social change, and their community organizations are more likely to lack the money needed to engage in extensive political work. Thus, not only are certain groups materially deprived, but they are also denied equal capacity to influence the political processes that help determine how society's resources are used and distributed (King, Cornwall, and Dahlin 2005; McCarthy and Zald 1977).

While debates about the role of deprivation in social movement mobilization developed largely among political scientists, sociologists were beginning to articulate a model of social movement mobilization that focused on the *capacities* of challengers to resist injustice rather than on the conditions of inequality themselves. An important contribution in this regard is Charles Tilly's *From Mobilization to Revolution* (1978),

which explored how the war-making and tax-collecting activities of 18th century political elites contributed to the institutional elaboration of the modern national state. Tilly found that, as national states took shape, popular groups adopted new forms of resistance that resembled their new, national targets more than they resembled earlier protest forms. Thus, bread riots gave way to the emergence of more structured associations for popular resistance. It is to the earliest days of the modern state that Tilly traces common tactics in modern protest repertoires—including petitions, rallies, blockades, and protest marches. In short, localized direct action against an immediate target gave way to more symbolic forms of protest designed to communicate with other political actors and generate wider sympathy and support for challengers' claims. Challengers had to focus their efforts on the emerging states, which increasingly controlled key decisions about the distribution of resources and power. In the course of this shift, they had to mobilize larger numbers of people and resources than were needed for earlier types of challenges. Challengers thus needed to expand their organizational capacities accordingly in order to compete effectively in the emerging national polity.

Social and material inequalities have often formed the bases on which the largest social movements have emerged. In the West, for example, we see a history of robust social movements organized around labor, around gender, and around race. Each of these categories represents not only a group of people wishing to improve their lot, but also a systemic social division in which one group is allocated less than another. The structural approach to social movements brings to the forefront of analysis the institutionalized injustices and inequalities over which contested politics are fought. These include social barriers to material success, state policies that treat groups unequally, or bureaucratic

rules that favor one group (for example, corporations) over another (workers). Social movement actors form organizations to influence states and institutions. These structural elements of activism are of primary interest to structural approaches to the study of social movements. Inequalities of political access have motivated some of the largest and most successful social movements in the United States. For example, the women's suffrage movement was born out of the political exclusion of women. Although women's suffrage activists were disadvantaged by their gender, they were able to leverage the class privileges of some key activists (Banaszak 1996; King, Cornwall, and Dahlin 1996). Significantly, they also took advantage of skills, ideologies, and networks that emerged in the course of abolitionist struggles.

Structural approaches to social movements, in short, can be seen to cover an enormous terrain that takes us from questions about the nature and causes of inequality to the creation of social groupings to the causes of institutional change. The centrality of the modern state to shaping the distribution of resources and capacities has led many structural analysts to consider the national state as the primary target or arena against or within which modern social movements operate. The national state not only defines the possibilities for groups to affect social change, but it also structures the possibilities for different groups to articulate grievances and organize in support of social change goals. Thus, we focus much of this chapter on how understandings of the national state impact analyses of social change.

Two concepts that have emerged from what is largely a state-centric body social movements research– political contexts and mobilizing structures—provide useful analytical tools for helping scholars analyze the ways states and other actors and

structures shape social movement dynamics. The concepts' usefulness grows in part from their effectiveness at helping analysts assess the relative distribution of power across groups in a given society and the possibilities for altering power relations. We therefore focus much of our discussion on these concepts, identifying both how they have contributed to our knowledge of social movements and how they have changed over time. We pay particular attention to the ways global structural changes have affected both the political contexts and mobilizing structures. Finally, we identify some remaining questions and demonstrate how structural approaches can complement and contribute to cultural ones to enhance our overall understanding of social movements.

We emphasize a global perspective in our discussion of the structural approaches to social movements. This is because we find it increasingly difficult to ignore the ways that national states are embedded within broader sets of relationships to other states and to global institutions. If the modern state was key to the emergence of what we know as social movements, then we must consider how global integration is affecting the character of the national state, as well as social movements' attempts to influence it. Our perspective, which views states as interdependent actors embedded within a complex system of global relations rather than as free-standing, autonomous social entities, has important implications for how we think about the state as actor and as movement target.

I. Political Contexts

Structuralist accounts in sociology build on the work of Karl Marx, who saw basic material or economic relations as the key factor shaping the evolution of society. As Marx stated, "Men [*sic*] make their own history, but they do not make it just as they

please." For social movement analysts, this basic premise has led to research exploring how social structures affect the possibilities for collective attempts to make history. The idea of political opportunities or alternately, *political contexts,*[1] refers to the ways formal political institutions and more informal alignments of relevant actors condition the prospects for relatively powerless groups to effectively challenge the existing order. Factors such as the extent to which the political system is open to public participation, the presence or absence of influential allies, state capacities to repress or respond to movement demands, and divisions among elites all shape the political opportunities and limitations of movements. While some factors—such as state capacities and the degree of openness of the polity—change little over time, others – such as constellations of potential and actual allies and opponents—can shift more quickly to favor or hinder political activism. Political contexts affect both how people can try to influence political outcomes as well as how they can come together as a group.

A key insight of research on political contexts is that we must look beyond movements themselves if we are to understand how movements arise and under what conditions they succeed or fail. People like Mohandas Gandhi or Martin Luther King Jr. may indeed have been highly exceptional political leaders and strategists, but if they had been around at different historical moments, we would not be recalling them today. Similarly, other Gandhis and Kings have existed throughout history, but unless they were born into an era where political conditions favored movement activism, they remain outside of our understanding of history (e.g., Wuthnow 1989).

Political Opportunities

Early formulations of the external dynamics relevant to social movements consider the varying levels of "openness" of a particular political context to a social movement. Charles Tilly (1978) argues that social movements are likely to emerge when windows of opportunity for access to the polity open. Thus, several early studies in political opportunities gauge the relative "openness" of political structures. Kitschelt's comparison (1986) of anti-nuclear movements in four democracies is a key example. Eisinger (1973), analyzing U.S. cities, argues that the relationship between social movement emergence and political openness was an "inverted-U" shaped curve. If a city is extremely open to input from political outsiders, this will suppress social movements by rendering them unnecessary. On the other extreme, a very closed system will also suppress social movement activity. Social movements, he argues, would be most likely in states that fall between these two extremes. While later social movement scholarship has supported these propositions, many scholars have sought to develop a more multifaceted conceptualization of political opportunity (e.g., Gamson and Meyer 1996; Kriesi et al. 1995; Tarrow 1996; for a review, see Meyer and Minkoff 2004).

Doug McAdam's political process model of social movement emergence and decline is a key work in developing this perspective (1982). He argues that shifts in the structure of political opportunities promote the expansion of social protest and the emergence of social movements (see also Tarrow 1998b; Tilly, Tilly, & Tilly 1975). His conceptualization of relationships between large-scale structural forces, such as transformations of regional and national economies, migration patterns, and institutional configurations has been central to encouraging a proliferation of new research on political contexts. By making explicit the connections between broad structural change and

mobilization processes, McAdam's work contributed to the emergence of discussions about "social movement society" in the late 20th century. This concept helped analysts think about social movements not as aberrations, but rather as constituent elements of routine politics. We discuss this concept further in relation to globalization later in this chapter.

Some have found it helpful to distinguish between more static, structural opportunities and dynamic opportunities. Structural opportunities refer to the more stable features of political institutions, such as bureaucratic agencies, formal mechanisms regulating access to political authorities, and the capacity of state agents to implement changes. These opportunities are relatively consistent across time, though not impervious to change. Dynamic opportunities are more volatile and particularistic. Important examples of dynamic opportunities that have been linked to social movement success are divisions among elites, social control strategies by state actors, and momentary crises and events (Gamson and Meyer 1996). The latter are significant only if social movement actors recognize them as opportunities and act upon them. Another possibility, however, is that movement actors fail to perceive opportunities or openings in the system, and therefore fail to take advantage of these. Thus, many analysts point to the problem of distinguishing between "objective" conditions and activists' perceptions of those conditions, and some have addressed this with the notion that "signaling" processes help link structure and action (more on signaling below).

Some contend that the opposite of an opportunity is a threat. Nonetheless, threats, too, have been shown to contribute to efforts for social movement mobilization (Francisco 1996; Rasler 1996; Staggenborg 1986; Van Dyke 2003). Movements, it is

claimed, are sometimes more focused on preventing bad ends than for securing good ones. Tilly (1978) argues that groups may be more responsive to threats because they require less mobilization than opportunities. He argues that social movements can respond to threats using networks and practices already in place, whereas opportunities require new forms of mobilization.

Some social movement scholars have raised concerns with political opportunities as an analytic category. For example, Goodwin and Jasper (1999) argue that the concept of political opportunity was so vague and pliable as to apply to anything at all external to a social movement organization. They also argue that, as applied to studies of social movements, political opportunity theory tends toward a tautology: any source that produces social movement activity is *post hoc* identified as an opportunity (Gamson and Meyer 1996). They also are concerned that cultural factors are either subsumed under this concept or ignored altogether.

Some scholars responded to this criticism by further specifying their usage of the concept political opportunities. For example, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) articulate two key concepts, state capacity (the impact of the state on activities and resources) and democratization. With this model, states themselves are the unit of analysis, as well as a number of clearly articulated dimensions along which states may vary. This framework can be used to compare social movements in different state contexts. However, this framework is limited in its ability to explain variation in patterns of mobilization among states that are similar in terms of their capacities and levels of democratization.

Meyer and Minkoff (2004) also argue for retaining the political opportunity concept. While they agree that there are discrepancies in how different scholars operationalized political opportunities, they argue for more conceptual clarity, as well as a clear explanation of causal mechanisms, rather than a new framework. In particular, they argue that *structural* political opportunities influence most strongly the policy-related outcomes of social movement efforts. Other political opportunities serve to structure the cultural dimensions of social movements' work by signaling to activists and the public at large which issues and frames might be successful at a given point in time (Tarrow 1996). These are most influential in the founding of social movement organizations and in the formation of coalitions. For instance, Wuthnow (1989) analyzes how the emergence of significant "communities of discourse" is shaped by environmental conditions, institutional contexts, and sequences of actions. Koopmans's analysis (2005) of the "discursive frames" that affected right-wing mobilization in Germany, Steinberg's analysis (1995) of labor mobilizations in the 19th century, and Maney, Woehrle, and Coy's analyses (2005) of peace movement frames illustrate how political contexts shape ideological work in social movements. Meyer and Minkoff (2004) call for scholars to keep in mind the questions, "political opportunity for whom?" and "political opportunity for what?" as a method to avoid conceptual cloudiness.

From Political Opportunities to Political Contexts

Another approach has been to move away from the concept "opportunity" and instead focus on political contexts (Kriesi 1996; Rucht 1996). This shift has allowed scholars to avoid the limiting metaphor of the opening and closing "window" of

opportunity and instead identify both durable and variable aspects of the state relevant to a given movement at a particular point in time. This approach centers on questions of how major political institutions structure the contexts for political action by both challengers and authorities.

Kriesi and colleagues (1995), and later Amenta and colleagues (2002) argue that the structure of the polity, ranging from highly centralized to highly dispersed, affects both social movement forms and outcomes by creating more or fewer points of access to (as well as "veto points" within) the polity (Skocpol 1992). Measures of democratization, such as suffrage, the number of political parties, and "direct democracy" legislative processes (e.g., ballot initiatives) will also impact the number of social movements and their forms (Amenta et al. 2002). State policies are also a critical component of the political context. They have the capacity to shape the grievances of social movements as well as channel their actions (Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander 1995; Clemens 1998; Feree 1987; Giugni, McAdam, and Tilly 1999; McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991; Piven and Cloward 1979; Quadagno 1992; Valocchi 1990; Western 1993). A final component of political contexts is state bureaucracies and repressive capacities. Kriesi and colleagues (1995), studying "new" social movements in Western Europe, argue that high levels of repression may effectively prevent protest, but the impact of low levels of repression is unclear. Della Porta (1996) argues that a state's failure to invoke repressive action increases the likelihood that social movements will use peaceful protest tactics. On the other hand, strong bureaucracies are likely to increase social movement mobilization in that they increase the state's capacity to implement social change (Amenta et al. 2002).

To the extent that bureaucrats support social movement goals, they may aid challengers directly (Orloff and Skocpol 1984).

Research on the ways states have worked to police public protests has shown that during the 1960s and 1970s a system of "public order management" evolved as authorities worked to balance their competing mandates to maintain public order while also protecting citizens' rights to speech and assembly (della Porta and Reiter 1998; McCarthy, McPhail, and Crist 1999). This institutionalization of protest and state responses to it, however, is just one aspect of the ways states have sought to neutralize threats from social movement challengers. For instance, researchers have detailed the covert actions of the U.S. government to repress movements of both the left and right during the 1960s (Cunningham 2005), and contemporary news accounts suggests that such practices may be expanding today. Davenport and his collaborators (2005) call for a wider interpretation of state repression to account for the varieties of tools available for modern states to channel and subvert challenges to their authority. One study in that volume calls for an extension of the historical emphasis of McAdam's political process approach to the study of movements to address the decline phase of movements. Zwerman and Steinhoff (2005) analyzed the effects of state repression on activism in the U.S. and Japan, and they found that repression in both cases generated enduring and robust forms of militancy. They concluded, "repression may have serious long-term costs not just for the activists it represses but for the state that imposes it [...]" (p. 102). These insights from research on state repression and other forms of protest control demonstrate the need for structural analyses to account for the ways interactions between

challengers, authorities, and other actors shape the evolving contexts for protest (Earl 2006; Jenkins and Klandermans 1995).

Further demonstrating the importance of adopting an interactive and dynamic approach to understanding political contexts, newer analyses have shown that the system of "negotiated protest management" observed over recent years has broken down in recent years, and this is partly due to the expansion of the global neoliberal agenda and a related reduction in officially sanctioned spaces of protest, known as the public forum (McCarthy and McPhail 2006). As a result, more overtly repressive police tactics have been seen in many Western countries, reversing the earlier trend towards more nonviolent policing strategies (della Porta, Peterson, and Reiter forthcoming). Together this work illustrates the importance of understanding the ways states are organized to both manage and resist challenges from social change advocates, affecting the relevant political contexts.

Some critics wonder whether, if political contexts are so important to social change, might it be the case that the social movements themselves are irrelevant to the process of social change (e.g., Goodwin and Jasper 1999). However, several studies have shown that the movements themselves do matter to the process of social change (Burstein Einwohner, and Hollander 1995; Giugni 1998; Giugni et al. 1999; Piven and Cloward 1979). One study on the emergence of Old Age Assistance in the United States tests this question directly by using time-series and cross-sectional data (Amenta, Caren, and Olasky 2005). They find that the pension movement did influence social policy by acting as an important mediator between the favorable political conditions and the legislative process.

Not all movements are oriented to changing state policies or reforming state bureaucracies. Some movements, for example, target the policies or practices of private corporations. Nicole C. Raeburn's (2004) study of lesbian and gay employee associations' attempts to secure domestic partner benefits is an excellent example of one such movement. This analysis tracks the successes and failures of activists who are participating in a larger project of bringing benefits to lesbian and gay families; however, each employee association is bounded by the institution in which it operates. Even in this case, however Raeburn finds that contexts are very important to securing these benefits, both the political and labor market contexts in which the organization is embedded and the institutional context of the organization itself.

It is well established that political contexts affect mobilization, and research on political contexts has contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the ways broad structures as well as institutional practices affect the prospects for social change efforts to emerge. In particular, the concept of political context highlights the role of the state's more routine policies in channeling the activism of social movement organizations. For example, McCarthy and colleagues (1991) examine the role of federal tax law and postal service regulations in the United States. They find that the laws requiring non-profit organizations to be "nonpartisan" have a major impact on the day-to-day organization of activities, as well as the framing of social movement claims.

In subsequent work, McCarthy and his colleagues showed how relationships between protest groups and police have also served to channel forms of political protest. They found that government restrictions on people’s rights to public assembly have evolved through a process of give-and-take between authorities and challengers, whereby

authorities have sought to limit the time, place, and manner of public protests, while challengers have used the courts and other institutional mechanisms to press for more expansive rights to assembly and speech. This work highlights the ways states and other institutional actors "channel" social movement activities through often subtle and indirect means (e.g., McCarthy et al.1999). Neoliberal economic trends over recent years have transformed public space even further, as shopping malls have replaced town commons as the primary public gathering spaces. The investment of public resources in the development of privately controlled consumer spaces, and the expansion of private housing communities further constrains the public forum (McCarthy and McPhail 2006).

In today's era of enhanced global interdependence, we find analysts re-thinking their understanding of states and state power. The concept of political contexts can help us extend our analytical lens from conflicts that are usefully viewed in more localized terms to more global contexts. In particular, the notion that social movements are shaped by broad structural forces that affect distributions of economic resources and political power and that institutions play important roles to encourage, channel, and/or repress social change activism can be readily applied to a polity that is viewed in global, rather than national, terms. As we argue below, structural accounts of transnational, national, and local protest are critical to understand the relative strength of states, the utility of transnational activism, and the multiple access points for activists in this era of increasing globalization.

II. Globalization and its implications for thinking about political contexts

Globalization is not a new phenomenon, and in reality it is simply a new label for long-enduring social and economic processes (Arrighi and Drangel 1986; Chase-Dunn 1998; Chirot and Hall 1982; Robinson 2004; Wallerstein 1976, 1980). Sociologists have devoted extensive attention to the ways increasing interactions among national societies have affected social life on many levels, through processes such as modernization, urbanization, and secularization. The fact that we find similar patterns of behavior across many very diverse societies suggests that these processes have common structural roots, and that these roots extend beyond the national state context. For instance, Markoff's historical analysis (1996) shows that both social movements and democracy emerged through extensive transnational (and even pre-national) interactions that helped spread new ideas about politics and forms of collective action. Emerging pro-democracy forces learned from their counterparts around Europe, and practices diffused readily across national boundaries.

Popular politics has long spilled over national political boundaries, but the much more rapid speed and more extensive volume of these interactions—now commonly referred to as "globalization" have intensified transnational political activity. Some of the earliest organized social movements brought together people from a variety of cultural backgrounds around shared aims of, for instance, promoting an end to slavery, advancing equal political rights for women, and limiting the barbarism of warfare (Finnemore 1996a; Wittner 1993, 1997). Nineteenth century transnational activism was similar to that of today in that it benefited from technological advances (Hanagan 2002) while also advocating notions of humanity that transcended geographically defined boundaries (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Rupp 1997). Today, we find thousands of civil society

organizations that cross national borders, and more frequent and dramatic instances of transnational collective action. What forces are helping to push popular politics outside their traditional, nationally-defined boundaries?

Structural accounts of social movements have highlighted the need for contemporary studies of social movements to consider states as actors within a broader system of players that make up what is an increasingly coherent and institutionalized global political arena. Most analyses portray national governments as embedded in networks of relationships with other states and international institutions. The ideas governments have about what their interests are and how they will pursue those interests are strongly influenced by these networks of relations (Boli and Thomas 1999; Finnemore 1996b; Frank et al. 2000; Meyer et al. 1997). The very basis of states' identity—the legal concept of sovereignty—is only meaningful in the international context where states themselves grant each other recognition. Analyses that do not account for this global system will fail to identify how global factors influence the articulation and negotiation of what might otherwise appear to be nationally-rooted conflicts. And without considering how states are embedded within a broader system of relationships, we will underestimate how variations in state power may affect their responses to challengers. The next section summarizes the main elements of "globalization" and identifies how these processes are relevant for our understanding of the contemporary global political arena.

Economic Globalization

Many popular discussions of "globalization" refer implicitly to the idea that national economies are gradually becoming integrated into a single, global economy. While economic factors reflect just one aspect of globalization, any attempt to understand global political change must consider these underlying economic foundations. Analysts working in the World-Systems tradition have argued that the system of states is highly unequal, and that the global economic hierarchy is, for a variety of reasons, likely to persist, barring a major transformation of economic relations. "Core" or early-industrializing states have enjoyed the most benefits from the global expansion of capitalism, beginning with direct economic imperialism and colonial occupation. The "periphery" states have been--through colonization or some other form of unequal economic relations-- relegated to a subordinate role in the world economic system. Economic globalization institutionalizes and reinforces this inequality (e.g., Bello 2000a; Korzeniewicz and Moran 1997, 2006). "Semi-peripheral" states lie somewhere in the middle, as they have substantial enough resources to influence world market relations but they lack enough influence to play a leadership role in this system.

The organization of economic relations in the core and periphery has meant that these exploitative core-periphery relations have persisted, even as periphery states formally obtained their "independence." As states in the core depend upon southern markets and resources for their economic development, they have used their power to institutionalize their dominant position in the global economic order. For instance, McMichael (2003) shows how the post-WWII settlement shaped a "national development

project" that gradually evolved into a global market-oriented "globalization project," serving to perpetuate and even expand inequities between core and periphery states.

World-system scholarship has informed more recent attempts to articulate class-based analyses of global political and economic relations. Leslie Sklair (2001) analyzed the discourses and structures of the world's leading transnational corporations to assess whether we can speak of an emergent "transnational capitalist class." He argues that transnational corporate structures and the practices involved in reproducing and advancing a vision of globalized capitalism has indeed generated a social grouping that may be called a transnational capitalist class. Sklair shows how agents operating as part of this class have systematically advanced the interest of globalized capital over other interests and agendas. Similarly, Robinson (2004) makes the case that a collection of corporate actors and their political allies have systematically altered relationships between states and citizens while shaping global institutional configurations. Opposing the transnational capitalist class is a structurally disadvantaged labor movement, which has been limited in its influence by the compromise strategy of business unionism used by organized labor in the global north, or the core countries (O'Brien 2000). This approach may have suited the short-term interests of some workers, but it has contributed to nationalist divisions in the labor movement that have contributed to labor's decline in the latter part of the 20th century.[2]

An important conclusion from research on global economic relations is that a state's position in the global economic hierarchy affects both its vulnerability to international pressure as well as the domestic political context. Core states in the world economic system depend upon cheap labor and other resources from the periphery in

order to support both high levels of consumption among their citizens as well as the maintenance of their predominant position in the world economy (Chase-Dunn 1998:42-3). Labor protests helped establish workers' rights in those countries, and protest mobilization throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries helped expand democratic rights and protections (Tilly 1995). Thus, citizens in core states have comparatively more opportunities and resources for participating in social movements, and—perhaps more importantly-- their governments have greater capacities for responding to citizens' demands (Arrighi 1999; Markoff 1999).

In contrast, citizens in periphery countries are far more likely to face violent repression (Jenkins and Schock 1992; Podobnik 2004; Walton and Seddon 1994). Because core states depend upon cheap access to goods and labor from the periphery, they have an interest in maintaining political conditions in those countries that suit their economic interests. This further limits opportunities for political mobilization in the periphery. Not only are opportunities for political participation more limited in the periphery, but because their governments are so dependent upon international finance and aid, their experiences are more strongly determined by global-level processes than are the domestic opportunities of activists in core states. So the policies of the World Bank and IMF have more immediate consequences for people in countries that borrow money from these institutions—the global South—and yet the decisions taken in these organizations are determined by just a handful of core states. This leaves periphery citizens dually disenfranchised, since they have limited ability to influence their own governments that, in turn, have little capacity to influence the global policies that most affect them. As formal democracy has spread to periphery regions, some analysts have used the term

"democratizing disempowerment" to describe the paradoxical position of the people of the global South (Hippler 1995).[3]

Despite the relative powerlessness of the global south, it is here that some analysts see the most promising developments in social movements. For instance, some analysts have identified new forms of political organizing in global south countries that may reinvigorate institutionalized politics in those countries while also providing models for parties elsewhere (Baiocchi 2004; Markoff 2003).[4] Semi-periphery countries such as Brazil, South Korea, and South Africa are also sites of labor movement revitalization, and transnational ties among labor groups as well as between labor and other movement sectors are seen as one of the most promising developments in contemporary global justice activism (Baiocchi 2004; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Levering 1997; Moody 1997; Munck 2002; O'Brien forthcoming; Waterman and Timms 2004).

Political Globalization

Alongside global economic integration, we see the formation and strengthening of international institutions designed to help states manage their external as well as internal insecurities. These insecurities are not only military, but also involve environmental, economic and public health concerns, among others. Some speak of this process as "internationalization," in contrast to economic "globalization" (Daly 2002; Tarrow 2001). Internationalization refers to the development of formal cooperative relationships among states, usually through formal treaties and the establishment of international organizations.

The expansion of inter-governmental agencies that address substantive issues creates both challenges and opportunities for social movement actors. On the one hand, when governments relinquish part of their authority to global institutions, they undermine the traditional channels of political accountability. This leads to what is called the "democratic deficit" of international institutions, which are typically staffed by appointed rather than elected officials who have few if any ties to local or national constituencies (Evans 1997; Markoff 1999; Tilly 1995). In some instances, particularly within the global financial institutions, international officials are selected for their technical expertise alone, and institutional cultures either ignore or disdain democratic values (Markoff and Montecinos 1993; Montecinos 2001; Stiglitz 2003). In fact, the World Trade Organization (WTO) even posted on its web site a "top ten list" of the main benefits of the WTO, which included the supposed "benefit" of "protecting governments from the influences of special interests" within their borders. Why is it that proponents of international trade oppose more input and oversight from groups that are affected by policies?

While international institutions can undermine democracy, they can also be used to strengthen democracy by enhancing transparency and providing opportunities and resources for social movements to strengthen their position vis-à-vis other more powerful actors (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Korzeniewicz and Smith 2000; Risse, Ropp and Sikkink 1999; Sassen 1998; Smith et al. 1997; Tarrow 2001). The fact that international institutions are charged with addressing global problems relating to peace, the environment, and human rights means that within these organizations, social movements can find powerful allies as well as material and

symbolic resources. In fact, because international agencies lack the "natural" constituencies that support local and national elected officials, international officials see a need to build direct links between their agencies and popular groups. The fact that governments have signed international declarations and treaties indicating their support for the values movements advance provides both international and legal legitimacy for activists' claims as well as political leverage against states that would prefer to maintain reputations of good global citizenship. Although governments may sign treaties with no intention of actually implementing them, no government welcomes – and most actively resist – attempts to bring international attention to their violations of these treaties.[5]

The pattern of increased formalization and bureaucratization of inter-state structures parallels the evolution of the modern state. Just as we saw with the rise of the modern national state, we see that social movements have had a similar relationship to global institutions as they do to national ones. They have pressed for the expansion of global institutions to establish citizens' rights and to promote and protect social welfare, and they have reinforced these institutions by making appeals to international authorities and norms. This process parallels the strategy of U.S. civil rights activists, who appealed to federal authorities and the U.S. Constitution against repressive state and local officials. And as states move political decisions into transnational political arenas, we find more and more evidence that social movements are adapting their strategies to respond to –if not to affect -- these shifts in the locus of authority.

Scholars who have examined the ways social movements make use of international political arenas in their struggles have used a variety of concepts to describe

how internationalization affects movements' mobilizing prospects. Marks and McAdam, for instance, describe it as a system of "multi-level governance" arguing that,

> Whereas the classic nation-state tended to define the 'structure of political opportunities' for all challenging groups, the emergence of a multi-level polity means that movements are increasingly likely to confront highly idiosyncratic opportunity structures defined by that unique combination of governmental bodies (at all levels) which share decision making authority over the issues of interest to the movement. So instead of the rise of a single new social movement form, we are more apt to see the development and proliferation of multiple movement forms keyed to inherited structures and the demands of mobilization in particular policy areas. (1996:119)

Rothman and Oliver (1999) use the notion of "nested political opportunity structures," where "[l]ocal political opportunity structures are embedded in national political opportunity structures, which are in turn embedded in international political opportunity structures" (p. 43; see also Boyer and Hollingsworth 1997:470), creating possibilities for complex patterns of relations among actors seeking political influence. Tarrow (2001) sees a "composite polity," whereby international agreements add another overlapping layer to an already existing national polity, creating "opportunities for coalitions of actors and states to formulate common positions and overcome their diversity and dispersion to exploit its political opportunities" (pp. 243-44).

The key point here is that as decisions of national governments become increasingly subject to political processes beyond national borders, existing structures designed to provide for public input and accountability can no longer insure democratic governance. We must therefore understand the global political system as a set of inter-connected and inter-dependent national polities linked by a growing array of international institutions. As the international political system expands and exerts more influence on

people's everyday experiences, we see intensified demands for enhanced democracy in global institutions. Social movements have increasingly cultivated transnational alliances in order to enhance their influence in shaping the structures of global regulation and accountability (e.g., Clark 2003; Foster and Anand 1999; Fox and Brown 1998; Khagram, Riker, and Sikkink 2002; Smith, Chatfield, and Pagnucco 1997).

Social movements have long been involved in struggles to define the global political context and to support and expand international law. Throughout history, social movement actors have pressed governments to adopt new and different approaches to the world outside their borders. We now take for granted the idea that slavery is something that no society should allow, that governments engaged in warfare must adhere to some minimal standards of human decency, and that the world's sea beds are the common inheritance of all people. Without the tireless efforts of a relatively small number of dedicated citizen advocates, governments are unlikely to have agreed to these formal rules that limit their sovereignty (e.g., Chatfield 1997; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Levering 1997). More recently, social movement pressures have led to the adoption of important new treaties such as the International Convention to Ban Land Mines and the International Criminal Court (e.g., Glasius 2002; Price 1998; J. Smith forthcoming). Few analysts would disagree that without the concerted efforts of citizens' groups around the world, neither of these treaties would have been adopted. And despite continued opposition from the United States, both treaties were among the fastest to enter into force, setting new speed records in the evolution of international law. Transnational social movements have proved an important antidote to the glacial pace of many inter-governmental negotiations.

In addition to pressing for new laws that might limit and constrain state action, social movements play key roles to bring pressure on governments to comply with international norms and standards. Keck and Sikkink (1998) refer to this as the "boomerang effect," where citizens finding their governments unresponsive to domestic pressures appeal to international allies and institutions to bring international pressure onto their governments. Without such citizen efforts to engage 'boomerangs' in many places around the world, the correspondence of national practice with international human rights and other norms would be very weak indeed. Key international human rights bodies rely upon civil society groups to "name and shame" governments into complying with human rights norms. The boomerang process contributes to the "domestication" of international law (J. Smith forthcoming; Tarrow 2005). We should note, however, that these global-local pressures can also work in the other direction. For example, Stewart's analysis (2005) of an indigenous Guatemalan movement for the proper burial of victims of a political massacre indicate that local transnational activism can bring pressure to bear on global institutions, such as the World Bank, in addition to local governments.

Cultural Globalization

Global integration has important influences on the cultures and collective identities of communities everywhere. For instance, the extensive flow of information about diverse cultures helps encourage an appreciation for the diversity and richness of different people's histories and traditions. It can also foster perceptions of relative deprivation and rising expectations as global marketing promotes images of consumption pattern that eludes vast portions of the world's population. This helps fuel defensive

responses from groups that perceive such information as threatening to their own cultural practices and identities (Barber 1995).

At the same time as it poses very real threats to many cultural traditions, the expansion of what might be called a global culture or at least a global media market also facilitates transnational dialogue and communication of all sorts. It helps create common grievances and reference points and shared sets of ideas upon which social movements and other groups can build. To unite individuals from very diverse political and cultural backgrounds, social movements must cultivate some shared ideologies and identities that help define a joint purpose and form a basis for trust and solidarity. Transnational associations cultivate group identities that transcend the geographic ones defined by national states. They encourage people, for instance, to emphasize their identity with their profession (i.e, the International Sociological Association), their hobby (i.e., the International Chess Club), or their political views (i.e., People's Global Action) over political nationalities. And important mobilizations have taken place in recent decades among diverse indigenous peoples around the world (Brysk 2000; Passy 1999). Indeed, many participants in these groups find that they have far more in common with the other members of the group than they do with many compatriots (Minkoff 1997a; J. Smith 1998).

Cultural globalization is therefore reinforced by both economic and political processes, and it helps provide a foundation upon which both of those processes build. While this chapter emphasizes the more structural aspects of globalization, it must be said that the cultural materials – the ideas, traditions, practices, and identities—that constitute culture have important influences on the processes we examine here. And indeed these

cultural artifacts are shaped by the broader institutions and structures discussed throughout the chapter (Boli and Thomas 1999; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Meyer 2003). Of particular importance is the notion that transnational processes and interactions are helping to generate new ideas of citizenship and loyalty that are challenging traditional, nationally-bounded identities. These provide important cultural foundations for transnational social movement mobilization.

Contextualizing the State

It is increasingly clear that the political contexts within particular states cannot be understood independently of that state's relations to other actors in the global system. There has been fairly extensive debate about the relative importance of global, as opposed to national, structures and institutions on the trajectories of social movements (e.g., Imig and Tarrow 2001; Koopmans and Statham 1999a; Laxer and Halperin 2003). Numerous analysts caution against arguments suggesting that a growth in global level institutions and policies signals the demise of the national state (e.g., Tarrow, 1998a). Some also show that earlier eras of global integration represented comparable or even greater levels of international trade and investment, questioning whether today's globalization is fundamentally new or different (Hanagan 2002; Laxer and Halperin 2003).

Without denying the continued importance of states, we emphasize the idea that the complex web of global relations has significant impacts on state structures and capacities, and this, in turn, influences the possibilities for movement mobilization and impact. Global institutions, structures, and processes are simultaneously shaping both states and other political actors, including social movements (and vice versa). Global institutions

affect not only the political and legal contexts that define opportunities and constraints for states and all other actors, but they also influence the collective identities of those actors. Thus, the practices of states vis-à-vis their own citizens are increasingly defined in global terms (e.g., Reimann 2002; Sassen 1998). Moreover, the notion of a state itself is irrelevant without an inter-state context of other states able to recognize the rights and legitimacy of a given national authority. Collectivities define themselves in terms of broader sets of relationships, and an inter-state system provides the context that encourages and facilitates the elaboration of both national and transnational identities (Boli and Thomas 1999). As Buss and Hermann conclude,

> To dismiss transnational activism as relevant only in terms of domestic politics overlooks the extent to which international law and policy are important realms in their own right. The 'international' is more than just the space 'outside' of the domestic. It has taken on a significance as, among other things, a site of struggle over the shape and meaning of social relations in the context of global change. (2003:134)

Gay Seidman's analysis of anti-apartheid and labor activism leads her to conclude that activists are capable of articulating multiple identities in the course of their struggles, or "shifting the ground" on which they work, moving quite easily across national borders. The fact that many conflicts are oriented around national political structures is merely an artifact of the institutional arrangements in which people are embedded:

> […] the institutional fact that international bodies are generally composed of national representatives forces potentially global identities into national frames. But it need not blind us to the possibility that activists might under other circumstances frame their concerns more globally. (2000:347)

While recognizing how global relations have transformed the nature of the state over time, we must also avoid another conceptual pitfall of thinking that global politics *must* take place in transnational contexts. Looking at women's activism in India Subranamiam and her colleagues found that analyses of the global downplay the extent to which globally relevant politics occur in local settings:

> [Although] global processes are often viewed as taking place in a world context, above nation states, networks can be anchored between and across all borders (villages, districts, states, and nations) involving actors and groups at the grassroots. (Subramaniam, Gupte, and Mitra 2003:335)

These observations,[6] suggest that we must relax our traditional notions of borders and instead see states as just a bundle of comparatively dense networks of relations that has a variety of diverse, and expanding, ties to similar national networks and to other transnational actors around the world. This networked, multi-layered political structure provides the context in which social movements, states, and other political actors contend. As Tilly (1984; 1990) found in his research on the rise of the modern state, it is these contentious interactions that are constantly shaping and re-shaping social institutions at the local, national, and global levels. Thus, through their interactions with states and other global actors, social movements are helping to shape the course of globalization—even if the results aren't completely consistent with movement aims.

III. From Organizations to Mobilizing Structures

Another key concept in structural approaches to social movements is the notion of *mobilizing structures*. This refers to the formal and informal organizations and networks

that facilitate routine communication and coordination among groups of people. Early research in this tradition emphasized the importance of formal organizations --or social movement organizations or SMOs-- to the development of social movements (McCarthy and Zald 1973;1977). While important debates have been waged in the literature on the tensions between the demands of building organizations and challenging predominant power relations,[7] most analysts accept that without some effort to organize, no movement can mobilize a sustained flow of resources and energy towards social change efforts.

Research in this area shows that SMOs have become routine and enduring features of the modern political landscape, contributing to what scholars have referred to as a "movement society." As we discuss in more detail below, the movement society refers to the increased prevalence in modern societies of formal and professionally staffed organizations advocating for social and political change (Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Tarrow 1998b). While social movement organizations have become more prevalent and professional, they still vary tremendously along a number of important dimensions. This variation affects both the audiences an SMO can reach as well as the likelihood that a given organization or movement will be successful in realizing its goals. For instance, organizations adopt more or less formal structures, work at different levels (e.g., local, national), depend upon more or less volunteer labor, and have differing access to the resources they need for their work (Edwards and Marullo 1995, 2003; Edwards and McCarthy 2004; McCarthy and Wolfson 1996).

In addition, different movements and organizations vary in their strategic approaches to policy processes. While some engage formal political institutions by mobilizing voters or lobbying policymakers, others engage in "outsider" strategies such

as public demonstrations or civil disobedience, and many groups use some combination of conventional and protest forms of political action. Cross-nationally, we find even more variation in how movements are organized, and this variation is shaped in part by the formal political institutions that define the possibilities for political mobilization as well as by historical and cultural traditions. For example, in authoritarian settings like Kenya and China we find pro-democracy advocacy emerging through organizations and activities framed in environmental terms (Economy 2004; Michaelson 1994), whereas movements in core countries tend to form professional social movement organizations specifically devoted to their social change aims. Another important organizational difference seems to parallel class rather than national variation, as social movements for the poor may tend to be larger and more formal and hierarchical in structure than those of middle class activists (e.g., Lichterman 1996; Polletta 2001; Wood 2005).

The concept of mobilizing structures takes the focus away from organizations specifically devoted to promoting social change (SMOs) to emphasize the roles that groups such as churches, unions, and others not explicitly focused on political advocacy play in most social movements. It has also sensitized scholars to the ways particular organizations or clusters of organizations (known as "populations") relate to each other and to their environments as they struggle to maintain their organization and promote social change (Hannan and Freeman 1977; McPherson and Rotolo 1996; Minkoff 1995, 1997b). This has led many analysts to include in their analyses a range of other types of less formal groupings as well as formal organizations that are not explicitly devoted to the aims of a movement. Especially in repressive contexts, the key organizational structures and networks that are engaged to challenge authorities are unlikely to be

explicit in their oppositional stance. So, for instance, opposition to authoritarian regimes in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and South Africa emerged from religious institutions (Borer 1998; Chilton 1995; Mueller 1999; C. Smith 1996; Thomas 2001).

Successful movements are not necessarily those that generate their own organizations but rather they are ones that compete successfully for adherents within multi-organizational fields (Campbell 2005). By mobilizing constellations of diverse organizations and networks in society, social movements help to amplify the voices of less powerful groups by aligning their interests and issues with a broader public agenda (e.g., McCarthy, Smith, and Zald 1996). Successful movements are thus those that find their way into what we might call the structures of everyday life (Wuthnow 1998).

A variety of conditions – ranging from overt political repression to far more subtle developments such as shifting party structures or living and working patterns—reduce the time and space most citizens have to join political organizations. Thus, movements must work against the tide to convince people that particular problems are both urgent and subject to change. To convey such notions, movements must reach people within their daily routines of earning a living and raising families. By cultivating connections to groups such as labor unions, parent-teacher associations, churches, and other civic associations, SMOs can reach a much broader audience than they otherwise could. Increasingly, both activists and analysts use the term "networks" to characterize the broad and dense relationships among diverse types of organizations coming together around particular goals (della Porta 2005; Diani 1995, 2003; Escobar 2003; Escobar and Alvarez 1992; Rucht 2004). The notions of fluidity and contingency that networks imply shift the focus of research away from questions about whether or not organizations help or hinder

movements to questions about how particular sets of relationships affect possibilities for social change.

Early Scholarship in Social Movement Organizations

The earliest scholars of collective action focused on the collective psychology and irrational actions of crowd behavior at political protest rallies. This scholarship was seen as critical of the activists, painting a portrait of irrational actors led by their emotions alone. In the 1970s, a handful of scholars set about to correct this partial portrait of collective behavior by documenting the rational, even bureaucratic, aspects of social movement activity. For example, Turner and Killian (1957) documented various types of social movements, and Killian (1964) argues that successful social movements become institutionalized in some way.

Resource Mobilization

Against this backdrop of debate about the emotionality of social movements, McCarthy and Zald (1973) borrowed from rational choice theory in their seminal work that outlines resource mobilization theory. Resource mobilization argues that social movements in the contemporary period have become professionalized. They see social movements as part of the flow of normal politics, with cycles of protest and quiescence. They demonstrate that much of the work of social movements is done by paid professionals in formal organizations, whose jobs include collecting, channeling and managing money, resources, and time. Their emphasis on social movement organizations meant that, rather than considering social action from the perspective of the individual participant, we can understand social movements to be the result of "social movement

entrepreneurs" mobilizing individual participation by fostering discontent and channeling it into formal social movement organizations.

Resource mobilization theory focuses on the material resources, organizational capacities (including skills and networks), and tactics that enable organizations to mobilize support to address these grievances. They develop a framework for understanding movement success as a function of the resources available to social movement actors. Access to external resources—money, media attention, institutional ties, is considered at least as important to movement emergence or social movement outcomes as any individual processes. Gamson (1975) provided an important test of these propositions by analyzing the outcomes of various social movements. He examined 53 "challenging groups" in the United States, and found that success entailed groups with reformist objectives that make use of available channels of political participation, such as the electoral system and political lobbying, were more successful than those who took to the streets. Lipsky (1968) posited that while powerful groups can engage in direct confrontation, relatively powerless groups used protest as a leverage to increase their bargaining ability. Protest groups were successful to the extent that they could gain the support of "reference publics" who would join the conflict in ways favorable to their protest goals.

Oberschall (1973) similarly emphasized the role of material and organizational resources in mobilizing people and channeling their action. In his analysis of the United States civil rights movement, he demonstrated that sympathetic third parties, such as northern whites and political insiders, were important to the effectiveness of civil disobedience as a protest tactic. Jenkins and Perrow's study (1977) of three farm worker

union movements showed that support from third parties, such as labor unions and liberal interest groups were integral to movement success.

Mobilizing Structures

Resource mobilization's focus on the institutionalization of social movement activity has led researchers to consider the role of social movement organizations in fostering mobilization, facilitating activism and producing social change. Debates in this area, however, have stressed the inherent tensions between movements' need for flexibility and the demands of organizational maintenance (e.g., Oliver 1989). Scholars have also pointed to the wide variety of organizational forms that movement actors have used to build their struggles, noting how these differ from conventional assumptions about formal organizations (Ferree and Mueller 2004; Marwell and Oliver 1993; Staggenborg and Taylor 2005). Also important is the central importance of alliance-building to social movements' work, which contributes to their relatively amorphous and variable structures. Thus, the concept of mobilizing structures has been applied to help sensitize analysts to the importance of both formal and informal organizations or networks to most social movements. The mobilizing structures concept emphasizes the fact that most social movements combine diverse sets of actors –some of which are explicitly organized around movement goals and others that are organized for other social purposes (McCarthy 1996). How these diverse forms combine to form particular movements, moreover, is largely affected by the broader political context (Kriesi 1996). This concept was particularly useful in helping scholars explore relationships between the professional social movement organizations that had become increasingly dominant in

the United States context and other organized and informal elements of movements. Professional SMOs are formal organizations that tend to have paid staff members to help organize fundraising, lobbying, and protest actions such as letter-writing campaigns (McCarthy and Zald 1973). Such organizations themselves can be key agents of social change, even when they have only limited participation by grassroots supporters. They can help sustain movement foundations and develop movement critiques even in times of movement abeyance (Rupp and Taylor 1987).

Such professional organizations are by no means the only example of mobilizing structures. Other classic accounts of mobilizing structures in social movements include Sara Evans' analysis (1980) of the informal friendship networks among women in the civil rights and New Left movements that gave rise to the women's liberation movement, and numerous examples of the role that black churches played in fostering the civil rights movement (McAdam 1982; Morris 1981, 1984). As we discuss below, global justice activists are inventing new, networked structures to support diverse forms of activism and movement goals. It is widely agreed that the organizational capacities of these various mobilizing structures deserve the attention of social movements scholars.

Ironically, despite resource mobilization's explicit emphasis on the organizational dynamics of social movement activity, social movements scholars have paid relatively little attention to the systematic study of organizations themselves (McCarthy and Zald 2002). And most work tends to be case studies of particular movement groups. What literature exists tends to focus on the level of formal organizational structure in social movements, as well as changes in organizational forms over time (e.g. Rucht 1999; Staggenborg 1988; Voss and Sherman 2000). This scholarship has found that, while

many social movements do become "professionalized," meaning that they move from informal, grassroots organizations to centralized, bureaucratized organizations over time, there are numerous examples to the contrary (Kriesi 1996; Edwards and Foley 2003; Edwards and McCarthy 2004). Further, professionalization is not a singular process, and the degree of formality and centralization can vary. There is often a difference, for example, between the level of bureaucratization at higher organizational levels, such as a national office, than at local levels (Edwards and Foley 2003; Oliver and Furman 1989).

Organizations in recent scholarship

More recent work has sought to bridge the fields of social movement studies with the sociology of organizations. A small number of scholars have shown how analyses of organizational populations can contribute to our understanding of various dimensions of social movement organizational dynamics (McCarthy et al. 1988; Minkoff 1993). The emergence, growth and decline of social movement organizations have been important topics of study for social movement scholars (e.g., Zald and Garner 1994). Another important area of inquiry has been the relationship between social movement organizations and social movements. Studies of social movements over time often show that even when organizations are small or absent, the larger movement can carry on (e.g., Taylor 1989). Nonetheless, most scholars agree that social movement organizations are important centers for social movement activity.

Some scholarship has moved beyond studies of organizational populations to draw attention to the embeddedness of social movement organizations in various social, political, and institutional contexts. A recent collection explores various connections

between the fields of social movements and organizational studies (Davis et al. 2005). This work emphasizes the need to account for broader organizational "fields," in which numerous organizations operate, cooperate, and compete in order to understand social movement dynamics. By examining social movements as players within these organizational fields, scholars can recognize the diversity of organizational forms within social movements, the response of social movement organizations to shifts in political contexts, and the relationships among social movement organizations.

For example, examining the case of the environmental movement in North Carolina, Andrews and Edwards (2005) examine the relationship between an organization's position in the field and a number of aspects of their activism, such as the tactics they choose and whether they participate in coalitions with other organizations. They consider local organizations' affiliations with national groups, and their willingness to form coalitions with other local groups. They find that local organizations are more likely to be affiliated with a national organization than a state or regional organizations, but that they are less likely to ally themselves with organizationally distinct groups that share similar interests than state and regional groups are. This finding suggests that the field of environmental organizations is structured in such a way that inhibits coalitions between local groups, but facilitates cooperation between mid-level state and regional groups.

A number of social movement case studies analyze the fields of activism as well. One recent example is Elizabeth Armstrong's (2002) analysis of the lesbian and gay movement in San Francisco. Armstrong demonstrates that the emergence of a number of identity-based organizations in the 1970s was reflective of a new social movement field

crystallizing around the concept of gay and lesbian identity, as opposed to the more radical New Left ideologies that previous organizations held. Similarly, Raka Ray's (1999) analysis of women's movement groups in India surveys the fields of activism in which movement organizations are positioned. This work shows the utility of the concept of organizational fields for understanding how organizational identities and tactics develop over time, through interactions with movement allies and opponents. The field-level analysis highlights a promising if under-explored approach to understanding the inter-organizational dynamics that influence movement activities. It also points to important relationships between structural and cultural approaches to the study of social movements.

Other scholars also consider the increasing importance of coalition-building among organizations, including the factors that foster coalitions among movement organizations. In her analysis of six decades of student activism on college campuses, Nella Van Dyke (2003) finds that movement organizations are more likely to work across social movement boundaries in the presence of a threat that affects multiple movements, while they are more likely to work together within movements in the presence of local threats. Gillian Murphy's analysis (2005) of the interdependencies of movement organizations suggests that there are unintended consequences to coalitions, however. She argues that increased coalition activity suppresses the emergence of new organizations, even as it optimizes the distribution of resources among coalitions. Coalitions are a particularly important aspect of transnational activism, which we discuss below.

IV. Globalization and Mobilizing Structures

Studies of social movements in different parts of the world have generated important new questions and insights into the factors shaping social movements. For instance, why do movements in distant places tend to adopt similar forms, tactics, and ideologies? And why do we see an increasing tendency of activists from different countries to come together around common struggles? Marco Giugni (2002) summarizes three explanations for this. The first is that changes at the global level—such as international economic and political integration—generate common sets of complaints (e.g., loss of jobs due to trade competition) and targets (e.g., transnational corporations or international institutions) around which movements mobilize. Second, global political coordination has produced similar government structures within states (Meyer et al. 1997), something analysts call "structural affinity." Because the organization of governments is more similar across different national contexts, activists can more readily share useful knowledge and experiences across national borders. Third, the proliferation of international exchanges of all sorts—including international travel, communication, and expanding use of the internet—greatly enhances opportunities for citizens in all countries to communicate with others around the world and to share ideas and experiences about political participation, among other activities. Global inter-connectedness also increases the vulnerability of governments to international pressures.

Global integration thus affects both the ways people engage in political participation and state responses to popular pressures. Increasing flows of information and ideas as well as growing numbers of ties between people and organizations from diverse nations affect the character of societies and governments everywhere. First, they

have helped produce a global emergence of what analysts have called a "movement society."[8] Once thought to be sporadic and short-term forms of political involvement, social movements are proving to be more permanent fixtures in all democratic political systems. A movement society perspective understands social movements as central to politics and to the evolution of social and political institutions at national and global levels.

Second, as we discussed above, increasing volumes of social, political, and economic interactions that cross national boundaries challenges the abilities of governments to affect conditions within their borders while making it increasingly difficult to separate national from global policy processes. As each nation's activities have more obvious impacts beyond their national borders, more decisions that once were the sole domain of national governments are now subject to international pressures and regulations. Social movements both contribute to and respond to these two inter-related developments.

[INSERT BOX 1: **Transnational Social Movement Strategies in Multi-Level Politics**]

A Global Movement Society?

According to Mayer Zald, key characteristics of today's movement society include "the growth of a relatively continuous social movement sector, the development of [social movement organizations] as enduring features of the society, the professionalization of movement leadership, and the transition from a search for [social

movement] membership in the polity, to the search for specific policy outcomes" (1987:321). In other words, we see an ongoing and fairly stable mobilization of people and resources away from more conventional modes of political participation and towards more protest-oriented forms (Norris 2002). At the same time, movements are taking on a more formally structured character, adapting themselves to become more stable features of the institutional environments in which they operate (Soule and Earl 2005).

A movement society perspective thus anticipates that protest or movement politics will only become more central to the operation of our political institutions. Long- term shifts in the structure of our economies and political systems—such as urbanization, expansion of the scope and scale of government, increases in professionalization and in the centrality of information to economic and political life—make it easier for potential challengers to mobilize resources and people to promote social change (McCarthy and Zald 1987). At the same time, however, they also enhance the capacities of governments and corporate actors to resist changes that threaten their economic and political interests (McMichael 2003).

Because states are embedded within an increasingly dense web of relationships to other states, they have adopted—not always voluntarily—similar ways of organizing social relations and state functions (Meyer et al. 1997). This "structural affinity" has allowed for the development of a globalized movement society, since social change advocates everywhere find that they face similar conditions within their national contexts, or that the targets of localized grievances are inter-state institutions (Giugni 2002; Walton and Seddon 1994). The need to develop strategies and organizational resources in order to confront modern states helps generate modularity among social movement forms that

defies national and cultural differences (e.g., Tarrow 2005; Traugott 1995). And as the world capitalist economy unifies the world labor market through processes such as proletarianization, urbanization, industrialization, professionalization, and casualization, it structures both the capacities of diverse groups to resist exploitation as well as the specific conditions they are likely to protest (Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000). Below we'll explore in more detail how large-scale changes in inter-state social institutions and processes have helped shape a global, movement society.

Social Movements and Economic Change

We discussed above how military competition among states contributed to the expansion of state bureaucracies that could generate revenues through taxation and provide a growing range of services for citizens. States' need for revenues made them dependent upon favorable ties to economic elites, and most analyses of state formation treat the character of relations between state authorities and capitalists as central to the emergence and stability of democracy (e.g., Markoff 1996; Moore 1966; Tilly 1978; Wolf 1982; cf. Centeno 2002).[9]

Today it is largely taken for granted that the state should be involved in promoting the national economy, and today this often means that governments should help increase the global competitiveness of their "national" corporations (McMichael 2003; Moody 1997; Robinson 2004; Sklair 2001). But this assumption has not always existed, and it arose out of competitive interactions among globalizing states, international organizations and their officers, advocates of neoliberal globalization, and other organized social interests such as labor and other groups. Social movement challengers have long been

involved in struggles to define the role of government and the character of local and national economies, and we have noted how they are increasingly mobilizing across national boundaries to transform global economic relations. At the same time, the policies designed to encourage economic development and to aid in the development of national states have also affected possibilities for social movements. In particular, both national states and the economies they fostered depended upon mass media and education for their success. And these same institutions play central roles in our attempts to understand social movement development as well.

Mass Media. Benedict Anderson's work (1991) highlights the centrality of the promotion of a mass print media to the development of the modern nation state. He argues that the introduction of the printing press enabled emerging state authorities to cultivate national "imagined communities," such as France, where only locally defined communities had previously existed. For people to feel some connection with remote others, they needed some common bond, and print media helped nurture such bonds. Together with systems of roadways that made direct contact more likely across groups within a given set of territorial boundaries, the print media helped expand people's sense of community to a wider, national level.[10]

Sidney Tarrow builds further on this notion of imagined communities to demonstrate how the print media also shaped the development of social movements. He argues that newspapers and journals allowed citizens with no direct contact to cultivate a sense of solidarity and shared experiences that made collective action more likely across very loosely connected networks. Moreover, print media contributed to a political leveling of society. It fostered greater scrutiny of political leaders who were once seen as

"divine" rulers, and it expanded popular access to knowledge. In a sense, just as states were encouraging people to think of themselves as part of imagined national communities, social movement leaders were articulating other imagined identities around the shared experiences of exploitation and resistance (Tarrow 1998b).

The mass media represent an important site of struggle between those who benefit from the existing order and those who seek its transformation. To the extent that global processes are fostering the emergence of a global economy and political institutions, we would expect the mass media to be playing a similar role in cultivating shared assumptions and values as a way of fostering global markets and commitment to global institutions such as the European Union. We find what Leslie Sklair (2001) identifies as "consumerist elites," including merchants and mass media, to be an essential element of a "transnational capitalist class" that promotes a global capitalist order. Movements also recognize the importance of the mass media, even if they don't have equal access to its most visible forms.

Today, the internet has amplified the traditional media forms and has become an important tool in this same process of disseminating information and fostering communication that both promotes the aims of governments while giving rise to various challenges to them. At the same time, the increasing privatization of the mass media reduces the space for programming that serves non-commercial, public purposes. Public concerns that directly threaten commercial interests, such as global warming and public health, receive limited and biased coverage in corporate-owned media.[11] Although the internet has helped create many new openings for public dialogue and communication, access to this technology varies widely cross-nationally and within countries. While the

internet has facilitated access to information by people in poor countries and communities, these same groups have relatively less access to the technology and high-speed connections needed to make effective use of this medium (Bissio 1999). And increasing amounts of online material is now available only to paid subscribers, further exacerbating rich-poor inequalities in information access. Moreover, legislation like the U.S. Telecommunications Act of 1996 has helped centralize broadcast media in that country and constrained the diversity of and popular access to mainstream media sources (Herman 1995; Herman and Chomsky 1988; Kimball 1994; McChesney 1999). More broadly, international trade agreements on services threaten national governments' ability to influence media content and accessibility.

Education and Professionalization in the "Information Society." As governments have become involved in an increasing array of complex issues, and as global integration increases the complexity of economic and political life, the demand for expertise increases. Thus, states are increasingly faced with the challenge of educating their populations to build a skilled and globally competitive workforce. The professionalization and information-driven needs of government can undermine democracy and the prospects for popular mobilization by turning policy decisions into technical matters in which only experts can be involved. But most proponents of democracy would argue that many questions in which technical complexity is used as an excuse to limit public involvement in policy decisions are in fact political rather than technical ones. Experts can provide information relevant to policy debates—such as evaluations of evidence about global warming or of the effects of global trade on employment patterns-- but they do not deserve a stronger voice than other citizens in the

fundamentally political questions about how the benefits or risks associated with different policy choices should be distributed (e.g., Coleman and Porter 2000; Markoff and Montecinos 1993).

While the information needs of modern states can serve to exclude popular groups from policy arenas, an important consequence of education and professionalization within contemporary societies is the emergence of professionally-oriented associations that cultivate new, post-material identities and alliances that don't privilege national boundaries (Inglehart and Baker 2000; Melucci 1989). The expertise and professional credentials of such groups can counter the legitimacy and authority of governments (Moore 1996). Some analysts discuss the growing role of "epistemic communities" – or "networks of knowledge-based experts" in global policy decisions (Haas 1992).

A highly educated workforce is likely to be more independent and less deferential to state authorities than a less educated one. Educated citizens are better able to independently collect and analyze information and are less easily swayed by appeals to traditional charismatic authority. The availability of information and skills for analysis also makes governance more transparent, even in authoritarian settings. Thus, in contemporary society especially, political influence depends upon the effective mobilization of information (Florini 2003; Sikkink 2002).

The implications of these changes for social movements are numerous. First, the demand in government and the economy for highly skilled workers means that skills related to the mobilization and dissemination of information will be widely available in the population. Thus, movements mobilizing around highly technical problems can depend upon a certain level of knowledge within the population they seek to influence,

and they also can hope to recruit activists with expertise related to the problems around which they are organizing. As Zald notes,

> The skills of networking, of meeting notification, of developing newsletters, have spread quite remarkably in the society. Networking, fund raising, and organizational techniques for utilizing the media are all transformed from techniques learned on the job to formally transmitted skills. (1987:329)

Sidney Verba and his colleagues also found a relationship between the skills people learned in the course of their everyday work routines and their participation in democratic politics (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995).

Of course, as many have observed, the distribution of professional skills is by no means equitable, and we can expect to find higher concentrations of these capabilities among more privileged classes and groups. Moreover, given the stratification in the global labor market, we can also expect a higher concentration of such skills among populations in the richer countries of the global North. But Verba and his colleagues also found that, outside the workplace, participation in public associations such as churches and unions helped enhance people's skills for political participation. A wide range of studies show that people who are active in any form of association are also more involved in politics (e.g., Schofer and Fourcade-Gournchas 2001). This is due in part to the impacts these groups have not only on people's understandings of issues and access to information, but also on the skills they have in, for instance, public speaking, computing, policy analysis, coalition-building, etc. (Baiocchi 2003; Norris 2002; Verba et al. 1995).

In sum, the activities of governments aimed at promoting economic development expands the role of scientific professionals in government while also enhancing the pool of resources available to potential challengers. Today's economies depend upon the rapid

flow of information across national boundaries, and they demand a highly educated workforce. Structures that facilitate rapid communication and the development of technical skills also provide a foundation that citizens can use to mobilize interests that may counter those of economic and political elites. And in the course of employing these resources in political contexts, challengers help transform political processes and institutions.

Social Movements and Civil Society

While social movements are shaped by global political and economic changes, they also help transform the social contexts in which they operate (Rochon 1998). Political activism, according to Pippa Norris, is being reinvented around the world through the creation of new forms of association, new repertoires, and new targets for political action (Norris, 2002). Urbanization, education, communication, and other changes described above have contributed to the emergence of new values that are impacting political participation around the world (Curtis, Baer, and Grabb 2001; Inglehart and Baker 2000). Because these processes are global, they are producing parallel, although not identical, developments in different countries (Giugni 2002). To the extent that social movements help articulate and spread identities that challenge traditional loyalties (such as to national states or traditional political parties) and to the extent that they are active in promoting new forms of organizing and action, they are important catalysts in this "reinvention" of political action. Indeed, research on social movements shows that some protest tactics and movement actors become institutionalized (Meyer and Tarrow 1998a), that is, they become part of the "normal"

political process. Thus, the interactions between movements and more influential players in the policy process generate new ideas and forms of political action that shape subsequent action, organization, and policy (Kriesi 2004). So while movements might achieve relatively little in terms of their specific policy goals, they have, over time, exerted enormous influence over how we do politics today (e.g., Clemens 1996).

It is also important to remember that many different groups are seeking to mobilize popular support for their causes at any given time. While perhaps a majority of social movement actors work either directly or indirectly to advance democratic aims, we must keep in mind that anti-democratic movements adopt similar strategies and forms (Koopmans and Stratham 1999b). Indeed, the idea of a movement society" anticipates that practices that evolve within the context of social movements will become institutionalized. As they do, a wider range of political actors will employ them in attempts at political gain. Moreover, those that democratic movements challenge– including corporations, governments, and other social groups-- often appropriate ideas and action forms from progressive movements. Thus, we see corporate lobbyists engaging in efforts to demonstrate broad-based, "grassroots" support for policies they support by generating masses of public letters through "grass-tops" or "astroturf" campaigns (Faucheux 1995). And Nike has attempted (unsuccessfully) to appropriate its critics' approach by building its own website to criticize the company for allegedly producing such a superior product (Greenberg and Knight 2004). Corporate opponents of global agreements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions have employed similar strategies in order to prevent public mobilizations on environmental protection (McCright and Dunlap 2003). Thus, recent movement scholarship stresses the need to focus more

attention on *interactions* between social movements and their opponents than has been the case in much research.

A movement society perspective, in short, seeks to link broader social changes with everyday practices throughout society. It sensitizes analysts to how issues and actors are defined through their interactions with other actors. It helps us understand politics as an ever-changing process involving the articulation of conflicts and struggles to win favorable policy outcomes. It also embeds social conflicts within a context of a globally integrated economy, recognizing that global-level actors and forces have helped create similarities in organizational forms across national societies. Also, a global economy implies a globalized labor market, whereby more and more people around the world are increasingly subjected to similar opportunities and pressures. Indeed, thousands of workers from scores of countries may be linked through a single complex commodity chain controlled by one transnational corporation (Silver 2003).

A key argument we are making here is that the processes that have shaped the development of a "movement society" are not confined to individual nations, and we can identify global trends that support the development of an interconnected, global movement society. This society shapes the evolution of national and international political institutions. National polities are nested within a much broader system of institutional relations, and analysts and citizens must consider how this influences any given political conflict by providing potential for alliances, symbolic or material resources, and/or political leverage for both challengers and authorities. Thus, we must view states as embedded within a broader network of transnational relationships to other states, international institutions, and other global actors. These complex relationships

shape possibilities for movement emergence and impact, and we can also argue that the movement society itself is a global phenomenon.

Networks & Globalization

Another way we see globalization impacting social movements is in the increased recognition of—if not the reliance upon—networks as a form of social organization. While networks are certainly not new, globalization may be enhancing their prevalence and making actors more self-conscious of this form of social relations. In the above section we discussed relations between globalization and the development of the social movement society because global processes have shaped fundamentally the ways people work, consume, socialize, and engage in political action. By linking production and consumption processes across geographic boundaries, global economic forces have led what were once highly varied communities to adopt similar forms of association and action. And the network form has thus been uniquely associated with globalization, since it adapts the modern formal bureaucratic organization to the demands placed on it by complex, rapidly changing, and highly uncertain environments (Castells 1996; Knoke 1990; Riles 2001). Thus, when scholars consider the mobilizing structures from which social change efforts are likely to emerge, they increasingly find themselves speaking in terms of "networks" of associations (Diani and McAdam 2003; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Khagram et al. 2002).

It is no coincidence that the concept of networks has gained prominence in the social sciences at the same time as we've seen a growing awareness of enhanced global interdependence and inter-connectedness. The evolution of modern political and social

institutions has generated new forms of organization that resist the rigid structures and formalities of traditional bureaucratic institutions. As Wuthnow (1998) argues, changes in the demands on people's time, on the built environments in which people live, and in the character of our social and political institutions have generated a greater reliance on "loose connections," that foster communication and trust. Uncertain and changing environments require organizational flexibility and innovation, and so organizations must maintain ties to other actors in order to maximize their access to relevant information (Campbell and Pedersen 2001; Powell 1990). Thus, organizational analyses must increasingly address the reality that contemporary organizations are likely to have more porous and flexible organizational boundaries.

Much social movement scholarship focuses on contentious interactions between social movements and authorities, often neglecting the importance of movement links to affinity groups, public bystanders, and third-party mediators for explaining conflict dynamics. As Rucht argues, "[t]hese linkages … should become part and parcel of social movement studies. It is time to abandon the simplified image of a two-party struggle between a (unified) movement and its (unified) opponent acting in some kind of a social vacuum" (2004:212-13). Mediators operate both within and across conflicting groups, frequently intervening to de-escalate conflicts, add new resources, or to broker relations between adversaries (Rucht 2004). Others, (e.g., Burstein et al. 1995; della Porta and Rucht 1995; Kriesi 2004; Kriesi et al. 1995; Rucht 1996) also argue for greater attention to the interplay between movements' "alliance" and "conflict" systems. Indeed, for most movements, cultivating allies that can help counteract the power of adversaries constitute the bulk of social change efforts (e.g., Diani 1995, 2004; Maney 2001; Mueller 1994;

Osa 2003; Polletta 2002; Rochon 1998; J. Smith forthcoming; Winston 2004; Wood 2004). We have comparatively little systematic evidence about changing relationships among actors in these broad social movement alliance and conflict systems.

As some of our earlier discussion suggests, recent research on social movements seems to be moving in the direction that Rucht prescribes, and we find greater attention to how informal networks of actors contribute to social conflict processes. Much of this work points to the need to understand more about how networks of organizations and individuals develop durable cooperative relationships (e.g., Anheier and Katz 2005; Bandy and Smith 2005; Diani and McAdam 2003; Gamson 2004; Katz and Anheier 2006). Demonstrating the need for more nuanced understandings of movement actors, Ferree and Mueller argued that "organizational repertoires may be broader, more strategic and more interconnected than dominant ways of conceptualizing social movements suggests" (2004:595). Staggenborg and Taylor (2005) show how conventional approaches to social movement analysis produced inaccurate claims about the women's movement.

Some researchers have focused explicitly on the importance of *networks* of individuals and organizations to social movement outcomes (e.g. Bennett forthcoming; Davis et al. 2005; Diani and McAdam 2003; Marwell and Oliver 1993; Passy 2003). For instance, Caniglia (2001) found that transnational environmental organizations with informal ties to international agencies played more central roles in transnational social movement networks by helping channel information and pressure among disconnected social actors. Demonstrating the particular importance of networking for transnational alliances, Stark and his colleagues found in a study of civil society groups in Hungary

that those with international links were comparatively more densely networked with local and national groups, suggesting that transnational associations may serve as brokers between international and more geographically proximate political arenas (Stark, Vedres, and Bruszt 2005). This finding resonates with one from a study of movement networks in Vancouver by Carroll and Ratner (1996), which found that groups working with a political economy and justice frame were more outward-oriented and connected to extra-local groups. Groups adopting other frames tended to remain more concentrated within their local geographic space. This may help explain why the global justice movement is undoubtedly the most widely visible and populous of transnational social movements. It also suggests that we should expect to find extensive networking going on within this movement, and even a cursory look at the literature confirms this (e.g., Adamovsky 2005; Bennett 2005; della Porta et al. 2006; Moghadam 2005).

Riles' study (2001) of transnational women's organizing at the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women highlights the centrality of the network as the recognized and legitimate form for transnational political work. She demonstrates how delegates at the UN Conference learned new skills through their ties to other participants in the Conference as well as how they brought new ideas and strategic proposals to local groups when they returned from the conference. The network form, Riles and others argue, is preferred for its ability to help people navigate across different levels of political engagement while affording them greater informational, material, and political resources than they could have as isolated individuals or groups.

The emergence of the network form of mobilization is, in short, closely linked with changes in the operation of governance institutions. As states shift their authority to

supranational institutions, devolve some authority to local governments, and privatize government functions, they fundamentally re-define the character of the state as well as the meaning of citizenship (Brysk and Shafir 2004; Markoff 2004). Thus, citizens active in social movements have worked to forge new types of relationships with government officials as they have sought to remedy grievances and improve social conditions for their constituents (Coleman and Wayland 2004; Korzeniewicz and Smith 2003). Advocates of social change have found that they must adapt the mobilizing structures they employ as globalization processes have fundamentally altered the allocation of political authority.

Research on transnational organizing in particular has shown that social change advocates often benefit from connections to international institutions and their agents. For instance, Jackie Smith's analysis (2005) of networking among transnational social movement organizations finds that the shape of networks is largely determined by institutional contexts defined at both regional and global levels. While there was some variation across different issue areas, for the most part, groups within particular world regions adopted network structures that maximized the institutional openings for their particular region. Lending further support to the claim that network structures among transnational social movement groups reflects broader institutional contexts is Wiest and Smith's finding (2006) that regional network ties were more likely in regions with larger numbers of regional inter-governmental organizations and treaties.

The emergence of routinized and fairly cooperative relationships between social movement actors and agents of governments may seem puzzling to some, although social movement scholars have long recognized that movement-government cooperation is often essential to their efforts to affect policy (McCarthy and Wolfson 1992). Some

analysts speak of the need for "networked governance" as an approach to managing the complex array of problems and actors under the jurisdiction of global institutions (United Nations 2004; World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization 2004). And analyzing civil society networks in Latin America, Korzeniewicz and Smith (2000, 2001, 2003) argue for a more self-conscious cultivation of "polycentric governance coalitions" to address the inequalities that have hampered development efforts in that region and elsewhere.

Many United Nations agencies– especially those working on the environment, development, disarmament, and public health—share the values and objectives of social movements, and many analysts see movement pressure as key to strengthening international norms and institutions by pressing states to adopt multilateral over unilateral approaches to foreign policy (Clark 2003; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Passy, 1999; Risse et al. 1999; Smith et al. 1997). Moreover, underlying the entire UN system is a commitment to values of equity, fairness, and participation--principles that motivate and lend legitimacy to a considerable amount of social movement activity. Although links with authorities always introduce risks that movements will be co-opted, such links can fundamentally alter unequal power relations by expanding the political access of relatively powerless groups. Thus, understanding transnational social movement dynamics requires attention to the extensive links between transnational social change groups and international institutions as well as the transnational networks of social movement and other civil society actors.

Our approach to this discussion of structural approaches to the study of social movements has emphasized the centrality of the national state to our efforts to understand

the causes and consequences of social movement emergence and impact. As a target of social movement pressure and an institution that shapes the distribution of resources and power in society, states are central to any social movement analysis. As global forces have altered the authority and structure of the national state, they have forced social movement actors to adapt their own organizing strategies accordingly. Thus, alongside the expansion of international institutions, we find an increasing reliance on networks by all groups seeking to operate transnationally. The network itself comprises the mobilizing structures from which social movements emerge. But networking as an activity becomes a form of agency whereby social change advocates might seek to enhance their political power by forging new alliances and other strategic ties.

VI. Unanswered questions

We chose to emphasize in this review our concern with how different conceptualizations of the state have shaped structural accounts of social movements. This emphasis grows from our recognition that our very notion of social movement is conceptually inseparable from the modern national state. National states both affect the distribution of power and resources in society and define possibilities for challenges from social movements. Therefore, social movement analysts should take into account the historical and geographic contexts in which relevant state actors are situated.

Despite the historical grounding of modern social movements in the era of the modern state, what is largely missing from much scholarship in social movements is attention to the possibility that the national state itself may be changing in fundamental ways, just as did the pre-national, competitive systems of warlords and localized sovereignties that were displaced by the national state during the 18th century.[12] Social

movement research is, by and large, state-centric (McMichael 2005). Much existing work assumes that social conflicts are contained within the boundaries of the national state. But if states, and social movements, were not always around in their current forms, why should we expect the forms we observe today to endure over the long-term? Structural analyses typically presume that change comes slowly and large structures have long-term impacts on social relations. But no one would argue that structures never change. Nevertheless, a considerable amount of debate has been generated over the rather simplistic question of whether an increase in global influences necessarily reduces the importance of the national state.

The implication in this dualism between globalism and the state is that the modern state is some unchanging entity that is in constant tension with forces of global integration. In reality, the national state can only exist in a global context that recognizes national sovereignty and certifies national governments as legitimate actors on the world stage. If national states only exist in relation with other states, then their structures have evolved in the course of interactions among states and other global actors. Thus, global embeddedness is not necessarily inversely related to the strength or viability of the national state. Furthermore, the nature of the state will continue to change as new actors emerge in the global arena and as power constellations among actors shift. Our discussion has sought to draw attention to possible conceptual limitations that might prevent us from seeing fundamental changes in how social movements relate to states and other forces in an increasingly interconnected global environment.

Given this analytical starting point, we offer some thoughts about questions that deserve greater attention from researchers working in the field of social movements and social change.

Political Contexts

- To understand the ways political contexts shape social movement dynamics, it is imperative that analysts try to account for the transnational influences that may be impinging on a given social conflict. National borders are in many ways arbitrary boundaries that reside more in our conceptual maps than in the real world where political actors operate. This is not to say that national policies and institutions don't matter, but rather that these are often shaped by transnational or global forces. By ignoring global influences on national political contexts we fail to appreciate fully the range of constraints and opportunities that define the political contexts in which social movements operate. Analysts should seek a more complete understanding of the important relationships between national and global level economic, cultural, and political processes. For instance, how does the embeddedness of the state within a broader system of global political and economic relationships affect social movement mobilization and policy impact? How does the position of a given state in the broader world system define alliance opportunities for social movements within that state?
- By taking a global perspective, we quickly notice that recent years have witnessed a growing and widespread sense of disillusion with democratic institutions and the prospects for democratization in the global south. There are expanding

discussions of a "legitimacy crisis" in global institutions, as states transfer authority and capacity to international organizations without developing a corresponding structure to allow democratic input and accountability (Bello 2003; Markoff 1999; McMichael 2003). At the same time, national democratic institutions are also losing the confidence of citizens (Norris 1999). This signals a vulnerability of global institutions that could either generate new nationalist mobilizations or contribute to expanded calls for global democratization (cf. Barber 1995). We can readily point to evidence that both nationalist and pro-democracy mobilizations are happening in different parts of the world, and we need to better understand what shapes each one as well as how each affects the broader political context.

- Political contexts at national levels are increasingly influenced by inter-state institutional factors. But we need more research to assess how transnational political contexts impact social movement dynamics within and across states. For instance, in recent years, we have seen a turn towards more confrontational relationships between social movements and global institutions. Why has this change has happened, and does it signal changes in the configurations of opportunities at the global level, or does it result more from changing activist perceptions of these?
- As scholars puzzle over the structural aspects of social movements under increasing globalization, one of the questions that movements pose is the extent to which mobilizing structures can be transferred to other political contexts. As activists themselves endeavor to extend the reach of their movements beyond

national borders, it is worth considering which institutional resources can be moved from one country to another, and which mobilizing structures can be replicated or approximated in other locations. Scholars have only begun asking questions about the relative transferability of structural aspects of social movements at this point, and it is sure to be an important ongoing pursuit among scholars and activists alike.

- Finally, in the post-9/11 era, it is crucial that social movement scholars consider the long-term impacts of the "war on terror" (or as it is now called the "long war") on both domestic and transnational social movements. Will the emphasis on counter-terrorism generate a strengthening of coercive state apparatus and a reversal of the international human rights regime? Will it help slow and reverse the globalization project that has been the predominant influence on the world political economy in recent decades? Will it alter our assumptions about the social movement society as it has been experienced in the West?

Mobilizing Structures

As our discussion above suggests, global integration has important implications for how people organize politically, in large part because it is driven largely by the expansion of capitalist modes of production and labor organization. As more people's lives are governed by production and distribution processes that are globally organized, we must account for how the global organization of work impacts the very local mobilizing contexts in which individuals are embedded. Also, global integration involves the

emergence of new types of organizational structures that impact social movements as well as other parts of society.

- Social movement scholars have focused increasingly on questions of collective identity, and this is a promising development in the literature. Nevertheless, we see room for even more work to explore the relationships between economic and political structures and transnational identity formation in particular. One area that deserves more attention from social movement scholars is the labor movement. The U.S. labor movement's emphasis on business unionism as well as the conservative, anti-communist emphasis in much international labor organizing (e.g., O'Brien 2000) led many social movement researchers to neglect the labor movement as a topic of inquiry. But even though it is now clear that people are motivated to act politically around a range of different issues and identities, labor remains a crucial area of potential political engagement. Indeed, segments of labor movements from different parts of the world are playing leadership roles in contemporary transnational mobilizations. We need to know more about the possibilities for making connections between labor and other collective identities within and between nations. For instance, what are possibilities for transnational labor movement, given the changes brought about by global economic integration? Will the movement be mobilized as labor, or as a coalition of civil society actors/interests (cf. Waterman and Timms 2004; Clawson 2003; Turner, 2003)
- Another important feature of globalization's impact on the organization of labor is seen in patterns of migration and conflicts over definitions of citizenship (Brysk

and Shafir 2004; Fox 2005; Sassen 2000). The contemporary immigrant rights mobilizations dramatize the importance of this theme, and social movements researchers can contribute to our understandings of these mobilizations and their impact by exploring questions such as: what shapes effective coalition-building between immigrant and non-immigrant sectors of particular societies? What sorts of claims-making are being articulated by different groups of immigrant activists, and are claims anchored in international human rights language or some other language? What variation exists in terms of national responses to immigrants' claims, and what explains this variation?

- As technologies enable new forms of political and social organization, we should expect changes in how social movements are organized. People around the world are increasingly likely to be involved somehow in globally organized commodity production and distribution chains, and therefore they are exposed to ways of thinking and acting that are consistent with globalized organizational structures. Forms of organization once unfamiliar are now well understood by people around the globe. This expands organizing possibilities, and may increase the extent of isomorphism between corporate and civil society organizational forms. For instance, we noted that social movements researchers speak increasingly of networks or multi-organizational fields of inter-connected actors. But despite the importance of the network concept to our understanding of social movements, most existing networks research is based on case studies of single movements. We lack systematic data that will allow us to compare networks across issues or time (cf. Lauman and Knoke 1987). Future research should seek to develop more

comparative analyses of networks across time, issue, and place. Also, more work needs to be done to examine networks of ties between social movement actors and governments, parties, and international organizations (e.g., della Porta et al. 2006). Analyses of global political institutions, for instance, suggest that network ties between social movements and the United Nations will differ in important ways from those between movements and global financial institutions.

VII. Bridges and overlaps with other disciplines and review of interdisciplinary advances

Although we have focused here on structural approaches to the study of social movements, we do not claim that this lens is the only one through which social movements should be viewed. Rather, we consider this perspective is best utilized when taken as an orienting concept, keeping social movements theorists attuned to the structural, institutional, and contextual factors that order social movement activity. We therefore see many opportunities for structural perspectives to bridge with other approaches to the study of social movements. We see structural approaches in dialogue with, for example, cultural aspects of social movements. For instance:

- Constructivism in international relations research has focused on the ways non-governmental actors, including social movements, interact with other global actors, shaping global institutions and norms.
- The world polity approach in sociology has expanded attention to institutional processes and cultural influences that affect the organizational forms, agendas, and systems of meanings across diverse national states.

- Organizational and institutional analyses can contribute to our understandings of social movement processes (Davis et al. 2005).
- Social movement scholars will also find much in common with political scientists working on themes of democracy and democratization. While many scholars do read across these literatures, there is much room for expanding a dialogue here. Indeed, social movement scholars might be more explicit in their attention to questions of how movement mobilizations relate to broader processes of democratization and repression.

Understanding social change processes that take place within a context of multiple and inter-connected political arenas operating at local, national, and global levels requires that we re-think our methods and concepts. We have argued here, for instance, that globalization processes are fundamentally altering the structure and operations of national states. But much research continues to assume fairly constant state structures and meaningful boundaries between states. The expansion of global research highlights some of the historical, geographic, and disciplinary blinders that may be inhibiting our efforts to understand the processes of social change. Anheier and Katz (and others) warn against "methodological nationalism," or the "tendency of the social sciences to remain in the statistical and conceptual categories of the nation state" (2005:206). Overcoming methodological nationalism requires both intellectual openness and innovativeness on the part of researchers.

In particular, it is clear that understanding relationships between social structure, human agency, and social change requires a multiplicity of disciplinary approaches and

research methods ranging from detailed qualitative studies to large-scale quantitative and historical work. This is required because many of the relationships between local contexts or experiences and global structures and processes remain to be uncovered. We need rich descriptive accounts of the global-local links in the specific places where relevant policies are enacted, decided, and invented in order to put the global puzzle together. And we also need "big picture," macro-level accounts that can help us understand how particular practices, beliefs, and structures have differed or changed across time and place.

Another methodological challenge is that the spaces in which global politics take place may not resemble those social spaces for which conventional research methodologies have been designed. For instance, the global conference is a unique site of social experience that differs fundamentally from the ethnographic field sites in which the architects of ethnographic methodologies worked. While we can draw from that foundation, attempts to adapt these research tools to somewhat novel social spaces can be fruitful. For instance, research on activist discourses and actions at the World Social Forums and other global meetings requires the short-term deployment of trained observers to meetings lasting several days, rather than the long-term embedding of a single observer within a single organization or community. Greater efforts at collaborative research are needed to study effectively important events such as the World Social Forums and their counterparts at regional, national, and local levels.

While states are embedded within an increasingly global institutional arena, they still have distinct histories and social contexts, and therefore we need to enhance our access to data that can allow us to make comparisons across different national contexts.

This is quite difficult for those studying social movements in particular, as it is often difficult to find valid records of civil society organizations and events in particular countries. Much more difficult is finding data sources that can be reliably compared across nations. But how useful it would be to have a measure, for instance, of the comparative strength of civil societies across nations and even time!

Recommended Readings in Structural Approaches to the Study of Social Movements

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Clemens, Elizabeth S. and Debra Minkoff. "Beyond the Iron Law: Rethinking the Place of Organizations in Social Movement Research." Pp. 155-170 in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, edited by D. A. Snow, S. A. Soule, and H. Kriesi. Oxford: Blackwell.

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[INSERT]

Box 1: Transnational Social Movement Strategies in Multi-Level Politics

This section discusses how political decisions are increasingly shaped by global policy arenas. This has altered the way many activists organize their political strategies. In particular, it often requires that activists operate at multiple levels simultaneously, or at least that they understand how politics at the global level impact the possibilities for local activism. We can identify several distinct, "multi-level" strategies in contemporary transnational campaigns. The first is the classic "boomerang" model discussed by Keck and Sikkink (1998), whereby activists look outside the state to international institutions to bring outside pressure on national governments. Such a strategy is evident in many human rights campaigns, when human rights advocates bring their grievances to international organizations or other international audiences in the hopes that other governments and international agencies will raise the costs of continued rights violations within their countries (e.g., Sikkink 1993; Risse et al. 1999). Such transnational coalitions activists' interpretations of how global forces affect local conditions, and several authors remind us of the mutual directions of influence between local human rights groups and their transnational allies (e.g., Stewart 2004; Rothman and Oliver 2002). In addition to seeking greater government adherence to international norms, activists work to shape the international normative context itself. By proposing and lobbying for new international agreements, and they help institutionalize new norms as well as mechanisms for their enforcement. For instance, citizens' groups were at the forefront of new treaties to ban landmines and to form the International Criminal Court (Glasius 2002; Price 1998). And indigenous communities have been very active

internationally to press for their rights to self-determination within the international legal order (Brysk 2000; Passy 1999). Campaigns like that working to ban international trade in toxic wastes work at both levels to help define international norms while also pressing national governments to act (J. Smith 1999). And more recently we see more examples of "defensive transnationalization" by groups aiming to defend existing rights of democratic participation against encroachments by global institutions (Sikkink 2005).

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Notes

[1] Many analysts adopt the term "political opportunities" to discuss these, but since broader institutions and political alignments define obstacles as well as constraints, we adopt the more inclusive notion of political contexts (See Amenta et al. 2002).

[2] Recent years have witnessed a renewal of transnational labor organizing, and Ronaldo Munck (2002) has argued that we may be seeing a new "great transformation," similar to labor's success in reigning in the most destructive elements of early industrializing capital (see also Moody 1997; O'Brien Forthcoming).

[3] The end of the Cold War has also reduced the ability of states in the global South to impact global policy. During the era of competition between the U.S. and Soviet Union, these two countries courted Third World allies as a way to advance their own ideological positions and influence in the global system. With the demise of the USSR, there is no counterweight to the pro-capitalist initiatives of the U.S., and the lone superpower status of the U.S. means that it no longer needs to cultivate allies from among the world's poorer regions. Thus, we see declining flows of international aid between the global North and South, as well as a reduced political influence of global South countries in the inter-state system that has contributed to the strengthening of the Bretton Woods Institutions relative to the United Nations.

[4] There is also evidence that political parties in Western contexts are responding to pressures from contemporary global protests (see, e.g., della Porta, Donatella et al. 2006).

[5] Here we find an important link between structural and cultural accounts of social movements, as global institutions are seen as spaces where social movements and other

actors compete to define global norms as well as to promote their implementation (Clark 2003; Risse et al. 1999; Sikkink 2005).

[6] Is it just a coincidence that they are all made by women?!

[7] See, e.g. Piven and Cloward (1979); Gamson and Schmeidler (1984).

[8] See, for instance, Tarrow (1998b; Zald and McCarthy 1987; Rochon 1998). Tarrow is most explicit in his discussion of the parallel processes of globalization and the rise of a social movement society.

[9] Note: Latin American and other periphery and semi-periphery states are characterized by important differences in the relationship of states to capital and citizens. For instance, many Latin American countries supported their militaries through taxes on imports and exports, thereby eliminating the need for a democratizing bargain with citizen-taxpayers (Centeno 2002). We are grateful to John Markoff for this observation.

[10] We must remember, too, that, as they built systems of roadways and communications to cultivate national societies, nation-builders destroyed local communities and cultures. National languages displaced local and regional ones, and the process of national integration was often violent.

[11] Numerous scholars and policy analysts have engaged this question of whether and how corporate ownership affects the operation of the mass media. For instance, Project Censored offers an annual review of the top stories of the year that were un- or under-reported in the mass commercial media, based upon systematic reviews of the U.S. mainstream and alternative media by researchers (See, e.g., Herman 1995; Herman and Chomsky 1988; Bennett and Entman 2001).

[12] Even this understanding of the state is challenged as European-centric. Looking at the Latin American experience, for instance, Centeno argues that the European experience was the exception rather than the rule in regard to the processes characterizing modern state formation Centeno, Miguel Angel. 2002. *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America*. University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press..