Human Rights and Social Movements:

From the Boomerang Pattern to a Sandwich Effect

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Abstract

Human rights and social movements have long had mutually constitutive relationships with each other, but scholarship that examines this link had been relatively slow to develop. Since the late 1990s, however, social scientists in the United States have produced a growing body of literature on how social movements engage with international human rights institutions to advance their cause and form transnational alliances. We examine this literature and offer future directions for this line of research that emphasize the importance of local-level organizing in sustaining the international human rights system. We argue that institutional development in the past few decades has consolidated global instruments and empowered local actors, such that what used to be called a boomerang pattern of global institutions helping local activists with access has now become more of a "sandwich effect," with both global and local actors operating in concert to promote human rights in the world.

Keywords

globalization, Civil Rights Movement, women's rights, economic inequality, transnational social movements, movement actorhood, multinational corporations, civil society, international law, human rights city

Human rights and social movements have long had mutually constitutive relationships with each other. Many social movements have promoted human rights causes domestically and internationally since the late 18th century, elevating human rights to a guiding principle in international politics. Collective political mobilizations challenging torture, slavery, discrimination against women, and other repressive practices have played critical roles in expanding "the universe of obligations" of governments across the globe to ensure fundamental rights to every human being. Indeed, most observers point out that social movement engagement was critical in institutionalizing universal human rights principles into international declarations and treaties, despite resistance from powerful states (Gaer 1996; Tsutsui, Whitlinger, and Lim 2012). Once established, international human rights institutions have contributed to diffusion of human rights ideas the world over, and they have directly and indirectly empowered various local actors. This has furthered collective mobilization around human rights and increased the challenges to both national and international authorities. This growth in human rights claims-making has, in turn, further enhanced the legitimacy of human rights across the globe, inspiring even more social movements (Kaldor 2003).

Curiously, however, social scientists in the United States have been slow to focus serious attention on this critical relationship between social movements and human rights until recently.[1] On the one hand, social movement studies have long neglected the impact of social movements on the rise of human rights in the contemporary world as well as the

influence of international human rights institutions on local activism. Focused almost exclusively on domestic factors that shape national level political changes, social movement scholars had failed to recognize the international dimensions of social movements and the impact of collective popular challenges on global political dynamics until the late 1990s.

On the other hand, scholarship on human rights has tended to focus more on the impact of global human rights on state practices, seeing social movements, at best, as one of the independent variables that shape policy outcomes. As a result, only a handful of studies on human rights examined the impact of global human rights on social movements until the turn of the 21st century.

This cursory review of the literature points to a picture of two ships sailing past each other: social movement scholars overlooked the relationships between social movements and the international human rights regime, and scholars of human rights politics failed to fully recognize the impact social movements in human rights politics. The vocabulary these scholars typically use is indicative of these tendencies. Social movement scholars are much more likely to discuss specific rights issues such as civil rights and women's rights, those issues that became prominent in domestic politics in the United States. Human rights scholars tend to call social movements by different names such as NGOs, civil society actors, and human rights defenders, signaling their focus on broader constituencies that support the principle of human rights and shape policy outcomes. The existence of social movements in itself is not of high relevance to them, and only when activists have an impact on policy outcomes do they pay attention to social movements.

Considering how intertwined these two political concepts are in reality, it is puzzling how long it took for scholars to draw a tight connection between the two. One main reason for this is the timing of the rise of human rights in the contemporary world and that of the development of social movement research.

Human rights became a vocabulary for political mobilization in the post-World War II era. Initially, core international human rights documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) were leveraged for self-determination in independence movements in Asia and Africa and autonomous regions in developed countries. Perhaps this is not surprising, considering that the first article of both the ICCPR and the ICESCR refers to the right of self-determination. The early U.S. Civil Rights Movement also embraced human rights language in its early stages, and activists such as Fannie Lou Hamer used the UDHR in her organizing work. In the late 1940s and early 50s, the NAACP and its precursor organization brought the "We Charge Genocide" petition to the United Nations. However, the leaders of the Movement soon chose civil rights framing instead, fearing that the language of human rights, with its association with social and economic rights pushed by the Eastern bloc, would doom the movement to failure (Anderson 2003). Thus, in the few decades after the end of World War II, international human rights instruments were used more for developing countries' mobilization for independence, and Cold War dynamics led many social movements in the West to distance themselves from human rights language.

Human rights gained traction for more reform-oriented social movements in the 1970s (Moyn 2010). Many movements have emerged since then to leverage expanding global human rights principles and instruments, making the relationship between human rights and social movements a more viable topic of research. Studies on social movements developed around the same time, since the late 1970s. However, from Charles Tilly's classic work in the late 1970s to the crystallization of the "holy trinity" of political opportunities, resource mobilization, and framing by the early 1990s, their focus has been on domestic political environments. The paradigm case of this scholarship has been the Civil Rights Movement. This influenced the analytical focus of this line of research, delaying attention to the broader influence of human rights on social movements.[2]

Scholars of human rights – particularly those in law and political science, who dominated early scholarship on human rights – focused on policy outcomes and legal decisions, viewing social movements as nothing more than an intervening variable. They did not examine social movements as the main object of their research, thus neglecting the causal connection between global human rights and local activism.

For those reasons, scholarship that explicitly links human rights and social movements developed surprisingly late, in the late 1990s. The next section reviews this literature, followed in the subsequent section by examination of recent trends and suggestions for productive future directions in these lines of research.

Key Insights in the Research on Human Rights and Social Movements

Studies that focus on the interplay between global human rights and social movements emerged in the late 1990s, when Keck and Sikkink (1998) examined how local activists use international human rights norms and institutions to advance their movements, and Smith, Chatfield, and Pagnucco (1997) studied how transnational social movements leverage human rights in their campaigns for social justice that target international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. Since then, many empirical studies have documented (1) how local activists strategically adopt global human rights ideas and instruments to advance their cause and (2) how they form transnational coalitions to challenge international authorities. We examine these two types of global-local interface separately.

Local adoption of global human rights and its transformative impact: First, research on how local actors use global human rights institutions for their local goals has identified some recurring factors that correspond to the three key dimensions in social movement studies – political opportunities, resource mobilization, and framing (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). First, international human rights forums, such as the UN Human Rights Committee and the European Court of Human Rights, provide disadvantaged groups with new opportunities for claims-making (see Chapter 1 on political opportunities), thus enabling boomerang patterns by which repressed local actors go to international forums to gain leverage against their government (Keck and Sikkink 1998). These international forums exert varying levels of pressures on local authorities to address human rights problems, ranging from naming-and-shaming to legally binding decisions. Second, international flows of mobilizing resources reach far corners of the world and facilitate collective action by marginalized populations (see Chapter 4 on

resources). These resources include material aid such as foundation grants and Official

Development Assistance that typically flow from developed to developing countries.

Human resources also play important roles, as activists, journalists, and researchers visit

vulnerable communities the world over to offer advice on how to stage effective political

mobilization and to expose local human rights violations. Third, symbols and

vocabularies that carry international currency can become useful tools in framing

movement goals. In their efforts to legitimate movements, activists often draw on

international human rights documents and framing used in other successful movements.

Such framing efforts often help in publicizing human rights violations and in making the

case that the relevant authorities need to correct injustices

(see Chapter 21 on framing).

In sum, global human rights institutions assist local social movements (1) by

creating new political opportunities at the international level that enable local actors to

exert external pressures on local authorities, (2) by increasing international flows of

material and human resources for political mobilization, and (3) by providing frames for

social movements that appeal to and engage international audiences and local publics

(Tsutsui 2006; Tsutsui and Shin 2008). These three dimensions offer a useful framework

for analyzing the impact of global factors on local social movements.

There is a fourth dimension that has only recently received attention from scholars

in this area, the construction of movement actorhood by global human rights. Because

most earlier studies (e.g. Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink 1999) took as

given the activists' perspectives, interests, and goals, they failed to examine how global

human rights have the capacity to form and reconstitute local movement actorhood, a

subject position through which social movement actors engage in collective mobilization for social change.[3] They typically assumed that social movement actors are bounded entities with clearly defined goals seeking to leverage global opportunities, resources, and vocabularies for their gains. Seeing global human rights simply as a means to pre-defined ends, they overlooked how global human rights can shape movement actorhood itself and circumscribe how actors interpret their social and political world, formulate their approaches, and carry out their concrete actions.[4]

Recent studies have paid more attention to constitutive effects of global human rights on movement actorhood. Merry (2006) is one of the earliest studies to examine the impact of global human rights on local actors' subject position. She argues that women take on a new subjectivity when they invoke international law on women's rights. Rosen and Yoon (2009) also examine the emergence of new subject position among New York City activists as they incorporated an international women's rights discourse, thereby forging a new counter-hegemonic space. The primary focus of these studies, however, is on negotiations between global law and local cultures and how local actors "vernacularize" or adapt and adopt international ideas, exercising their agency, rather than how the latter transforms the former. Tsutsui (2017) is the first to explicitly theorize the transformative impact of global human rights on local actors. Drawing on the multi-institutional politics approach of Armstrong and Bernstein (2008), he examines how changing understandings about their position in local society and their entitled rights galvanized minority activism in Japan, leading to greater activities and subsequent successes.

These four dimensions of the global-local interplay do not necessarily exhaust how human rights impact social movements, but should be the first step in future studies of this kind. A second line of research on the global-local interplay examines the formation of transnational social movements. These movements challenge international authorities to change their operations and, as such, are distinct from local activism that pursues local goals.

Transnational social movements targeting global authorities: As noted above, much research on social movements in the United States has not been attentive to the ways social movements cross national boundaries and/or engage in political activities outside the formal jurisdictions of national governments. Thus, until the late 1990s there was little attention to transnational dimensions of social movements (See Chapter 6 on transnational contexts). At that time, more social movements were beginning to develop formal organizations and informal connections that crossed national boundaries, and they were encouraged and supported by the proliferation of technologies that facilitated transnational communication and exchange as well as by a series of UN-sponsored Global Conferences on issues such as the environment, human rights, women, and social development. Smith's research documents a rapid proliferation of formally organized transnational social movement organizations (TSMOs) beginning in the late 1980s and continuing until the turn of the 21st century (Smith 2008; Smith and Wiest 2012). Noteworthy here is the fact that human rights TSMOs are the most numerous in this population, comprising roughly a third of all TSMOs. Moreover, over time we see growing numbers of TSMOs adopting multi-issue frames that combine human rights claims with, for instance, concerns for environmental protection or the transformation of

the global economy. Qualitative research links such shifts to the end of the Cold War and to the expansion of dialogues among activists from the global North and South and from a diverse array of class and social positions (e.g., Vargas 2003; Rothman and Oliver 1999; Moghadam 2012). In addition, experiences in global settings changed activists' analyses of global problems and their understandings of the inter-state system, leading to shifts in organizing strategies and emphases.

Qualitative research further shows that recent decades have brought a dramatic expansion of "translocal" networks of activists who deploy varied strategies of engaging global human rights frameworks in local struggles (see, e.g., Desai 2015). Technological developments that facilitate transnational communication as well as the development and learning of transnational organizing strategies and capacities contribute to the possibilities for local activists to draw from and connect with the broader global network of human rights advocates. Globally, organizations and campaigns have been working to better connect local needs and priorities with global strategies. Thus, the World Social Forum process, which emerged in 2001 as part of the global protests resisting economic globalization, has inspired and helped connect local, national and regional movements and to connect global analyses with local struggles (see, e.g., Smith et al. 2011; Sen 2007). It is important to note here that these movements do not simply seek to advance their local goals but place their issues in the context of global challenges, and advocate for global solutions to these problems, targeting global institutions.

An important theme that is apparent when considering the ways activists have engaged global human rights discourse and institutions is that there is a more coherent critique of the incompatibilities between global financial institutions such as the World

Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund and international human rights. Activists from the global South especially have been demanding formal recognition and protection of the "right to development," and economic, cultural and social rights more generally, as they have resisted the abuses stemming from the growing power of transnational corporations and global finance (Smith 2008; Pleyers 2011). More recently, activists have come together across North and South to demand protection from growing threats to basic human needs such as food, water, and housing (e.g., McMichael 2015; Harvey 2012). As we discuss below, since the 1990s and especially in the 2000s, more activists are coming together to demand "the right to the city," that is, they are challenging conventional notions of citizenship based in national identities and individual property ownership and proposing that the city is the more appropriate unit for their commitment and organizing efforts (Holston 2009).

New Trends and Future Directions

The assumption in much of these studies has been that local actors receive help from international actors and institutions to achieve their goals. The boomerang pattern, as identified by Keck and Sikkink, symbolizes this dynamic: deprived of means to challenge authorities locally, actors appeal to international society to produce a boomerang effect of international authorities pressuring local power holders for desired changes. Similarly, transnational social movements target powerful international organizations so that international authorities would change their policies, which should subsequently alleviate human rights violations in many localities. It is also important to note that this process is

beneficial for local activists to the extent the international institutions are effective and national governments are responsive to international pressures.

Recently, questions about the efficacy of the international human rights regime have intensified, leading some to claim the "twilight" or "endtimes" of human rights (Hopgood 2013; Posner 2014). These observers question the capacity of international human rights institutions to exert real changes in the face of growing opposition by state governments. They also express concerns about global actors' lack of sensitivity to local cultural practices in trying to implement reform. In response to these concerns, two aspects of the interaction between human rights and social movements call for more attention.

Feedback from local activism to global human rights institutions: First, global institutions do not stand on thin air, and they need constant reinforcement by local and other actors. Existing studies tend to take both the national state and international human rights institutions as given, and they treat the global-local interaction as a unidirectional process whereby the global shapes the local. That is, many studies on global human rights examine how, and to what extent, international human rights treaties and organizations impact local politics, seeing the global and national entities as preexisting and self-sustaining, with little need for local actors' contributions. In practice, both national and international institutions are shaped by interactions among diverse actors working at multiple scales. In many cases human rights movements have been the prime movers working to advance both human rights treaties and institutional innovations that improve compliance (Gaer 1996; Sikkink 2011; Smith 2008; Tsutsui, Whitlinger, and Lim 2012). Prior research and experience shows that effective implementation of human rights norms

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requires more than just treaties and implementing bodies. It is essential to also have engaged actors working at local and trans-local scales who are capable of monitoring human rights practices and holding local and national officials accountable to human rights commitments (Hafner-Burton and Ron 2009; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Simmons 2009; Smith-Cannoy 2012).

From the abolitionist, anti-slavery campaign (Martinez 2012) – arguably the first truly transnational movement for human rights – through the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Glendon 2001), to more recent norms about specific human rights issues such as the Apartheid (Klotz 1995; Soule 2009), torture and forced disappearance (Brysk 1994; Mendez 2011), female genital mutilation (Boyle 2002; Shannon 2012) and discrimination based on descent (Tsutsui 2017), local actors' commitment to problematize and publicize the issues globally and to establish an international understanding about prohibited human rights violations has been the foundation that sustained the edifice of international human rights institutions. With support from officials of international organizations and sympathetic governments, civil society actors' tireless efforts have reinforced and expanded the international human rights regime. For instance, within the past few decades, we have seen the introduction of new institutional mechanisms—all resulting from movement initiatives—that strengthened human rights monitoring and implementation, including the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Criminal Court, the UN Permanent Forum of Indigenous Issues, UN Women, and the reorganized Human Rights Council with a new potentially powerful mechanism called the Universal Periodic Review. Despite persistent challenges, each of these innovations represents a significant

step that alters the relative power of states against human rights claims by civil society actors.

Nevertheless, in the current political environment—marked by economic and environmental instability and the rise of right-wing parties and leaders across the world—we are seeing critical challenges to the international human rights architecture. In part, this may result from the effects of globalization on reducing the governing capacities of national states and expanding the power of transnational corporations. States are assumed to be the legally accountable parties to international human rights law. However, global economic integration has reduced states' ability to ensure the economic and other human rights of their citizens. At the same time, powerful states like the United States and transnational corporations have gained extraordinary influence over the day-to-day experiences of many people around the world, while being much less directly accountable to existing international human rights treaties. This creates a crisis for human rights institutions as well as for many national states, whose very legitimacy rests upon the premise (and promise) of human rights (Gibney 2008). As the Brexit and the new regime in the United States threaten the foundations of multilateralism itself, this institutional crisis is especially problematic. The impressive gains that various local and transnational actors have made in the past few decades are under threat in the current political environment, reminding us of the need for social movement actors to continue to support the international human rights system.

Local initiatives at the municipal level: Second, the limited effectiveness of international human rights institutions for improving local human rights practices has helped fuel the more recent expansion of local initiatives to implement global ideals at

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the local municipal level. Frustrated by national governments' lack of responsiveness to residents' concerns about both economic, social and cultural as well as political and civil rights, activists have been working to hold local authorities accountable for human rights protections. For their part, cities are finding that neoliberal economic policies have left them with insufficient resources to address growing demands in conventional ways, and municipal authorities have increasingly come together in attempts to respond to these challenges (Barber 2013). Factors such as growing urban populations, inequality, inter-urban competition for investment, and declining national government support for social welfare have made cities the sites of a growing global wave of place-based human rights claims-making. This trend first appeared in the global South, and in particular in Latin America in the 1990s and has expanded to countries of the global North during the 2000s (Holston 2009; Harvey 2012; Chueca 2016). In response to the need to maintain local political and social stability, cities are finding it in their interest to champion human rights that national governments do not necessarily support, such as the rights of undocumented residents. In the United States, a national movement for "Sanctuary Cities" has emerged to support local protections for undocumented immigrants, defying federal government efforts to detain and deport non-citizens. The U.S. Conference of Mayors recently endorsed both the International Coalition of Cities Against Racism and the Cities for CEDAW campaign.

The "Cities for CEDAW" campaign is a locally-based human rights initiative in the United States that seeks to advance international protections for women that have been stalled by the U.S. government's failure to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This campaign has sought to

effectively realize the CEDAW convention by convincing municipal authorities to adopt local CEDAW ordinances. Effectively, this would produce a "bottom-up" ratification process whereby mobilization in local communities produces national compliance with global human rights norms. To date there are six cities that have formally adopted local CEDAW ordinances, and more than fifty cities are currently working towards this goal.[5]

As activists from different localities have come together in transnational organizational networks and in physical spaces like the World Social Forums, we have seen increasing coherence of what is being called the "right to the city" or the human rights cities movement (Mayer 2012; Oomen et al. 2016). Instead of working to target national governments or international institutions, more human rights activists are mobilizing at local levels to help realize human rights in local communities. Starting with the grounded experiences of urban residents, they are demanding that cities formally recognize and take steps to protect basic rights such as the right to affordable housing, racial justice, clean water, a healthy environment, and living wages. They are engaging with international human rights machinery such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the UN's Universal Periodic Review process, the Convention Against Torture, and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination.[6] In some cities, residents are forming diverse coalitions to press municipal leaders to make formal commitments to becoming "human rights cities," and to date more than thirty such cities exist.[7]

A "human rights city" is a municipality that refers explicitly to the UDHR and other international human rights standards and/or law in their formal charters, policies, statements, and programs. Analysts have observed growing numbers of such cities since

2000 (Grigolo, 2011, van den Berg and Oomen, 2014). Some human rights cities

incorporate a particular set of human rights into their formal governing agenda, such as

San Francisco's 1999 ordinance implementing the Convention on the Elimination of

Discrimination Against Women or Barcelona's anti-discrimination and immigrant rights

programs. Other cities have explicitly designated themselves as human rights cities,

indicating a commitment to moving towards the realization of the broad array of human

rights. The Human Rights Cities initiative was launched by the Peoples Decade on

Human Rights Learning (PDHRE) following the UN Human Rights Conference in

Vienna in 1993. The group defined a Human Rights City as:

> a city or a community where people of good will, in government, in organizations
> and in institutions, try and let a human rights framework guide the development of
> the life of the community. Equality and nondiscrimination are basic values.
> Efforts are made to promote a holistic vision of human rights to overcome fear
> and impoverishment, a society that provides human security, access to food, clean
> water, housing, education, healthcare and work at livable wages, sharing these
> resources with all citizens—not as a gift, but as a realization of human rights.[8]

Key elements of the strategy outlined by PDHRE organizers include extensive efforts at

popular education known as "human rights learning" and a commitment to broad popular

participation in shaping and monitoring policies, typically through a Human Rights

Steering Committee. Organizers are explicit in pointing out that cultural change is

essential to advancing human rights, and it is not enough simply to change the laws.

PDHRE leader Shulamith Koenig has worked directly with local organizers to help them develop human rights city initiatives, and the group also promotes the initiative at the World Social Forums and in other movement venues, encouraging and providing resources for activists to re-imagine the cities in which they live. Rosario, Argentina became the first human rights city of this kind in 1997.[9]

In addition to local initiatives, there has been growing momentum among local human rights leaders to expand and strengthen horizontal networking across Human Rights Cities in the United States and internationally. For instance, municipal leaders in Europe began meeting in 1998 as part of a conference on "Cities for Human Rights," organized to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This meeting generated a series of bi-annual meetings and the European Charter for Safeguarding Human Rights in the City, which now has over 400 municipal parties.[10] The Forum of Local Authorities convened local authorities alongside the World Social Forum since 2001, debating a draft text of a World Charter of the Right to the City (Oomen and Baumgärtel 2012:6). In mid-2016, activists working in the U.S. Human Rights Network have formed a National Human Rights Cities Network to organize periodic gatherings of human rights city organizers and to document and share best practices and models for implementing local human rights initiatives.[11] And following the electoral success of right-wing candidates in the United States and elsewhere, more analysts and activists are recognizing the significance of cities as sites for human rights mobilization (see, e.g., Barber 2016; Baird and Hughes 2016).

This shift in momentum of human rights organizing from global to local levels might be seen as reflecting the limitations and failures of the neoliberal globalization

project and its institutions. As national governments have shifted more attention and authority to international economic and political institutions, they have undermined their own authority and redirected it both upward to inter-governmental institutions like the UN and World Trade Organization, outward to corporations (through privatization), and downward to cities and local regions (Markoff 1999). Meanwhile, economic globalization has contributed to rising inequality and the emergence of urban centers that have fueled the key processes driving global finance and trade, changing both the nature of state authority and its long-term viability under neoliberalism (Sassen 1991; 2014). As national and global institutions have failed to address increasingly urgent global crises such as climate change, rising inequality, and growing insecurity in regard to access to food and other basic needs, activists in local communities have responded by putting forward new strategies for addressing such needs.

Conclusion

Our review of international human rights movements shows the dynamic relationships between social movements and formal institutions and between local and global political arenas in the work of advancing human rights. Despite some setbacks and the potentially challenging years ahead, international human rights institutions continue to operate to support local struggles for better human rights practices. The institutional scaffolding is quite strong for many international bodies, and despite some potential trends for de-institutionalization – such as in defections from the International Criminal Court by a few African countries –, the Human Rights Council and many treaty monitoring bodies have

been working steadily to promote and protect human rights. The recent research we examined here suggests that we will see a growing collection of locally organized and horizontally networked actors helping constitute a changing global human rights movement that once took a more international and national organizational arrangement.

Thus, what we see in contemporary society is a shift from a reliance on top-down globally initiated changes for human rights protection to a combination of bottom-up and top-down efforts. On the one hand, global level efforts that seek to generate pressure on national governments continue, even if they are limited largely to naming and shaming and lack enforcement mechanisms. On the other hand, bottom-up mobilizations at local, even municipal levels, focus on translating global norms into local practices, producing more immediate small scale changes with a view to accumulating these changes across different locales to achieve global level transformation. In this way a "double-boomerang" pattern continues to be one part of contemporary relationships between human rights and social movements, whereby local agents' appeals to international human rights law both strengthen local leverage and enhance the practical impacts and legitimacy of international human rights law (Kaldor 2003). We believe that what we are witnessing here might be described as a "sandwich effect," whereby global institutions' pressures from above and grassroots mobilization from below combine to increase the pressure on national governments as well as transnational corporations and some intergovernmental organizations to comply with and advance human rights norms.

The bottom up mobilizations grew ever stronger because of decades of efforts by international organizations to both define and strengthen international human rights machinery and to build the capacities and translocal networks of local actors. To that

extent, it is also important to recognize the importance of the transformative effects of human rights ideas not only in shaping the international institutional arena but also in constituting movement actorhood. These effects might not be captured in measurable ways in quantitative analyses, but they have raised the potential for local actors to challenge authorities at local levels and sustain global efforts for social change. After decades of global ideas and institutions empowering local actors, the local actors have developed new understandings of how local conditions are shaped by global forces, and they have developed broad and deep networks of translocal ties that significantly enhance their capacity to support global human rights institutions and to influence local and national governments.

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Biography

Kiyoteru Tsutsui is Associate Professor and Associate Chair of Sociology, Director of
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1 Our review covers the perspective from U.S. sociology of social movements literature, which differs from that emerging from other national and regional contexts and from other sub-fields, such as world-systems analysis and the sociology of race and ethnicity. In particular, this tradition tends to be U.S.-centric and guilty of "methodological nationalism," if not American exceptionalism. Because social movements tend to cross national and other boundaries and defy researchers' categories of issue-focus, insider/outsider politics, formal vs. informal organization, prevailing conceptual schemes often obscure the complex ways that people engage in the work of social change. For instance, social movement literature distinguishes movements such as LGBTQ rights, women's rights, labor rights, anti-poverty, and racial or environmental justice as separate movements, whereas in reality they all advance human rights claims in some form. Many are also tied to varying degrees with regional or global networks, whether or not studies focusing on their national or local activities are able to see those connections. Alongside growing connections and dialogue across the global North and South in both movements and in the academy, we are seeing a greater

appreciation for the ways prevailing epistemologies impact our understandings of the world and especially of the emancipatory movements operating outside hegemonic logics (see Conway 2017; Dalsheim 2017).

2 Partial correctives to this emerged in the late 1990s as Layton (2000) and McAdam's revised version of the classic (1999) acknowledged the influence of the Cold War politics and human rights language on the Civil Rights Movement.

3 The concept, movement actorhood, has a good deal of affinity with the more frequently used term, identity. Reflecting the primary focus of early social movement research, identity is often used in the context of examination of what level of collective identity is needed for social movements to emerge (for an excellent recent review, see Snow and Corrigall-Brown 2015). This led to research focus on how a shared sense of "we-ness" can be created among relevant actors, what kinds of symbols facilitate this process, what types of collective identities are more likely to enable mobilization and under what contexts, and other questions that focus on movement emergence. While sympathetic to this approach, scholars who examine movement actorhood demonstrate a greater interest in movement goals and strategies and how actor's subject positions guide them, reflecting the multi-institutional politics approach (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008). The use of this term is also a response to the call by Brubaker and Cooper (2000) to move away from "identity" and use more precise terms; identity has been overloaded as an analytical concept because scholars use them to refer to three related but different social processes – (1) identification and categorization, (2) self-understanding and social location, and (3) commonality, connectedness, and groupness –, and movement actorhood is primarily about the second category, actors' self-understanding about their place in society (Tsutsui 2017).

4 To be sure, social movement scholars have examined local actors' orientations, motivations, and identities in great detail (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001; Polletta 1998; Polletta and Jasper 2001). Such studies, however, largely overlook the impact of global factors, focusing instead on the influence of the state and/or interactions among movement actors.

5 http://citiesforcedaw.org/

6 The US Human Rights Network is a leading example of a national social movement organization that helps translate international human rights into local settings by, for instance, helping bring grassroots activists to official international human rights meetings to testify about local conditions and by assembling

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information from local activists as part of the civil society "shadow reports" filed in international bodies as part of official reviews of U.S. compliance with international human rights obligations (See, e.g., http://ushrnetwork.org/).

[7] Scholarly research and formal documentation of these activist initiatives is limited, given their dispersion and localized nature. However, Smith has been part of a growing network of activists, human rights lawyers, and scholars working to document and advance new thinking about these local initiatives. Along with students, Smith helped draft the Wikipedia entry on Human Rights Cities, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Rights_City.

[8] http://pdhre.org/achievements-HR-cities-mar-07.pdf

[9] For more details about human rights cities, see, e.g., Marks, Modrowski, and Lichem (2008), Oomen, David, and Grigolo (2016), and Smith, (forthcoming).

[10] http://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/right-to-the-city/european-charter.

[11] http://www.ushrnetwork.org/our-work/project/national-human-rights-city-network