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The Globalization of Social Movements: Exploring the transnational paradigm through collection action against neoliberalism from Latin America to the Occupy movement

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The main thrust of this paper is that social movement theories, which have traditionally conceived of the various aspects of social movements through the lens of the nation-state, would do well to further adopt and integrate a transnational paradigm. The paper examines anti-neoliberal social movements, and the case of the Occupy movement in particular as an illustration that we cannot make sense of the emergence, actors, strategies, tactics, or goals of social movements without incorporating the context and salience of transnationalism in today's global landscape. The paper attempts to justify the above thesis by demonstrating the nuanced linkages, similarities, and dissimilarities between the collective actions across Latin America (the Landless Workers' Movement in Brazil and the Zapatista Movement in Mexico), the Global Justice Movement, and the Occupy movement. The hopeful novelty presented in this paper is that an intricate analysis of the Occupy movement makes clearer than ever before the significance of transnationalism in understanding contemporary social movements. It is through the specifics of the Occupy movement, which are given particular emphasis, that we can further refine the proper role of transnationalism in social movement theory. The movements assessed in this paper, connected by grievances brought on by neoliberal globalization, can be conceived as part of a web of spatiotemporal relations. However, movements may still be very nationalistic and dependent on culture. It is important to recognize transnational aspects when analyzing social movements, but also make distinctions between and within various movements.

Introduction

The study of social movements is complex, as movements themselves are inherently messy. Movements may splinter, transform identities, or change tactics and strategies, making them difficult to analyze. Furthermore, generalized globalization has added a new layer of complexity to social movements. Globalization has opened new spaces for communication, allowing ideas to flow freely across borders. Similarly, globalization has changed the locale of social movement activity. Although, traditionally, social movements have often been analyzed relative to the nation-state model, social movements are expanding across borders. Movements do not exist in a vacuum: their behavior is influenced by the world around them, which is becoming increasingly integrated on a number of fronts. Movements often utilize globalized

tactics and strategies to express their grievances and build coalitions across borders. This process can be seen when analyzing the myriad of emerging social movements targeting social movements emerging targeting various aspects of neoliberal globalization.

With the emergence of the Occupy movement, it is obvious that social movement action against neoliberal policy is growing. Although the Occupy movement possesses unique qualities, some aspects of the movement are shared with past anti-neoliberal social movements. The movement has extensive ties with the Global Justice Movement (or Alternative Globalization Movement) and a number of social movements in Latin America including the Zapatistas in Mexico and the Landless Workers' Movement in Brazil. The flow of ideologies, strategies, tactics, and actors between these movements highlights their transnational characteristics. The transnational aspects of these movements call into the question the true target of movement actors. Many social movements have often targeted the state, seeking policy changes. But the neoliberal doctrine is not bound by borders, and its policies are entrenched in governments, inter-governmental organizations, and of course the intangible "world market." In its nascent stage, the Occupy movement targeted Wall Street, but as it expanded across borders, the target of the movement was blurred. Grievances against neoliberalism surpass the scope of the state, forcing actors to seek channels outside the realm of normal politics.

The primary thesis of this paper is delivered in section 5: social movement theories, which have traditionally conceived of the various aspects of social movements through the lens of the nation-state, would do well to further adopt and integrate a transnational paradigm—the case of the Occupy movement in particular illustrates that we cannot make sense of the emergence, actors, strategies, tactics, or goals of social movements without incorporating the context and salience of transnationalism in today's global landscape. Sections 2 through 4 are an attempt to build the case for the thesis outlined in section 5, by demonstrating the nuanced linkages, similarities, and dissimilarities between the MST, the Zapatistas, the Global Justice Movement, and the Occupy movement. This paper is certainly not the first to underline the significance of globalization in social movement theory. The hopeful novelty presented in this paper, however, is that an intricate analysis of the Occupy movement makes clearer than ever before the significance of transnationalism in understanding contemporary social movements. It is through the specifics of the Occupy movement, which are given particular emphasis in this paper, that we can further refine the proper role for transnationalism in social movement theory.

Grievances Across Borders: The Emergence of Neoliberalism

The dominant theme in the international economic arena appears to be one of insecurity. The neoliberal doctrine that emerged in response to global fiscal crisis of the 1970s still dominates economic policy to this day. International Financial Institutions (IFIs), dominated by western thinkers, still promote neoliberalism as the means to create and sustain development. The recent global economic crisis suggests that the neoliberal promise—that markets can self-regulate and deliver sufficient and sustained prosperity for all – appears to have fallen remarkably short in the eyes of many social movement actors. Similarly, other Western nations, such as the UK, Spain, Greece, and Germany, have adopted neoliberal policies to combat the growing recession. UK Prime Minister David Cameron has even declared that Europe has entered the "Age of Austerity."

In reality, this so called "Age of Austerity" has existed since the perceived failure of Keynesian policies in the wake of the financial crisis of the 1970s, which led to the popularization of economic theories emerging from the Chicago school, pioneered by economists Friedman and Hayek. The glorification of free market policies has never ceased to exist in the developed world, not even during the 2009-2010 implementations of fiscal stimulus packages in various developed countries, originally advocated by Dominique Strauss-Khan, managing director of

the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The current atmosphere of insecurity is only heightened by the polarization of economic ideologies within political systems.

Neoliberal theory is deeply rooted in intellectual property rights, rule of law, and most importantly, the ability of institutions to thrive inside the free market. It is assumed that as the government's role decreases, the growth of the private sector will lead to increased productivity and competition, which will reduce costs and increase quality of goods and services. Theorists also claim that in the long run, via the "trickle-down effect," neoliberal policy can eliminate domestic and international poverty. Simply put, the theory postulates that although growth may have unequal benefits in the nascent stages of neoliberalism, eventually growth will "trickle down" to the poorer classes. Delineating between the vast array of neoliberal policies is difficult because, as Harvey explains, "neoliberalization has been such as to force adaptations that have varied greatly from place to place as well as over time." In a simplistic explanation, there are three essential categories of neoliberal policy: austerity, trade liberalization, and privatization. Policies relating to these three categories have been implemented across the world, but these policies are not uniform and often produce varying results.

Neoliberalism in the United States

Despite common belief, the first modern experiment with neoliberalism did not occur in the United States. In fact, it was implemented by Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet in 1973. The US backed leader received guidance from the economic specialists of the Chicago school in restructuring the Chilean economy. The economists recommended policies that included slashing public spending, increasing foreign direct investment through the privatization of state run industry, and the exploitation of national resources. As the Chilean economy grew, the neoliberal model became glorified by fiscal conservatives in the United States and by leading IFIs. This was not a fast pace overhaul of the Keynesian system, as the foundations of neoliberal thought had been laid almost a decade before the election of Ronald Reagan in 1981. Although Reagan is credited as the pioneer of neoliberalism in the US, corporate deregulation had begun before his time with accelerated globalization and vastly complex growing global supply chains.

With the election of Ronald Reagan and the rise of neo-conservatism in the US, neoliberal rhetoric was adopted by policy makers in Washington. However, neoliberal policy was already being enacted in the late 1970s, when the Carter administration enacted supply-side tax policies. A massive wave of deregulation began, and continued into the 1980s. Business policy organizations (BPOs) played a major role in developing economic policy proposals during this time. These BPOs served on government advisory committees, and launched massive lobbying campaigns promoting free-market ideas. Neoliberal thinkers, as well as these BPOs, helped Reagan create his economic platform of austerity and business deregulation. In 1981, under the Reagan administration, the US passed the largest tax cut in US history, the Economic Recovery Tax Act. During his presidency, Reagan also increased privatization, most notably in education and healthcare. All of these policies were enacted in order to reduce the size of the government, as neoconservative thinkers blamed big government for the fiscal crisis. These policies also gave rise to extensive corporate influence in Washington.

Neoliberalism has led to corporate deregulation, arguably a reason for the 2007-2008 subprime lending crisis. Increased corporate power and increased corporate influence in politics are cited as reasons for the emergence of the Occupy movement. The neoliberal doctrine, created by institutions in the Global North, was adopted by IFIs that pushed governments of the Global South to enact similar policies. Since the 1980s, the neoliberal doctrine has remained the dominant paradigm throughout the international political economy. It also remains dominant across the Global South and in the US, IFIs, and many international organizations.

Neoliberalism in Latin America

Aside from the experiment in Chile, neoliberalism officially arrived in Latin America in the 1980s after the debt crisis. In order to make up for the lack of economic growth during the

1970s recession, many Latin American countries began heavily borrowing, sparking a balance of payments crisis across the region. Between 1970 and 1980, debt in Latin America increased from \$27 billion to \$231 billion, but the annual debt-service payments were only around \$18 million dollars. The debt crisis began in 1982, when Mexico became the first country to default on its debt. As US corporations had projects in Mexico, the US government scrambled to create a short term rescue plan for the country. Countries across Latin America were struggling to repay their massive foreign debts due to the lack of net financial transfers, high inflation rates, and deteriorating trade. Many Latin American nations began taking out new loans in order to pay off old ones. The rise of neoconservative thinking led to the fall of direct imperialism and the rise of economic imperialism through the implementation of fiscal austerity. IFIs including the IMF, World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, became the forerunners in restructuring debt for developing nations in order to end the debt crisis.

These institutions sought to reform economies and government practices through macroeconomic stabilization policies that conformed to the “Washington Consensus.” The “Washington Consensus” set forth policy prescriptions, or structural adjustments, aimed at preventing countries from defaulting on their debt. These measures included stabilization policies that sought to cut back on public health, public education, state sector employment, and subsidies to basic consumption items and transportation. They also included measures to privatize government-run industries including health care systems, education systems, telecommunications, water supply systems, mining industries, and ports. However, as Robinson explains, “the consensus also achieved ideological hegemony by setting the parameters for, and the limitations to, debate among subordinate groups on options and alternative projects for the hemisphere.”

The newly democratic governments of Latin America saw no choice but to accept these policy prescriptions, as IFIs controlled the ability of governments to secure new lines of credit. Thus, many Latin American countries largely conformed to the new world order of neoliberalism. These measures were successful in lowering inflation rates and preventing countries from defaulting on debt. However, they also lead to economic stagnation during the 1980s, a period known in Latin American history as the “lost decade” of development. During this time, GDP per capita decreased on average throughout the region and unemployment rates rose exponentially, causing a rise in informal employment. Latin American populations also saw accelerated impoverishment and socioeconomic inequality over this period. The emergence of “post-Washington Consensus” thought reshaped development rhetoric in the 1990s. Petras explains that, “the aim of this post-Washington Consensus was to establish a more inclusive form of development, a more pragmatic form of neoliberalism based on a new development paradigm according to which the poor are to be empowered to act for themselves— to take responsibility for their own development.” During this time period, more rigid policies were enforced, especially in regards to the privatization of state owned business. Although many Latin American countries saw improvements in their economies, poverty and inequality still lingered. Furthermore, the notion of state-motivated development was illusory, as governments were still tied to western countries and IFIs.

Instead of creating free societies with widespread economic mobility, austerity measures manifested a polarization of the rich and the poor, as funds became heavily concentrated in the hands of the few. “By the early 1990s, the richest 10% of households in Latin America were receiving 40% of the total income, while the bottom 20% was getting less than 4%.” Since the 1990s, this trend in inequality has essentially remained constant. According to World Bank data, in 2003 the richest 10% earned 48% of the total income, and the poorest 10% earned 1.6%. Despite these documented inadequacies of neoliberalism, the World Bank and other IFIs still promote neoliberal policy as the means to promote economic development and solve social problems.

Emerging Anti-Neoliberal Social Movements

From the onset of neoliberalism in Latin America, collective actions were organized in opposition to its policies, occurring at varying intensities and differing by country. As a region already facing entrenched poverty, neoliberal policy further extended hardships and grievances, causing an explosion of social movement action in the 1990s. The US had not experienced far reaching social movement action against neoliberalism until recently, with the emergence of the Occupy movement. Globalization has increased connections between anti-neoliberal social movements, creating spaces that allow for collective actions in response to similar grievances. Social movements in Latin America have laid a foundation for global collective actions against neoliberalism, as the region has experienced explosive social movement action.

An Examination of Anti-Neoliberal Movements in Latin America

Edward Galeano said, “Latin America is the region of open veins, everything from the discovery until our times, has always been transmuted into European—or later US—capital, and has such accumulated in distant centers of power.” Latin America has been a locale of direct and indirect imperialism for centuries. Since colonial times, meddling in the affairs of Latin American nations has led to extreme poverty, increased inequality and global economic, political, and cultural marginalization from western hegemonic powers. The hardships and grievances caused by direct and indirect forms of imperialism have compelled marginalized populations to mobilize for social change across Latin America. Since the rise of neoliberalism as a blanket approach to “develop” the perceived “backwardness” of the Global South, much social movement action has been directed at combating national policies that adhere to this global paradigm.

In the 1950s, social movements exploded across Latin America, seeking revolutionary change in order to halt the socioeconomic and political exploitation of the popular classes. A majority of these movements were anti-western-hegemony movements, and saw Latin America as a neo-colonial enterprise of the US. The ideas and goals of these movements were arguably the stepping stones for the anti-austerity movements that emerged in the 1970s. The most notable of these movements was the Cuban Revolution of 1959, which portrayed socialism as a favorable alternative to the capitalist world system, seen as overrun by western interests. After the Cuban Revolution, the US launched a massive campaign to ensure the compliance of countries in the Americas to US hegemony and capitalism. James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer contend, “The combined use of both the velvet glove (international development) and the iron fist (military force), and the mobilization of the state apparatus by its allies in the region, succeeded in establishing the sway of imperial power for the United States.” After the rise of socialism in the Americas, the US launched indirect military campaigns to remove government regimes they viewed as insubordinate, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) was created to enforce micro level development projects among the rural poor in order to offset the mobilization of guerrilla groups. As the US became directly involved in the affairs of many Latin American countries, mobilizations decreased but tensions remained high.

The economic downturn of the 1970s and the growing shift towards fiscal austerity, coupled with increased democratization of Latin America, created a shift in US foreign policy. Instead of directly crushing leftist movements, the US began supporting popularly elected democracies and free market policies to facilitate political and economic development, and shunned countries perceived as undemocratic or unwilling to adopt capitalist policies. When the debt crisis hit and the subsequent Washington Consensus was implemented, social movement activity decreased. After the lull of the 1980s, Latin America experienced a revival in social movement action in the 1990s. At the same time, the IMF and World Bank were implementing policy reflective of “post-Washington Consensus” thought that focused on countries taking

development into their own hands. The aim of the “post-Washington Consensus” was to empower individuals to escape the poverty trap. However, this proved difficult, as class mobility across many Latin American countries was essentially nonexistent. Although these measures were enacted to appease the popular classes, their effects were minimal, and massive protests broke out in Latin America.

With heightened grievances, new social movement organizations formed to combat austerity policies. Discontent with both neoliberal thought and the electoral left caused the emergence of new leftist organizations in the 1990s, known as the New Latin American Left. Perhaps because of the wave of democratization in Latin America, these new movements seek change through elections and popular protests, instead of armed revolutions. The actors of these leftist movements largely consist of peasantry, workers, and trade unions. The movements are rooted in ideas of collective leadership and utilizing participatory democracy to facilitate the interchange of ideas to combat grievances. Petras also explains that, “to a greater or lesser extent, these leaders were highly critical of the opportunism of the electoral Left and NGO intellectuals who they experienced as manipulative outsiders serving external patron.”

The ideologies of the New Latin American Left resonate heavily with the ideologies of the Occupy movement. These movements seek an alternative to neoliberal globalization, straying from the channels of normal politics. Previous social movement actions in Latin America, such as the revolutionary movements of the 50s and 60s, sought regime changes to end neo-colonialism and an unequal international system. The next two sections of this chapter will analyze two major movements of the New Latin American Left: the Zapatistas in Mexico and the Landless Workers’ Movement in Brazil. These two anti-neoliberal social movements have become global actors: both utilizing the forces of globalization to strengthen their own movement and influencing other social movements across borders.

Straying from Normal Politics: An Examination of Autonomous Communities from the Zapatistas to the MST

Zapatistas

The Zapatista movement, or the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), emerged as an armed guerrilla movement in the countryside of Chiapas in 1984. At first, the movement was considered identity-based, centering its goals on empowering those of Mayan descent. However, as the movement progressed, it emerged in opposition to neoliberal policies in general and in particular the creation of the North American Free Trade Treaty (NAFTA). Some refer to NAFTA as the “Mexico Purchase,” because of the agreement’s bias towards the US and Canada. Although NAFTA was supposedly created to facilitate development in Mexico, it only deepened poverty for popular classes, especially for the campesinos, or peasants. NAFTA loosened trade barriers and protectionist policies, such that Mexican peasants must now directly compete with corporations across North America and Canada. Also, NAFTA disrupted traditional notions of landholding in Mexico, as corporate farming expanded into indigenous lands. What emerged as a guerrilla movement in the Mexican countryside protesting NAFTA soon transformed into a transnational movement, adding the entire neoliberal doctrine to its list of grievances.

Olesen explains that, “At first, the armed Zapatista uprising therefore appeared to be an anachronism, a relic from the Cold War and a time when Latin America was the home of numerous armed groups inspired by socialist ideas... But the Zapatistas soon started moving in a different direction, inspiring Carlos Fuentes to label the rebels as the first post-communist rebellion in Latin America.” The categorization of this movement as an armed communist rebellion is misleading. In reality, the movement transformed into a creative force that initiated dialogue on the meaning of democracy, and educated the marginalized peasantry on issues surrounding hardships emergent from the neoliberal doctrine. Therefore, Olesen explains that, “in transforming themselves into armed democrats, the Zapatistas have become an

oxymoron embodying the major differences between the time before and after the ending of the Cold War era.” The Zapatistas signify a change in the progression of social movement activity: the movement shows the shift from the local to the global, and the subsequent rise of transnationalism.

The movement’s armed rebellion only lasted about three months, in which it seized a few towns and cities. The Mexican military attempted to forcefully squash the movement, as it threatened the ruling party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), which had been in power since 1929. A main base of the PRI’s power lies in the peasantry of Mexico, the same group that the Zapatistas sought to mobilize. Petras explains that, “With the entry of many thousands of Mexican Federal troops, and in the absence of a wider base of support, the Zapatistas withdrew to their jungle and mountain bases.” It was in these bases that the Zapatistas succeeded in creating communities that functioned autonomously from the Mexican state. Instead of seeking revolutionary change, or even electoral change, the movement largely drifted away from normal politics.

Stahler-Sholk explains that in October of 1996 a new phase of the Zapatista movement emerged when members, “boycotted municipal elections and refused to recognize the officially elected authorities, instead following indigenous usos y costumbres to choose leaders in open community assemblies.” The Zapatistas expelled government officials from their strongholds in order to create a new kind of government based upon collective leadership. The Zapatistas utilize a highly organized and functional form of the direct-democracy model, which has widely been cited as an inspiration in the decision-making structures of other movements, including the Occupy movement. Although largely withdrawn from the Mexican state, the movement does engage with the state in some ways. For instance, in 1999, the Zapatistas pushed for a referendum that would acknowledge indigenous rights and cease the Mexican occupation of Zapatista territory. Members of the EZLN lobbied for popular support of the referendum across Mexico, and educated citizens on the Zapatista movement.

Although the movement is not considered a pungent force in Mexican politics, it has succeeded in creating an extensive transnational solidarity network. In 1996, the movement voted to shift its focus to combating negative aspects of neoliberalism on a boarder scale, straying from the movement’s original focus of combating strictly local issues. In doing so, the movement created a global notion of “Zapatismo,” a conception that came to influence the Global Justice Movement, which will be explored in the following chapter. Khasnasbish explains that, “...the transnational resonance of Zapatismo represents a reimagining of political struggle that has at once reinvigorated the search for new kinds of socio-political possibilities not limited to variations of capitalist or socialist ideologies.” In a sense, this notion of “Zapatismo” represents a collective struggle to explore alternatives to neoliberal globalization. By growing “autonomous municipalities” that focus on local development, while at the same time developing the global notion of “Zapatismo,” the Zapatistas have been able to simultaneously strengthen centralizing and decentralizing forces. Utilizing transnational solidarity networks created out of the spaces afforded by globalization have allowed them to help cultivate a global sympathy for their national grievances. This exploitation of the transnational field has been largely unsuccessful in producing a national movement within Mexico itself, but it has been more successful perhaps in helping facilitate cognitive liberation on issues surrounding the neoliberal doctrine on the global scale.

MST

Similar to the Zapatista movement, Brazil’s Landless Workers’ Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Ruais Sem Terra, or MST) has created alternative communities across Brazil to contest neoliberal policies. The movement did not gain momentum until the mid-1980s, when in 1984 movement leaders were invited to participate in a dialogue on land reform in the city of Parana. The main tactic of the movement involves seizing unused plots of land and

developing squatter communities. The first large-scale occupation occurred in 1985, when over 2500 landless workers took over a 9500 hectre plot of land in Rio Grande de Sul. By taking land reform into its own hands, the MST has become one of the most successful and largest movements in Latin America, as well as one of the largest social movements in the world. Over 500,000 families are members of the MST, and the movement is present in almost every state in Brazil, including over 700 municipalities.

Land inequality has been a salient feature of Brazil since the colonial period. With the emergence of neoliberalism and the privatization of Brazilian land, peasant workers were further sacked of their land rights. Martin states, "Despite the proposal to privatize land reform sponsored by the World Bank, the struggle goes on. Occupation and production are both considered part of the MST's economic and political strategy against neoliberalism. The settlement is conceived of as a whole production unit and not only a legal property." The justification of movement actors lies within the Brazilian constitution. Martins explains, "By 1864 Brazilian land law, private property can be confiscated when it is not cultivated or where there are conflicts between the owner and workers or environmental damage." Therefore, movement actors view themselves as citizen enforcers of the law.

The actual process of "Occupation" is known as *fiesta*, or "the party." Land occupations occur at night due to fear of government retaliation. Movement actors turn the land into squatter communities and remain there until the government recognizes their claim to the land. Wolford explains, "If the occupation is successful, usually after many months of negotiation, the government expropriates the property and divides it among the landless poor, creating what comes to be called a land reform settlement." Many of the encampments created by the MST have become intricate communities complete with schools, medical clinics, and markets. Voss and Williams contend, "Reflecting its commitment to learning and keeping up with the needs of farmers it has established research institutes that provide ongoing courses in ecology and agronomics as well as participatory leadership skills and training."

Paradoxically, the MST utilizes state channels to gain land rights, while at the same time creating autonomous communities. According to Voss and Williams, "while it engages with the state, its pronounced activity is its clandestine land occupations in which it builds new communities on fallow land." Unlike the Zapatistas, the MST works directly with the Brazilian government to gain concessions. However, these concessions, the land rights, are utilized for the establishment of communities that possess their own decision-making apparatus, separate from that of the state. The form of grassroots organizing utilized by the MST places importance on collective leadership, in which each individual in the community is involved in decision-making. Voss and Williams argue that the collective leadership model "links its local struggles for land with a larger struggle to build an alternative world through the process of local transformations in power relations."

The MST has successfully forged working relationships with government officials and organizations, local civil society organizations, political parties, and other social movement actors. At the same time, the MST has gained support on a global scale through coalition building and creating transnational solidarity networks. Friends of the MST, a solidarity network promoting the MST, has chapters in a few major cities within the US. Similarly, the MST has transported its strategies and tactics across borders by sending representatives to educate actors of various social movements with similar ideologies, such as the Occupy movement. The movement has also influenced Bolivia's Landless Movement, Brazil's Homeless Workers movement, and the Take Back the Land Movement in the US.

Conclusions

Latin America has a long history of social movement activity that has sought to challenge exploitation within the global economic and political order. The historical accumulation of grievances and hardships, emerging from direct and indirect exploitation, has clearly caused

explosive social movements in the region. The ideas, strategies, and tactics of the revolutionary movements before the neoliberal era are key to understanding the later emergence of anti-neoliberal movements. It is important to understand, though, that these new social movements have changed the trajectory of social movements in Latin America by creating alternative communities and challenging globalization.

The Zapatistas and the MST have transformed peasant movements into globalizing forces. These movements have helped create a globalized framework for other movement actors. At the same time, these movements are localized. Both movements to varying degrees focus on issues specific to their country. The MST, much more so than the Zapatistas, focuses on utilizing government channels to benefit their movement, but at the same time resists the state. The linkages between anti-neoliberal social movements are clearly complex. The transnational characteristics of the Zapatistas and MST show how seemingly localized movements can simultaneously be global actors.

Exploring the Transformation of the Occupy movement

The Occupy movement emerged at a time of substantial global unrest. Movements for democracy appeared in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Syria and Yemen. Greece, Italy, and Spain saw massive protests against austerity and economic collapse at the same time. Israel saw massive demonstrations protesting the cost of rent. Chilean and Colombian students occupied universities protesting their highly privatized education systems. Although these movements created favorable conditions for the emergence of the Occupy movement, the movement itself is much more complex than an extension of these waves of protest. The Occupy movement is also connected to a myriad of other collective actions, whether by indirect or direct communication with members of other movements or by utilizing their strategies and organizational structures. It is apparent that the Occupy movement has deep grievances with the neoliberal paradigm, as do the movements in Latin America. The following section will provide an overview of the Occupy movement and discuss the movement's linkages to social movements in Latin America, including the Zapatistas and the MST.

An Overview of the Movement: Emergence, Strategies, Tactics, Actors, and Goals

Timeline of movement activity

The initial process surrounding the planning of the Occupy movement began in early 2011 when Kalle Lasn, creator of Adbusters (an anti-capitalist newspaper), and Micah White, Senior Editor of Adbusters, began collaborating on the creation of a mass encampment protesting Wall Street. The art department at Adbusters designed a symbolic logo to accompany a call for action, a ballerina standing on top of the "Charging Bull" sculpture located near Wall Street. This design was used on a poster that stated, "What is our one demand? Occupy Wall Street. Bring Tent. September 17th." Adbusters released an email proposing the occupation and exclaiming the need for an "American Spring." In their blog they explained, "It was our one simple demand that Barack Obama must ordain a Presidential Commission tasked with ending the influence that corporate money has over our representatives in Washington. Our one simple demand is: Stop the monied corruption at the heart of our democracy."

Online activist groups, such as Anonymous and the creators of US Day of Rage, began spamming the internet calling for citizens to join the movement. Calls for action were readily available to viewers of Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, blogs, online forums, etc. On September 17th, thousands of activists from around the country flocked to Zuccotti Park in lower Manhattan to protest the exploitive tactics of Wall Street and corporate America. The first day appeared chaotic, but with the guidance of the original planning committee, the movement developed a myriad of action committees including: Safe Spaces, Food, Medical, and Direct

Action, among others. Actors on the ground were able to setup an elaborate encampment, complete with tents, food supplies, medical equipment, and even public libraries. There were also spaces for performing artists, prayer, and even electronic charging stations. The General Assembly, the movement's decision-making body, soon passed a declaration of occupation, which expressed the importance of solidarity between those who "feel wronged by the corporate forces of the world."

Within a month of the first protest on September 17th, the movement spread to more than 100 cities in the US. Over the next four months, as movement activity went viral, encampments mimicking the one at Zuccotti Park popped up across the world. As the movement eventually spread to over 500 cities in 100 countries, the Occupy movement became Occupy Together, leading to further decentralization of the movement. Many of these occupations echoed the same grievances as the original occupations, but also incorporated more localized concerns. Movement actors created a collective identity, calling themselves the "99%." The locale of the actual movement became more and more ambiguous as movement activity could be traced not only to tangible occupations, but also to the depths of the internet.

The Occupy movement still exists today in a post-occupation period. Movement actors were forced out of encampments across the world, which largely diminished the movement's visibility. The movement is most active online, where activists still maintain websites, blogs, Twitter accounts, Facebook accounts, etc. Many argue that this period of post-occupation marks a failure of the movement because the initial zeal of the movement has since died down. The movement has planned some activities in the last two years, most notably May Day calls to action. On May 1st of 2012, thousands of protests, mostly organized by the Occupy movement, took place across the world. Once again, the Occupy movement, along with immigrant rights and labor organizations joined together to plan activities on May Day 2013. The demonstration called for people to "come together, support worker and immigrant struggles, and fight the injustices of the 1%." However, these activities were short lived and lacked the intensity of the encampments of 2011.

Movement Actors

Adbusters vehemently expressed their desire for movement actors to choose the direction of the movement, asserting that Occupy Wall Street must be leaderless. As the encampment at Zuccotti Park grew, so did the diversity of movement actors. Protestors came from a variety of different backgrounds: students, teachers, workers, unemployed, and homeless, among others. Many activists came from other social movements: the feminist movement, the environmental movement, the labor movement, the Global Justice Movement. Labor unions played an active role in the marches and protests, and the executive council of the AFL-CIO expressed unanimous support for the movement.

The multitude of movement actors and issues, especially in culturally, politically, and economically distinct areas of the world, adds a layer of complexity to categorizing the various members of the Occupy movement. The original actors on the ground at Zuccotti Park only represent a fraction of the movement's members. Jones explains that, "The verb Occupy is versatile; it lends itself to many uses and therefore multiplies itself easily—Occupy this Town, Occupy that Problem, etc." During the occupation phase of the movement, encampments popped up everywhere under various names. There were encampments named after cities: Occupy Oakland, Occupy Miami, etc. There were country-specific encampments: Occupy Mexico, Occupy Nigeria, etc. There were issue-specific encampments as well: Occupy Our Homes, protesting high foreclosure rates; Occupy the Hood, attempting to bring people of color into the Occupy movement. Each of these movements represents a different sector of the global population, all united by similar grievances and hardships, but at the same time very distinct concerns.

The identities of movement actors must be separated within a number of categories:

by location (country, state, city, town, etc.); by grievances (issue specific movements); and by their role within the movement (on the ground, online). Specifically, it is important to make a distinction between the protestors who participate in the actual occupations and marches, and the protestors who are active on the internet. In the beginning, the Occupy movement experienced relative success in reaching out to the public by exploiting online resources. These individuals represent movement actors who participate in activities in a more passive capacity, and although these actors do not participate in live marches on the ground, their activism manifests itself through statements of solidarity and the sharing of movement activities online. Jones explores this issue by distinguishing between the movement actors on the ground and the “99%.” For him, the “99%” represents movement sympathizers who may or may not have been active in encampments. He considers the actors who worked in General Assembly creating movement literature and who sacrificed their time to keep the movement visible, the backbone of the movement.

Strategies, Tactics, and Goals

The strategies, tactics, and goals of the Occupy movement have shifted since the initial protest on September 17, 2011. As the initial tactic of “occupying” public spaces has been limited, movement actors have been organizing small-scale protests. However, in the movement’s infancy, its strategies were characterized by the occupation of public spaces, non-violence, disruptive tactics, horizontal decision-making, and launching massive internet campaigns to gain visibility. The goals of the Occupy movement are vexing, as movement actors strayed from releasing concrete demands. In the initial call for action, Ad Busters asked movement actors, “What is our one demand?” Many organizers believed that making specific demands would alienate the movement and prevent creative thought on changing the system. Instead movement actors focused on consensus building and voicing grievances, attempting to create inclusiveness and common identities between various movements.

The most visible tactic of the movement was the utilization of public spaces to create a new dialogue concerning grievances felt by movement actors. The encampments were essentially a metaphor for a public takeover of the political system, which many movement actors deem corrupt and overrun by corporate interests. The encampments were essentially mini cities, equipped with food, libraries, medical care, and entertainment. Similarly, the encampments gave organizers the ability to develop literature for the movement, discuss grievances, and make action plans face-to-face. Movement actors utilized horizontal decision-making through the General Assembly, a tactic first employed by the early anarchist organizers. According to the Occupy Wall Street website, “The General Assembly is a gathering place of people committed to making decisions by working towards a collective agreement or ‘consensus.’ It aims to facilitate discussion and getting to know one another, in order to establish common ground and encourage compromise through mutual recognition of difference.” Decentralization is an imperative feature of the movement, as it promotes collective ownership, thus empowering all actors, instead of just a few.

Arguably, the most important tactic of the movement was the successful exploitation of social media. The movement’s swift accretion can be attributed to its successful exploitation of online resources and its disruptive tactics. Nathan Schnieder, columnist for The Nation, points out: “Working with the activist habit of resentment, acquired by seeing protest after protest fail to make headlines, the organizers planned much more for creating their own media than serving anyone else’s.” By streaming videos, utilizing the blog sphere, posting on online forums, and creating Facebook and Twitter posts, organizers were able to quickly spread news of the movement on a global scale. Actors across borders were able to seek advice and learn of new strategies, goals, and tactics more easily.

As the movement spread to different countries, the demands of movement actors became more cultural- and location- specific. For instance, the Occupy Mexico sect heavily

cited the War on Drugs and NAFTA as a source of protest, along with the influence of corporate power in politics. Many goals are specific to each off-shoot of the general Occupy movement. The Occupy Together website explains that, “Occupy wants to end the relationship built on money and donations between our elected officials and corporate interests. We believe this relationship has led to rampant corruption and criminal activities that undermine our economic and political system. We simply want a system that operates in the interest of the people and to empower people to be a part of the process.” However, the movement does not list action plans to achieve this goal. Instead the website lists “issues,” including: Corporate Influence, Corporate Personhood, Student Debt, Wrongful Foreclosures, “Too Big to Fail” Banks, and Healthcare.

In a sense, the movement’s lack of clear and distinct demands is relative to its overall goals, and is largely influenced by the spirit of the movement’s strategies and tactics. Coalition building has been a main function of the movement since its inception. In the early stages of the movement, the NYC General Assembly passed a statement of solidarity, listing the following points of unity: “Engaging in direct and transparent participatory democracy; exercising personal and collective responsibility; recognizing individuals’ inherent privilege and the influence it has on all interactions; empowering one another against all forms of oppression; redefining how labor is valued; the sanctity of individual privacy; The belief that education is a human right; and making technologies, knowledge and culture open to all to freely access, create, modify and distribute.” Making demands would damage the need for solidarity. In many ways, the movement attempted to stray away from normal politics in general, opting to recreate democracy within its organizational structure by imagining “a new socio-political and economic alternative.” Jones explains that, “The protests were heavily criticized for not having clear demands. But, in fact, it was the lack of demands that let the movement grow; anyone who felt aggrieved could get involved, feel ownership, and shape the demonstrations around their own sensibilities—without having to sign on to a particular policy solution that congress was not going to pass anyway.” Essentially, organizers believe the change needed cannot stem from the political system, as it currently operates.

The Diffusion of Strategies Tactics, Goals, Rituals, and Symbols: Exploring Transnational Aspects of Occupy Wall Street

Although the Occupy movement has many unique qualities, it has been influenced by the ideologies of many other movements, both on the national and international level. For instance, the Occupy movement claims to have drawn inspiration from the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, especially its focus on non-violent action. It also draws inspiration from the labor movement, the environmental movement, the feminist movement, and other movements that have roots in the US. When juxtaposing the ideologies of the Occupy movement and various social movements in Latin America, there are obvious similarities. The movements of the New Latin American Left and the Occupy movement are strikingly similar: the use of collective decision-making to create a leaderless movement, straying from the channels afforded by normal politics, and the desire to create an alternative manifestation of globalization are features of each movement. These movements share more than an ideological viewpoint reflective of reprobation of the grievous effects of neoliberalism. These movements share coalitions, strategies and tactics, and even movement actors.

As is the case with many other transnational movements, the Occupy movement has successfully utilized spaces afforded by globalization to spread outside national borders. Through extensive coalition building via technological means, the movement has successfully established an extensive transnational solidarity network. The Occupy movement’s transnational network includes the anti-neoliberal movements discussed above, the Zapatistas, and the MST. The Occupy movement also has roots with other transnational movements, such as the Global Justice Movement, which has similarly drawn much of its inspiration from the anti-neoliberal

movements of Latin America. The following section will explore the Occupy movement's connection with the Global Justice Movement, as well as its connections to the Zapatistas and the MST.

The Global Justice Movement

The Global Justice Movement (GJM), which emerged in the late 1990s, is essentially comprised of a convoluted web of global social movements. The movement is made up of a myriad of actors including NGOs, civil society organizations, transnational advocacy networks, religious groups, anarchist groups, etc. For instance, the Zapatista movement, Amnesty International, and Greenpeace are some of the organizations that constitute the vast list of members. Hosseini explains that there are three essential parts of the Global Justice Movement: “first, Transnational Solidarity Networks (TSNs) facilitated by the Internet and cyber activism, second the Online Deliberative Forums (ODFs) as multiple “public spheres” and the third the WSF [World Social Forum] and its regional and local chapters.”

The 1999 “Battle of Seattle,” which involved over 50,000 activists protesting the World Trade Organization, is often cited as the foundation of the GJM. However, an in-depth analysis shows that anti-neoliberal movements in the developing world largely influenced the emergence of the GJM. The World Social Forum, developed in opposition to the World Economic Forum, is one of the ways the various actors of the GJM collaborate. Moghadam explains, “Initially supported by the Brazilian Worker’s Party (PT) and the Brazilian landless peasants movement [MST], and intended to be a forum for the grassroots movements from all over the world, the WSF has been most frequently held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, a traditional stronghold of the PT.” The WSF first met in 2001, and by 2005, the forum had grown from 5,000 participants to 155,000 participants. The WSF has regional organizational structures, including a few in the US, but these are predominately in Latin America and Europe.

The GJM and the Occupy movement emerged to combat issues stemming from the neoliberal system, and both movements focus heavily on extreme networking and growing national and international movements. In the nascent stages of the GJM, actors centered activities on ending poverty in the developing world. However, it has since focused on the idea of “alter-globalization” to replace neoliberal globalization. Hosseini posits that: “alter-globalization attempts to rebuild global governance and transnational relations not just through institutional reforms but also predominantly through the plural participation of grassroots from below in transnational solidarity networks and autonomous plural public spheres.” The concept of alter-globalization emerging from the GJM resonates heavily with the Occupy movement, especially with its focus on anonymity and resisting being co-opted by formal political organizations and businesses.

Aside from the obvious ideological similarities, there are direct linkages between the GJM and the Occupy movement. Both movements have been influenced by academics and activists like Francis Fox Piven, Cornell West, Chris Hedges, David Graeber, among others. In regards to the composition of Occupy protestors, Sledge explains, “Older organizers were protest veterans, members of far-left parties, anarchist or unaffiliated supporters of the anti-globalization movement who have spent the decade since 9/11 marching against banks and both Democrats and Republicans. Many of them can tick off battle scars and arrest records from a long list of protests: the WTO in Seattle in 1999; the G-7 in Washington in 2002...” According to Berret, “Occupy Wall Street’s most defining characteristic—its decentralized nature and its intensive process of participatory, consensus-based decision-making—are rooted in other precincts of academe and activism: in the scholarship of anarchism.” And this is no coincidence, as David Graeber, well-known anarchist inspired by the Zapatistas, spent six weeks in New York educating demonstrators on horizontal decision-making.

The Occupy movement, the MST, and the Zapatistas

Aside from the sharing of movement actors and ideologies with the GJM, the Occupy movement has made direct connections with the Zapatistas and the MST. For instance, members of the MST visited the Occupy Oakland encampment to issue statements of support and educate movement actors on the strategies of the MST. On November 9, 2011, Elías Araujo, MST member, announced to the Oakland General Assembly, “We came here to bring you a huge hug from the peasants and social movement in Brazil. And more than a hug we came to give you support and an incentive to continue with your struggle.” Similarly, Jeff Frank, National Coordinator of the Friends of the MST, became the official lawyer of the Occupy Chicago encampment. In April of 2012, he addressed Occupy Chicago members on his experiences with the MST to inspire the Occupy movement to employ similar tactics. The Take Back the Land Movement, which assisted with the creation of “Occupy Our Homes”, has also sustained ties to the MST. Take Back the Land began in Florida, where movement actors began occupying foreclosed homes to avoid homelessness. The movement lists the MST as one of its partner organizations, and claims to have drawn its tactics and organizational structure from the MST.

Along with drawing ideological inspiration from the Zapatista Movement, the Occupy movement has also attempted to establish direct linkages with movement actors. Occupy Wall Street issued a statement of solidarity, showing their support for and sympathy with the Zapatista movement. The movement also produced an online petition, after members of Movement for Justice in El Barrio presented information on the Zapatista movement to the protesters in Liberty Square. Similarly, many local offshoots of the Occupy movement have also issued statements in solidarity with the Occupy movement. In response, the Zapatistas invited members of the Occupy movement to attend a conference to be held in Chiapas. The Zapatistas, through one of their support groups, contacted the Occupy movement by sending this message: “Greeting from Chiapas Mexico. We have been asked to invite OWS to this activity, and that there is a special hope that whoever comes could bring a video message to the Zapatistas.” Occupy Wall Street accepted this invitation, and sent some of its movement actors to Chiapas to attend the conference.

Conclusions

Through technological means and forms of indirect and direct connections, the Occupy Movement created and was created by linkages with a variety of other movements. The web of social movement activity that has emerged alongside increased globalization is convoluted, creating linkages in a plethora of ways among a virtually unlimited number of actors. It is apparent that many of these movements share similar tactics, strategies, goals, and even movement actors. The linkages between the various social movements in Latin America only represent a fraction of the transnational connections within the Occupy movement. For instance, Adbusters, the group that sparked Occupy Wall Street, is a Canadian organization. In many ways, the fact that Adbusters is a non-American organization epitomizes the need for transnational clarification of social movement theory: the Occupy movement was, at least in part, cognitively borne from movement actors that could not be explained through nation-specific social movement theory, motivated by transnational goals and targets. Transnational movements have challenged boundaries, finding unconventional ways to connect and combat various problems within the global system. Although many of these movements attempt to address problems that exist on the global scale, it is apparent that they also address problems on the community, regional, and national levels as well. This exemplifies the tensions between the global and the local, as the two are becoming increasingly interconnected.

Strikingly enough, as explored in the final chapter, these transnational linkages remain largely unexplored in social movement theories. Perhaps this is due to the inherent messiness in understanding social movement emergence, organization, structure, and success. But what is clear, as the examples above have shown, is that social movements are changing. Although they

still have grievances on the national scale, neoliberal globalization has amplified transnational grievances. With the changing direction of movement activity, it is clear that social movement theory must reform in order to explore the transnational aspects of social movements.

Transnationalism and Social Movement Theory

The Occupy movement, Global Justice Movement, Zapatistas, and MST are all globalizing forces. At the same time, these movements are influenced by each other, social movements of the past, other anti-neoliberal social movements, and, in some cases, even seemingly unconnected social movements. This spatiotemporal web of social movement activity, depicted by the connections among various anti-neoliberal social movements, demonstrates the growing importance of transnationalism when analyzing social movement activity. Traditional theories of social movements, developed in western nations, mostly examine the emergence and structure of social movements within the context of specific national borders. Therefore social movement theories can inadvertently categorize movements as nationalistic, even when movements are not confined within certain states.

Della Porta and Tarrow explain that, “Modern social movements developed with the creation of the nation-state, and the nation-state has for many years been the main target for protest.” However, with the onset of rapid globalization, the nation-state model faces new challenges, both internal and external. Economic, social, and political power are becoming increasingly decentralized, as people and markets are no longer confined within national borders. International Organizations, especially IFIs and Intergovernmental Organizations, are gaining power, not only as mediators between nation-states, but as international decision-making bodies. Similarly, neoliberal globalization has catalyzed the concentration of political and economic power in multinational corporations. Grievances from policies and situations arising from neoliberal globalization have caused a massive outcry across countries. But who is truly responsible for the policies emerging from neoliberal globalization? As demonstrated with US influence in Latin America, the state is not the only perpetrator. States are influenced by other forces, and no longer possess complete sovereignty over their borders.

The research presented in this paper draws three conclusions: (1) social movements can be globalizing forces; (2) movements are influenced by globalizing forces, whether by other social movements, international organizations, etc.; (3) classifying social movements within the context of the nation-state can be reductionist. The notion of “alternative globalization,” seen in the autonomous communities created by the Zapatistas and MST, and in the ideologies of the Global Justice Movement and the Occupy movement, demonstrates the changing trajectory of social movement targets. Social movements are no longer solely turning to policy changes within specific countries to address their grievances. This is not to say that social movements are completely disengaging with the state, but that movements are engaging with the state less, and no longer see the state as the sole possessor of the means to alleviate grievances. These three conclusions suggest the need for further inclusion of the transnational paradigm in social movement theory.

Traditional Social Movement Theories

The foundations of the traditional collective action theories remain useful in analyzing movements, but fall short in understanding the relationship between globalization and social movements. Three main social movement theories: resource mobilization, political process theory, and new social movement theory, have dominated studies of social movements since the 1970s. These social movement theories emerged after the explosive social movements of the 60s and 70s, when it became apparent that pre-existing social movement theories (collective behavior theory, mass society theory, and relative deprivation theory) were limited in their applications to these new social movements. This section will briefly highlight some of the

defining characteristics of these three major paradigms, and their limitations.

Resource mobilization theory asserts the importance of resources in determining movement emergence, movement continuation, and movement success. McCarthy and Zald explain that, “The resource mobilization approach emphasizes both societal support and constraint of the social movement phenomena. It examined the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used by authorities to control or incorporate movements.” Although resources are important in movement emergence, it is clear that grievances, hardships, solidarity, and collective identity also play a major role in movement emergence and continuation. Edelman notes that resource mobilization theory, “regarded collective action mainly as interest group politics played out by socially connected groups rather than by the most disaffected.” Political process theory is often viewed as an extension of resource mobilization theory, as both paradigms emerged at the same time, and have been refined by similar theorists. The political process approach posits that social movements will emerge when conditions in the political system are favorable. Tarrow believes that political opportunity refers to power shifts in the political system, increased number of allies sympathetic to the movement’s interest, or periods of increased expression by the state. The political process approach is heavily concerned with the relationship between social movements and the state. Although the relationship between the state and social movements is important, it is apparent that transnational social movements may or may not engage with the state because the state is no longer always the target of social movements.

New social movement theory developed in the Europe at the same time as resource mobilization theory and political process theory. New social movement theory tends to stray from emphasizing the importance of institutions and resources in defining the emergence and continuance of social movements. The paradigm emerged to showcase the inadequacies of Marxism in explaining social movement emergence. New social movement theorists believe that new social movements are emerging as society progresses from industrial to post-industrial, or capitalist to advanced capitalist. This paradigm was heavily influenced by the social movements in Latin America in the 1990s. Staggenborg explains that some new social movement theorists “have been concerned with how large scale socioeconomic trends are related to the emergence of new social movements, while others have focused on changes in the sites of conflict and nature of civil society in an “information society.” Other new social movement theorists place emphasis on the importance of collective identity in shaping the emergence and outcomes of a movement. Many scholars have questioned this paradigm and its distinction between “old” and “new” social movements. Although the trajectory of social movements is changing, past collective actions continue to influence new collection actions. This is apparent when examining how the revolutionary movements in Latin America influenced the movements of the New Latin American Left. Similarly, it is apparent when examining the shared horizontal decision-making structures of the Occupy movement, Global Justice Movement, Zapatistas, and MST.

Transnationalism

The transnational paradigm provides the missing link in major social movement theories, and may better explain the relationship between globalization and social movement theory. Ghimire explains that, “Social Movements frequently mutate or entirely new ones emerge, thus the need to a constant renewal on the existing theoretical and analytical parameters.” The transnationalist approach has become increasingly popular in the study of social movements since the rise of the Global Justice Movement. As Ayers notes, “It is widely accepted that recent global transformations such as growing economic integration, emerging issues that transcend national borders, the proliferation of international institutions, conference, treaties, and the communications revolution have given rise to contentious politics that transcend national borders.” Transnational activism is not a new phenomenon, but with the emergence of new

transnational social movements, such as the Occupy movement, it is apparent that it is occurring on a much larger scale.

Pietese explains, "...much collective action itself is a globalizing force. It is carried by technological infrastructure and possibilities, propelled by political opportunities and driven by necessity. From the outset, globalization is not something that occurs outside collective action and vice versa: globalization is rather a spatial expression of domain, a condition and medium of collective action." Thus, social movements are not independent of the forces of globalization, and have the ability to propel globalization. As seen with the transnational connections between the Occupy movement and the Zapatistas and MST, movements have the ability to coalesce with each other quickly, and with more intensity. Therefore by exploring the relationships between social movements across borders, and the cross-border aspects within movements, we can better understand movement emergence and movement progression.

According to Ghimire, "despite increased international economic and cultural integration in recent decades, the national setting continues to remain acutely important in contention politics." Each of the movements discussed in this paper have inherently nationalist characteristics, and are dependent on national culture. For instance, the MST and the Zapatistas are heavily comprised of rural actors that still rely on agriculture. The occupations created by these movements serve as a solution to their particular grievances. The Occupy movement, particularly Occupy Wall Street, created squatter-like communities like the Zapatistas and MST that were more of a tactic rather than a solution. Occupy Wall Street actors used the encampments as a form of contentious politics as well as a place to inspire dialogue. Each of these movements has engaged with the state in some capacity, but do not rely on the state to address their specific grievances.

Although the capacity of the state to solely maintain and confine that which lies in its borders is becoming more arbitrary, the nation-state model is still a salient feature in the overall structure of the international world system. Therefore traditional collective action theories are still relevant in analyzing social movements. Relationships between the local and the global are complex. Illusive and complex forces, such as the world market, do not make easy targets for movement actors. Similarly, although neoliberalism is a feature of the international economic political arena, its policies can be implemented on a local scale. My research shows that the mobilizations against neoliberalism discussed in this paper do not operate completely independent of each other, but can be seen as part of a web of spatiotemporal relations. At the same time, there are aspects of these movements that are very nationalistic and very much dependent on culture. Therefore I argue that it is important to recognize the transnational aspects within social movements, while still drawing distinctions between movements and within movements themselves.

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Endnotes

1. There is a difference between general globalization and neoliberal globalization. General globalization refers to overall process of globalization: the increased flow of ideas, people, goods, services, etc. across borders. Neoliberal Globalization refers to the spread of the neoliberal doctrine across borders, a process that is quicker because of general globalization.
2. This refers to Tarrow and Tilly's definitions of normal politics and contentious politics. Normal politics refers to the general political processes that individuals or groups use to gain concessions from the government. This includes elections, or writing to a member of the government to change his or her stance on a particular policy. Although members of the Occupy movement and other anti-neoliberal movements have engaged in these kinds of actions, they are engaging less. However, movement actors have engaged in contentious politics, which refers to utilizing disruptive means to influence politics.
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