More social movements or fewer? Beyond political opportunity structures to relational fields

JACK A. GOLDSTONE
George Mason University, U.S.A.

Abstract. If social movements are an attempt by "outsiders" to gain leverage within politics, then one might expect the global spread of democracy to reduce social movement activity. This article argues the reverse. Granted, many past social movements, such as women's rights and civil rights, were efforts to empower the disenfranchised. However, this is not typical. Rather, social movements and protest tactics are more often part of a portfolio of efforts by politically active leaders and groups to influence politics. Indeed, as representative governance spreads, with the conviction by all parties that governments *should* respond to popular choice, then social movements and protest will also spread, as a normal element of democratic politics. Social movements should therefore not be seen as simply a matter of repressed forces fighting states; instead they need to be situated in a dynamic *relational field* in which the ongoing actions and interests of state actors, allied and counter-movement groups, and the public at large all influence social movement emergence, activity, and outcomes.

A major dialogue has opened up on the topic of political opportunity and social movements. What constitutes opportunity? Is it only structural factors, or perceptions? Domestic factors or international? State configurations, or the situational field comprising elites, countermovements, and publics?[1]

I propose to enter this debate by examining a concrete question – are the opportunities, or more generally, the factors that facilitate social movements, including radical and violent movements, likely to increase or diminish with the global spread of democratic, representative institutions? By democratic institutions, I mean those laws and practices in which citizens and groups are given rights to assemble, speak, write, and associate freely; are able to participate in political decisions through elections of officials or voting on ballot issues; and have those rights protected by an accessible, open, and independent court system. Of course, any given state may mix these features in different degrees, and not all may be accessible to all of its inhabitants. Indeed, in most

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societies with democratic institutions, a goodly portion of inhabitants do not enjoy full access to these rights, and protest often involves precisely these issues. Nonetheless, on a global scale, more nations and more individuals have come to expect and acquire such rights, and we thus can speak, with full awareness that this is a matter of degree, of the spread of democratic institutions. Examining the likely impact of these institutional changes on protest provides a useful angle of approach to the debate on whether and how changes in "political opportunity" affect social protest.

I do not start out with a checklist of factors that constitute opportunity, however, and then seek how the global spread of democratic institutions will affect them. Rather, I start by examining how the spread of democratic institutions is likely to affect movement actions, given the empirical cases of movements with which I am familiar, and then see how those tentative conclusions may force us to rethink issues in our understanding of political opportunity and contentious politics.

Globalization of democratic institutions and social movements

Global movements for democratization, like other aspects of globalization, are not new. Samuel Huntington has referred to the post-World War II spread of democratic regimes and ambitions as the "Third Wave" of global democratization, and John Markoff has pointed out that global democratization has a history of multiple waves, carried by national and international movements, going back to the nineteenth century.[2] The period of the "Atlantic Revolutions" from 1776 to 1828 saw democratization efforts spread in Europe (Britain, France, and the Netherlands) and the New World; the years from 1848 to 1918 saw a global wave of efforts at building constitutional republics, extending throughout Europe and to Turkey, Mexico, Iran, and China; and the six decades since the end of World War II have seen a steady spread of anti-colonial and anti-authoritarian revolutions and reforms in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. These waves of democratization have sometimes been brought about by revolutions, sometimes by reforms. My concern here, however, is not with the causes of these pro-democracy movements, but rather with the consequences of their success for future social movement activity.

Social movements have most often been characterized as movements of those "outside the polity," or as "challengers," seeking goals that they

are unable to pursue through institutionalized political processes.[3] In addition, although authors on the "new social movements" argue that this is not exclusively the case, social movements have most of ten been depicted as acting on behalf of the economically struggling or disadvantaged, seeking greater economic justice in sharing society's wealth and economic opportunities.

One might therefore expect that if globalization brings democratic institutions to more and more societies, then the number of groups who are "outside" the polity should decrease. Global democratization might, it seems at first glance, open the way for people to reach their political goals through joining and supporting political parties, and taking advantage of access to more open and responsive regimes. It is certainly true that initially, when democratic institutions are only partially in place, or only accessible to limited groups, then those who are "outside" or unable to access these institutions or rights may be moved to protest actions to secure their access and rights. Yet as more and more groups gain access to political institutions and acquire guaranteed rights, then institutionalized politics would gradually replace protest as the means by which people seek to influence political outcomes.

Yet I believe this would be quite wrong. Instead, it is more likely that the opposite will occur. As democracy spreads, social movements – even more violent movements – seem *more*, not less, likely to emerge and engage in contentious politics. Whereas David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow have suggested that we may be moving toward a "movement society," I think they are too modest.[4] More likely, we are moving to a "movement world."

Let us examine the relationship between movements and democratization, to show why there are excellent reasons for movement activities to be spurred, rather than reduced, by the global spread of democratic regimes and of rights to political access and participation.

States, parties, and social movements

The notion that political party competition in democracy offers an alternative, and preferable, mode of political organizing to social movement agitation has been received wisdom for many decades. William Gamson even argued that for social movements one form of success – even if none of the movement's explicit policy goals is achieved – is

simply to make the transition from acting outside of institutionalized politics to being accepted as a legitimate actor in the field of parties, lobbying, and electoral politics.[5] As J. Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans state this distinction: "social movements ... constitute a potential rival to the political representation system."[6] Therefore, as Mary Fainsod Katzenstein noted: "Students of social movements commonly associate institutionalization with demobilization. . . . Social movements . . . are necessarily extrainstitutional."[7]

The transition from contentious movement to regular player in institutional politics is often treated as not only an empirical relationship, but as a normatively desirable outcome. Thus, as social movement actors gain institutionalized access to the political system, we expect that protest action by such actors would (and indeed, normatively *should*) fade away. Bresser Pereira et al. argue that "if reforms are to proceed under democratic conditions, distributional conflicts must be institutionalized. All groups must channel their demands through the democratic institutions and abjure other tactics."[8] In other words, protest is for outsiders and opponents of the system; normal citizens seeking policy changes or social reforms should stick to supporting political parties and candidates, and use the legal system, petitions, and lobbying to pursue their goals.

Yet in a recent book, building on the "contentious politics" view of McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, my coauthors and I advance a different claim, namely, that social movements constitute an essential element of normal politics in modern societies, and that there is only a fuzzy and permeable boundary between institutionalized and non-institutionalized politics. We argue that social movement activity is not so much an alternative to institutionalized politics, diminishing as the latter increases; rather it is a complementary mode of political action, which increases even as democratic politics spread.[9]

To be sure, there are quit distinct behaviors at the extreme ends of the spectrum of institutional and non-institutional politics. Elections, legislative votes, and court decisions are quite different in their conduct and content from protest marches, demonstrations, or boycotts. Yet in examining both nineteenth- and twentieth-century social movements, we find that the same actors, the same groups, and the same causes often were simultaneously involved in social movement actions and institutional political actions. In other cases, actors and groups moved back and forth between movement actions and institutional political actions

as tactical moves in pursuit of their overall strategy. Even after achieving full access to institutionalized politics, movements continued to engage in contention for a variety of purposes that involved influencing the political system. Indeed, the very presence of democratic politics often increased the value and effectiveness of movement actions.

To the extent that democratic institutions are spreading in the world today, this is not merely an adaptation or appropriation of institutions by political elites; it is instead a response to mass social movements seeking democratization as a goal.[10] The normal story of the development of social movements is that they became part of normal politics in response to greater citizenship rights and the development of political party systems in western democracies.[11] Today, the reverse seems to be true – in eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America, and southeast Asia, new research is showing how citizenship rights and political party systems are developing out of social movements.[12] Emerging democracies thus are arriving already equipped with habits and experience of mobilization for collective action. Once such movements succeed in bringing democratic institutions to their societies, they do not thereby extinguish movement actions (although specific movements and organizations themselves may fade). Rather, new movements emerge and proliferate in response to the new opportunities created by democratic institutions and the plurality of groups entering the political arena.

Inside or out? Social movements and institutionalized politics

Prior to the 1980s, prevailing images of social movement actors were that they were outsiders. In the words of Jenkins, they were "actors who are excluded or marginalized in the political order."[13] Recognition of the role played by the middle class, by intellectual and professional elites, and by students in the so-called "New Social Movements" somewhat changed the view of participants in social movements, but scholars still saw them as acting mainly outside of institutionalized politics, emerging only for intermittent rounds of conflict with established institutions and authorities.[14] Yet empirical research has repeatedly shown that the actors, the fates, and the structures of political parties and social movements are tightly interdependent.

Ever since the Republican movement in nineteenth-century France, the same individuals have often been both social movement activists and political candidates.[15] In the United States, presidential

candidate Ralph Nader used a third-party challenge to extend his consumerist/environmentalist movement, while in Europe former environmentalist activists have become members of the German parliament and even ministers as politicians of the Green Party. Gay political activists have run for local offices, and leaders of the movement for AIDS research have taken seats on government regulatory bodies. The same individuals often give their time and money both to social movements and to conventional party campaigns.[16] As Meyer and Tarrow explain, "participation in protest activity has not come at the expense of other forms of participation. . . . People who protest are more, not less, likely to vote and engage in the whole range of conventional citizen politics."[17]

Not only the personnel, but also the organizations that channel protest and "conventional" political actions, are increasingly intertwined. Hanspeter Kriesi et al. point out that social movement organizations sometimes act like protest groups, organizing protest actions, while at other times they act like normal lobbies, seeking to provide information and advice to officials, and still at other times act like parties, or party auxiliaries, helping get out the vote for particular candidates.[18]

Indeed, in the United States and western Europe, political parties and social movements have become overlapping, mutually dependent actors in shaping politics, to the point where even long-established political parties welcome social movement support, and often rely specifically on their association with social movements in order to win elections, as with the U.S. Republican Party and the Religious Right.[19] Conversely, many social movements can barely exist and certainly not succeed without sponsorship from institutionalized political parties.[20] For example, Diarmuid Maguire shows how both the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the Italian peace movement depended on support from established parties. CND initially grew and seemed likely to gain success when the Labour Party supported it; yet as soon as Labour decided that CND was not in its interest and turned against the movement, its chances for success dropped to zero and its support dried up. In Italy, the peace movement "could emerge only with Italian Communist Party (PCI) support, and it was organizationally and financially dependent on the party."[21]

The stance taken by institutionalized political parties toward social movement issues often determines the approach and fate of social

movements.[22] In return, the support or lack of support given by social movements to political parties can determine the latters' electoral success.[23] In U.S. cities, as Heidi J. Swarts has shown, elected city councils and mayors rely on guidance from social movements to set their agenda and provide information for decision-making.[24] At the state and national level, Nella van Dyke has demonstrated that cycles of student protest and cycles of electoral change seem to be remarkably synchronized.[25]

This overlap and interpenetration of social movement actors and actions with conventional political participation and political parties is not something new, nor is it limited to established western democracies. In Europe, all of the major labor movements of the nineteenth century worked simultaneously to build unions for organizing protest and to build labor parties for organizing voting and electing representatives. In the United States in the 1930s, the Roosevelt welfare program was advanced by the Democratic Party in conjunction with labor-based and reformist social movements, who meshed both protest and conventional political mobilization, leaving a long-term legacy of active participation of the labor movement in Democratic Party politics.[26] On the right, Nazism began as a social movement, but triumphed as a political party.[27]

Going further back in time, in the United States all the major nineteenth- and early twentieth-century social movements that spawned social movement organizations – the American Anti-Slavery Society, the Farmers' Alliance, and the Anti-Saloon League – also spun off political parties that ran candidates in local and national elections: the Free-Soil, Populist, and Prohibition Parties, respectively. The fate of the movements was intimately tied to the fates of those parties, and vice versa. The Free-Soil Party later developed into the Republican Party of Abraham Lincoln, who eventually brought success to the abolitionist cause. The Populist Party polled 22 electoral votes in 1892, elected several governors and members of Congress, and later fused with the Democratic Party; but the Democrats' defeat in William Jennings Bryan's 1896 campaign then brought the collapse of one of the most widespread and challenging protest movements in the United States since the Civil War. Although the Prohibition Party never was a significant player in national elections, the Anti-Saloon League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union eventually succeeded by combining street demonstrations and literature campaigns with "normal"

politics at the state level, namely by leading referendum campaigns for dry laws in numerous states, which provided the foundation for national prohibition. The fates of major political parties were thus deeply tied to the social movements that integrated with them. Of the major pre-World War I social movements, only the women's suffrage movement remained largely uninvolved with institutionalized political campaigns and party organizations.[28]

Outside the United States, we find that social movement activists and political party organization again overlap, even in the earliest emergence of democratic party institutions. Jan Kubik found that among four east European nations that recently developed democratic institutions; namely, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, and Slovakia, democratic participation and protest activity were not alternatives, but rather complements, that rose and fell together.[29] Those states that had the most active political party participation – Poland and East Germany – also had the most protest. In Russia, the activists of the Democratic Russia Party that successfully backed Boris Yeltsin in his challenge to the Communist Party were recruited from among dissident leaders of the human rights movement, and from among environmental activists who had been among the first organizers of social movements in the former Soviet Union.[30] And in South Africa, the politics of the now democratically elected ruling African National Congress party bear the indelible marks of that party's origins in the violent struggle of protest against apartheid.[31]

The complementarity of protest and conventional political action (lobbying, participation in election campaigns, voting) suggests that studies of the effectiveness of *protest* in terms of the characteristics of protest groups may have been wrongly conceived.[32] Rather, it may be the ability of groups to combine *both* protest and conventional tactics for influencing government actors that best conduces to movement success.[33]

Why was extra-institutional protest seen as the "normal" mode of social movement activity, while spawning political parties, mobilizing voters for referendums and elections, and influencing electoral campaigns and lobbying were seen as *not* part of social movements' tactical repertoire? It seems that most researchers saw a sharp contrast between the protest cycle of the 1960s and 1970s and the relatively quiescent trough of protest activity in the immediate post-war period of the late 1940s and 1950s.[34] The earlier period was seen as representing

"normal" conventional politics, while the 1960s cycle was "normal" protest. The somewhat different character of earlier protest cycles, such as the labor protests of the 1930s,[35] or the middle-class movements of the nineteenth century, such as abolition and prohibition,[36] were overlooked. The implicit model was that once those groups leading the 1960s protest cycle succeeded and were incorporated into the polity – for example, given rights to full political participation – they would use that standing to influence policy by conventional politics, and social movements would fade or continue to be drawn from the excluded.

Yet it has not turned out that way at all. The women's movement, the student left (now focused on international peace, human rights, cultural diversity diversity, and other issues), and the civil rights movement continued to use protest tactics in conjunction with normal political processes to seek their agendas, now expanded beyond mere access to voting to include a variety of issues of fairness (economic as well as political) and welfare.[37] Access to voting rights was simply one issue of contention, *not* the ultimate boundary between protest and withdrawal from protest activities. Thus, long after women obtained the right to vote, "new" women's movements arose over issues of control of their bodies and medical welfare (i.e., abortion issues and breast cancer). Long after 18-year-olds received the right to vote, and after the draft was abolished, college students engaged in protests over U.S. support for apartheid, among other issues. And long after civil rights were granted to African Americans, movements regarding busing, affirmative action, and even men's issues continued to draw protestors into action.

For all of these groups, their repertoire of contentious action did not simply shift from protest to politics; rather, it had always included, and continued to include, both. Indeed, it is something of an irony of the civil rights struggle that while the NAACP pursued legal remedies through the courts, and Black leaders in the South sought change by pressing voter registration, some of the largest and most violent social movement actions were taken by movements of the 'advantaged' who controlled local political institutions, such as the Ku Klux Klan. These situations used such movements not to seek access to democratic institutions, but to maintain control by denying access to others. The KKK used protest action to block change that was being pursued peacefully by actors using institutionalized processes such as voter registration. The image of such violent movements turns the conventional image of

protest – acts of marginalized groups using non-institutionalized processes to gain political access – on its head.[38]

In addition, "new" social movements such as the environmental movement and the anti-abortion movement, which have never been composed of formally disenfranchised actors, from their inception to this day pursue a variety of protest, associational, and political party actions, all aimed at making state policies conform to their goals.[39]

Mutually reinforcing expansions: Democracy and social protest

The reasons for this close and ongoing relationship between protest and institutionalized politics have become clearer from Charles Tilly's path-breaking explorations of the emergence of social movement activity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[40] Social protest repertoires emerged in England at roughly the same time as repertoires for influencing elections to Parliament, and with the same target – influencing the outcomes of Parliament's deliberations. This was not a coincidence, but represented a fundamental evolution in the nature of politics: *both* democratization *and* social movements built on the same basic principle, that ordinary people are politically worthy of consultation. Both protests and normal electioneering seek to influence the decisions of representative bodies by presenting to the public and to those bodies the degree of popular support behind particular goals.[41] Social movement activity and conventional political activity are different but parallel approaches to influencing political outcomes, often drawing on the same actors, targeting the same bodies, and seeking the same goals.

Social protest and routine political participation are complementary in several ways. First, institutional politics, for most ordinary people, is a highly intermittent process, focusing on electoral cycles. Protest and associational actions can go on throughout the seasons and throughout the years.

Second, most conventional political participation only allows a fairly crude expression of choices; one votes for or against a candidate or party that may have a wide variety of positions. Protest and associational actions can focus on particular issues, thus giving greater specificity to actions. Indeed, protests can shape party behavior in this respect, as Elisabeth Clemens has shown for the role of protest in making political parties more responsive to specific social groups

and their claims.[42] This is not always the case; anti-communist or pro-democratic movements have very broad goals, while conventional referendum campaigns or lawsuits are often very issue-specific. However, in general, protest actions allow a degree of focus that is often difficult for ordinary citizens to attain in routine voting and political party participation.

Third, protest and associational actions offer an ongoing method to refine and reinforce the results of conventional elections.[43] Left movements may protest more when a rightist government is in power (and vice versa) to keep their agenda in view or to moderate the actions of the new government; in other cases left movements may protest more when a leftist movement in power (and vice versa) to push that government to make good on campaign promises and honor its commitments. Van Dyke gives evidence of both processes operating in the United States, interestingly in different ways at the national and state levels of governance.[44]

Fourth, social movements, not just parties, can affect the *outcome* of institutionalized electoral contests. Movements can affect elections by not only mobilizing their supporters to vote and support a particular party, but also increasing the salience of issues that are identified with particular parties or politicians.[45] Thus, the U.S. civil rights movement not only mobilized Blacks to vote Democratic in northern states where Democrats had a thin margin in state elections; by dramatizing the injustices of segregation and raising the salience of civil rights issues, the movement also shifted the support given to anti-segregation parties and politicians across the nation.

Protest actions, thus, have certain advantages and complementarities with conventional political action that make protest both an alternative and a valuable supplement to the latter. Indeed, one would expect, and we generally find, that as societies gain and extend their institutionalized political participation through parties and voting, they *also* extend their institutionalized repertoires and participation in social movements and political protest. Both are avenues of political action that open up to ordinary people with the advance of democratization.

There is, then, no reason to expect that protest and conventional political action should be substitutes, with groups abandoning the former as they become able to use the latter. While some groups may, at different times, be more "in," in the sense of being more aligned and integrated with

the institutional authorities, while other groups are more "out," there is neither a simple qualitative split nor a "once and for all" crossing of some distinct line separating challengers from insiders. It is more accurate to think of a continuum of alignment and influence with some groups having very little access and influence through conventional politics, others having somewhat more, others quite a lot; but groups may move up and down this continuum fairly quickly depending on shifts in state and party alignments. Protest may sometimes be a means of moving upward along the continuum, or a response to movement downward, or even an option that becomes easier and more available as institutionalized access increases.[46] The dynamics of protest, thus, have a complex and contingent relationship to a group's integration into institutionalized politics. The notion that there are "in" groups and "out" groups, and that the latter engage in protests while the former engage in politics, is a caricature with little relation to reality.

Violence and protest

One might at least expect that violent protest would decline as more groups gain access to institutions and democratic rights. The simple dichotomy of "in" and "out" groups provided a simple theory of the role of violence in protest: "out" groups would be both the target and the source of most political violence; as groups gained more access to institutionalized politics the level of violence they needed to employ to gain attention, or that would be deployed against them, should decrease. Yet appreciation of the complex dynamics of protest and institutional politics also calls for new reflections on the role of violence.

In fact, the notion that political violence should decline with the spread of democratization has been only partially true. Studies of protest and repression have long recognized that groups with virtually no resources and no access to institutionalized politics have little means for effective disruption or violence, and no defenses against repression. Groups with no access are therefore as unlikely to engage in sustained protest actions as groups with very high access. The relationship between political access and political violence is therefore generally considered to be curvilinear, with more violent protests in states with intermediate levels of repression and political access.[47]

However, even this simple curvilinear scheme does not cover temporal patterns that are also important. When does a state decide that a protest group is a threat requiring repression? Does it depend on the size of the group, its intensity of protest, its level of violence? A recent

study of FBI repression of New Left movements in the United States by David Cunningham suggests that none of these is a solid guide to government repression.[48] Studies of revolution and rebellion have shown that it is often not groups that were just beginning to enjoy institutionalized political access, but those groups that had made considerable gains in institutional power and then were suddenly excluded, or that had acquired considerable economic power and felt entitled to a greater political role, that produced the most violent or revolutionary mobilization.[49]

In the U.S. civil rights movement, protest was generally non-violent during the early stages of the fight for political access. Popular violence by Blacks increased most rapidly *after* civil rights legislation had given Blacks widespread access to state and national politics through voting rights, as it became clear that even those victories in gaining institutionalized recognition and participation rights were not going to yield much immediate economic benefit or relief from residential, work, and other forms of discrimination.[50] The U.S. labor movement suffered exceptional violence from employers in the later nineteenth century precisely as it began to gain unusual success in broad-based mobilization.[51] Indeed, as the studies of the civil rights movement by Joseph Luders, and of U.S. labor conflicts by Kim Voss, demonstrate, violence is sometimes a deliberate product of formally democratic governments avoiding overt repressive actions by instead pitting different groups against one another, or simply failing to intervene to impose order amidst group conflicts.[52] As in Northern Ireland, orchestration of counter-movement and local violence against minorities by non-state actors may provide a tacit means for the majority to repress minorities, even in democratic regimes. Violence may thus be a means to challenge or reinforce group relations within formal democracies, rather than merely a matter of "out" groups facing overt state repression or choosing violent methods of protest. High access without gaining positive results seems as much a formula for popular violence as low to medium access might be.

Thus, as democracy spreads, we may well see more violent movements not merely from those who have been excluded, but from groups that find themselves frustrated by failures or setbacks in democratic institutions that function poorly, or in which ethnic or class struggles are intensified by electoral competition. Often, it is the collapse of partially democratizing countries that leads to the most violent, even genocidal, movements, as in the Nigerian and Rwandan civil wars.[53]

In addition, even as democratic systems mature, this does not necessarily mean an end to violence by movement actors. Tilly pointed out that groups on the margins of institutionalized politics generally need to present themselves as "WUNC" – that is, worthy, united, numerous, and committed to their cause.[54] This may be true for large groups or minorities seeking access to the vote or acceptance for the first time. But what of smaller groups of individuals who are already fully integrated into the polity, but who feel passionately about specific issues that they see as neglected or wrongly dealt with? These individuals do not need to show themselves as "worthy," for they are not seeking personal or group acceptance. They cannot seem numerous, for often they are not. What they do need to show is that they are committed, and dangerous to ignore. Thus, radical environmentalists (e.g., Earth First), animal rights activists, and anti-abortion activists have recently undertaken violent and destructive actions even in the most advanced democracies. There is no reason to presume that such actions will cease simply as democracy advances and spreads.

Opportunities, emergence, and the success of social movements

Let us now return to consider the implications of this line of argument for the study of social movement emergence and success. The "Political Process" model of social movements treated favorable political opportunity structures as a key element in social movement activity, but without much clarity on what constituted favorable opportunity structures, and whether the main contribution of favorable opportunities was to movement emergence or success.[55] Rather, it seemed to say that favorable opportunities conduce to both movement emergence and success, with movement "growth" vaguely mediating the two. That is, the greater the opportunity, the more likely a movement is to both emerge and grow, and the larger the movement gets and the more resources it can mobilize, the more successful it will be. POS (political opportunity structure), thus, acts generally to promote both emergence and success.

Nonetheless, a quick look at the dimensions most often adduced as constituting favorable opportunities clearly includes some factors that seem more germane to movement emergence, others to movement success; some that are particular to specific groups, and others that are general polity characteristics faced by all groups. Taking this list of favorable political opportunity factors from Tarrow,[56] we have:

1. Increasing access (but only for groups or countries where access has been denied – thus a curvilinear form is suggested where low or high and routine access are *not* constitutive of favorable opportunities).
2. Shifting political alignments, so that leaders need to look for new sources of support.
3. Divided elites, so that authorities do not unite to suppress protest.
4. Influential allies, so that protestors may find powerful and sympathetic supporters.
5. Limited repression and facilitation, so that the movement has room to grow and persist in its actions.
6. Low state strength – stronger and more centralized states are generally harder to "crack" and offer fewer entry points for movement contestation.
7. Ineffective and illegitimate state repression – states that engage in inconsistent or excessive repression often *increase* movement success by showing themselves to be ineffective or illegitimate. The skill and mode of state repression is, thus, important to movement outcomes.
8. International conditions and allies that support movement actors and their goals.[57]

This list has been criticized on various grounds.[58] The sheer number of factors is daunting, leading one to ask how they interact, and whether any particular combinations are necessary and sufficient to produce particular observed patterns of events. Nonetheless, it is in many ways a quite useful list of factors that affect social movement activities. Yet it deserves critique for not being sufficiently specific on what elements are most important to movement emergence versus movement success, and for being quite inadequate as specified to deal with the complex relationships behind movement dynamics.

In addition, the arguments above and much other empirical evidence on social movements suggest that the casual treatment of movement emergence and success as part of the same favorable trend, both fostered by the same opportunities, is badly mistaken. I shall argue that movement emergence and movement success are quite different processes, and differently affected by variables in the situational field that potential movement actors face. Thus, the prevailing "political process model" is badly underspecified, or at least, insufficiently specific, on the causes of these two very distinct elements of social movement processes.

Let me focus the empirical argument on social movements in the United States, and consider several distinct bodies of evidence: on student

protests, on government repression against the Civil Rights movement and the New Left, on the ongoing activities of local movements seeking to influence urban policy, and on the movement to add multi-racial categories to the U.S. Census.

The emergence of protest

The argument above regarding democratic institutions and social movements suggests a simple relationship between movement emergence and political opportunities, namely, that democratization – the spread of deliberative bodies purported to be responsive to publics and concerned for public welfare, combined with civil rights of assembly and freedom of expression – itself provides the basic framework for the emergence of social protest movements, as well as for institutionalized political activity. Putting aside for a moment the conditions that lead to the emergence of any particular group (which involves questions of leadership, creating and taking advantage of networks of interaction and mobilization, and the degree of threat or desire for change perceived by group leaders and followers), the conditions for protest or social movement *emergence* seem to be presented simply by increased access, or democratization.

It is true that in decaying authoritarian regimes, where a society is moving from a situation in which social movement and protest activity is harshly repressed as wholly illegitimate (as in authoritarian and party regimes, for example, Iran under the Shah, or Stalinist Russia), towards a situation in which movement activity and protest is seen as partly legitimate or part of a desirable process of movement toward partial or fuller democratization (e.g., in the Shah's Iran under pressure from the United States under President Carter, or in Russia under Mikhail Gorbachev) then other elements of political opportunity structure, including elite divisions and both domestic and international allies for protest actors, do seem essential for protest to emerge.

However, once democratic institutions are in place, then for much of the citizenry at most times, protest on a wide variety of issues is likely to be a normal part of politics, and movement emergence is likely to occur on a wide variety of issues as various interest groups crystallize from interaction networks under the influence of leaders who perceive a threat/desirable outcome as salient to their interests. In terms of opportunities for initial mobilization and protest, as opposed to whether the movement will grow and prosper, most of the conditions listed above

regarding political opportunity structure – state strength, allies, repression – seem irrelevant. Once the first condition – *access* – is in place, the initial emergence of movements seems a normal and inevitable part of politics.

Moreover, there seems no reason to presume a curvilinear trend as posited in Tarrow's treatment, following Eisenger, where only the middling phases of access produce movement action, and high and routine levels of access suppress movement activity.[59] Rather, it appears that once access is open, routine and high levels of movement activity will accompany routine and high levels of electoral political action. Democratic societies should, thus, exhibit a ferment of social movement emergence, with a variety of large and small, broad and narrow, movements bubbling up to pursue a variety of goals using both institutional and non-institutionalized means.

In one sense, therefore, political opportunity structures have a clear meaning: the movement from highly repressive structures to those that begin to offer a degree of popular participation and rights should be accompanied by an increase in both institutional actions *and* protest actions by social movements. However, this completely leaves open the question why, once access has begun to open, certain groups at certain times turn to protest to make it a larger part of their repertoire of actions, or why certain groups, but not others, succeed in their goals.

For example, Van Dyke's study of student protest activity in the United States from the 1930s through the 1990s explicitly sets out to test the idea that protest was triggered by increasing (and curvilinear) access to politics, and elite divisions. She examined the frequency of protests on college campuses and tested for relationships as to whether allies controlling state and federal governments (Democratic control considered as allied, Republican as not), or elite divisions (with one party controlling the executive and the other controlling the legislature), increased the frequency of protests. Surprisingly, she found that most protests occurred when the federal presidency was controlled by an adversary (the Republicans), but that – holding the effect of federal control constant – protests were also more frequent when Democrats controlled state governorships. Moreover, elite divisions at the state level, with executive and legislature held by different parties, were actually associated with a *lower* frequency of protest than a united Democratic leadership.[60] These results run counter to any simple attempt to

correlate the listed POS factors with protest activity. Rather, protest actions occurred throughout the period studied, with the frequency of protest intensifying in a complex pattern of responses to perceived threats as well as opportunities, and in different directions in response to conditions at different levels of governance, without any clear pattern of increase associated with either elite allies or elite divisions.

I have studied the emergence of protest actions in prisons, where one would expect the "political opportunities" for protest to be nil.[61] However, riotous outbreaks of collective action clearly aimed at protesting issues in prisons do occur. The causes, however, are neither simply a matter of increased repression, nor of "loosened" control that provides opportunities. Rather, the causes of protest are more subtle. It is only when the actions of the prison authorities (wardens and prison staff) are in conflict with the public rulings or requirements of external authorities (governors, legislatures, and courts), or where wardens are facing conflict with their own prison staffs, that inmates feel they have a right to protest, to draw attention to conditions that they themselves have been told by some level of authorities are wrong or illegal. To give but one example, in the Riker's Island prison in New York City, a strike by prison officers precipitated a riot by inmates. However, the riot did not begin when the prison officers went out. Rather, the riot began when the strike was settled and it was announced that the settlement would modify or withdraw a previous state-imposed regulation that limited officers' authority to discipline inmates.[62]

Thus, while elite divisions clearly have a role in precipitating protest, as does repression, this is not the same as saying that any given degree of elite divisions or repression generally creates a tendency to protest. The empirical work of Van Dyke and Useem and Goldstone clearly shows that different kinds of elite configurations and divisions can encourage or inhibit protest in complex ways, and that it is sometimes the withdrawal of repression, and sometimes its imposition, that triggers protest actions. To understand why certain groups take certain actions at certain times, we need to know more about the precise relationships among groups and elites than the broad conditions pointed to by current political opportunity theory.

Movement success

Similar shortcomings of the POS model are evident in empirical studies of how movements have gained success. Repression does not

necessarily reduce the chances of movement success, and increased access or divided elites do not necessarily make success more likely.

Recent studies of repression against the Civil Rights movement by Joseph Luders, and of the New Left by David Cunningham, call into question how POS factors operate.[63] Luders shows that movement success was not so much related to the level of state repression of the movement per se as to more extensive relationships involving state repression, permissiveness, and state repression of *anti*-civil rights counter-movements. Luders's study of responses by southern state governments to civil rights activism in the 1950s and 1960s found that state policies fell into roughly two distinct patterns. In the "law-and-order" pattern, typified by South Carolina, the state government committed itself to enforce order and control violence, regardless of the source. In these states, peaceful demonstrations by civil rights activists were tolerated and not harshly repressed. However, violent actions – even those by anti-civil rights groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan – were met with a powerful repressive response by the state. The result was that there were no great dramatic clashes between authorities and civil rights protestors, or between the latter and anti-civil rights groups; thus, civil rights activity remained muted. By contrast, in the "orchestrated repression" states, typified by Alabama and Mississippi, state governments not only encouraged local law enforcement to take whatever actions they wished against civil rights protesters, they also condoned and did not curb anti-civil rights violence by private individuals and groups. The result was a string of lynchings, murders, and violent confrontations with peaceful protestors, which produced a general lawlessness that delegitimized authorities and undermined the support for segregation in the United States. Indeed, it was the "orchestrated repression" policies of southern state governments that necessitated the intervention of federal law-enforcement officials in those states and helped support the civil rights movements. Thus, one cannot tell a simple story of repression of the movement hindering movement emergence or success; rather, distinct patterns of repression involving both the movement and counter-movements, and involving interplay between local, state, and federal levels of government, produced the conditions for movement success. Surprisingly, the "law-and-order" policies that permitted peaceful protest and curbed counter-movement violence might have had greater success in containing the civil rights movement and delayed its success, compared to the violent confrontations with peaceful protesters that brought on federal intervention and sympathy for their cause.

Cunningham shows yet another dimension of repression – the covert repression by infiltration and internal disruption used by the FBI in the 1960s against the New Left. His study shows that these efforts were somewhat successful against individuals, particularly the more extremist radical leaders. Yet the anti-war and student movement grew and flourished in the 1960s despite being the major target of FBI anti-movement activity. He shows that despite a massive effort at repression, the centralization and limited initiative of the FBI as an organization hindered its efforts against a sprawling popular movement. Cunningham's study also shows that the effectiveness of repressive efforts by the state can hardly be calibrated by spending, manpower, or other simple measures. The flexibility and skill of the repressive organizations, and conversely, the volume of support, emotional commitment, and skill of movement leaders, are critical to how a movement responds to repression and whether or not it, nonetheless, achieves success.[64]

Studies of social movement outcomes by Heidi Swarts and Kim Williams illustrate further problems in the use of POS factors to explain movement achievements.[65] Swarts studied the impact of two church-based social movements seeking to influence urban policies in San Jose and St. Louis. In both cases, the movements emerged out of concerns for local issues – education spending in San Jose and urban sprawl in St. Louis. Both movements also used similar tactics, namely large but peaceful demonstrations and meetings, mobilizing hundreds to thousands of supporters, to confront local politicians regarding their policies.

However, the structural conditions they faced were quite different. In San Jose, the urban government and school board were highly centralized; in St. Louis, local regional government was highly decentralized and divided among downtown and suburban governments with very different constituencies. Yet, it was where the movement faced the stronger and more centralized government that it was more successful. In San Jose, after initially unsuccessful meetings with a hostile government, the movement succeeded in obtaining funding for a pilot project. Still, the pilot program proved so successful and popular that the central government adopted it and used its power to expand and implement it. In St. Louis, by contrast, even though the movement began with powerful allies in the downtown St. Louis government, the opposition of suburban leaders, and the very fragmentation of governments – which would have required cooperation of many distinct units to achieve

success – frustrated the movement's attempt to achieve its goals. In other words, centralization and strength of the opponent proved a great aid to success for the movement in San Jose once it was won over, while allies and divisions provided little help or even hindrances to the counterpart movement in St. Louis. In addition, it was not the scope of mobilization or protest activity that influenced success – both movements were similarly successful in being able to mount protest actions. Rather, it was the success of the pilot program in San Jose with the larger, non-mobilized constituency of the city, which turned the government from opponent to ally of the movement's goals.

Williams similarly demonstrates the impossibility of reading movement success from structural factors regarding the movement and the government it faces. Williams examines the success or failure of the movement to modify the pure racial categories in U.S. and state census data – Black, White, Hispanic, Asian – by adding multi-racial categories. Analyzing all the states where multi-racial category legislation was introduced or passed, she finds that the success of the movement in certain states could not be accounted for by the volume of mobilization or the frequency of protest, nor by the presence of elite allies or divisions in those states. In fact, where successful, the legislation was generally passed by large coalitions of Democratic and Republican legislators, and mainly in places where there had been little agitation or protest regarding the issue.

What Williams discovered was that the success of such legislation depended almost entirely on the demographics and economic orientation of the state where the legislation was introduced. Where the demographics entailed a liberal state with a small minority population (less than twenty percent), such as Ohio, Minnesota, and Indiana, the legislation was passed with relatively little dissent. In addition, where the demographics entailed a large minority population (more than twenty-five percent), but with a great deal of involvement with international trade and large populations of urban professionals (the "New South" states of Georgia, Texas, Florida, and North Carolina, California, Illinois, and Michigan), the legislation also was generally adopted. By contrast, the "Deep South" states, despite larger minority populations, did not consider such legislation. Why?

Williams argues that much depends not on the mobilizing group per se, but how – once initial mobilization had raised the issue of multi-racial

categories and put them on the agenda – local politicians viewed the issue as likely to play to their constituencies. In states with small minority populations, or large numbers of urban professionals operating in an increasingly multi-racial but business-oriented environment, politicians saw that de-emphasizing racial divisions by including a "multi-racial" category would be popular or not provoke dissent, and thus were willing to pass the legislation. By contrast, where large black populations had struggled for their rights and remained apprehensive about their political and economic power, multi-racial categorization was seen as a threat by black politicians, who worried that the political and economic claims of black voting blocks would be watered-down by adopting multi-racial census types. In short, it was not so much the movement's actions and capacities nor government repression/allies that mattered for movement success. Instead, it was the structural characteristics of the broader voting constituencies, and how those latent interests were perceived by politicians once the movement had put the issue forward, that determined the movement's failure or success.

Beyond POS: Protest and external relational fields

The preceding studies, carefully examining movement activities, structural conditions, and state responses in a variety of states and localities in the United States, thus reveal complexities that make it difficult to draw conclusions regarding movement dynamics from the POS model. We find that once access is available to some degree, movement actions can be and are undertaken. But what then determines the frequency of protest actions by particular groups and their success is not merely a matter of greater access, allies, elite divisions, or state strength and repression in any straightforward manner. Rather, it is complex relationships involving different levels of state actors, counter-movements as well as movements, threats as well as opportunities, factors affecting the cohesion and commitment of leaders and followers to the movement when under stress, and the potential responses of broader non-mobilized constituencies, that determine outcomes.

Finally, to generalize beyond these specific studies, we could take a sample from a broad swath of social movement history and ask – are there any characteristic patterns of movement emergence or of movement success that correspond to structural conditions or changes? In fact, I undertook such a study some two decades ago, using data from

William Gamson's sample of American social movements from 1800 to 1945.[66] For each of fifty-three movements, I examined the dates when each movement emerged as a social movement organization (SMO), and the dates when each movement achieved its first major policy success. The pattern of movement emergence turned out to be statistically indistinguishable from a random distribution across the entire time period. There was no significant clustering of SMO emergence at any particular periods. There was no greater level of SMO emergence in the mid-to-late nineteenth century when blacks and women were expanding access to institutional politics, nor was there any fall-off after 1920 when the largest previously disenfranchised groups – women and blacks – had been formally granted the vote. Rather, SMO emergence continued at roughly the same rates before, during, and after expansion of the electorate. As suggested, once access is available for much of the population, a ferment of social movement emergence is simply the typical condition of pluralist societies.

In contrast, there was statistically significant clustering of movement successes around economic or military crises when the federal government was particularly in need of broad support (the Progressive Era [which followed the Panic of 1897], the Depression, Civil War, World War I, World War II, and Vietnam). These crises apparently shifted the "political opportunity structure" in a pervasive way that enabled "cycles of protest" to develop and grow.[67] POS may, thus, have a simpler interpretation at the national level, in regard to major crises increasing opportunities for movement success, than is conventionally suggested in the long list of POS factors given, which in fact, are much more ambiguous in their relationship to empirical movement dynamics.

In summary, we find that two very simple principles "work" in regard to relating political opportunities to protest. First, societies with democratic institutions – whether modest or fully developed – are likely to show persistent social movement activity involving *both* institutionalized actions and protest. Second, major protest cycles are likely to be triggered by major society-wide crises, such as military or economic challenges that weaken support for a government. But beyond these two general principles, the impact of specific tenets of the POS model on the protest and success of specific groups seem to be indefinite at best. Thus, we need to go beyond POS to characterize better the complex situations faced by specific social movement actors and organizations.

External relational fields

"Political Opportunity Structure" has been an enormously useful concept in social movement studies, pointing us to several key elements in the external environment of movements that affect how they flourish or fail. Yet, the mounting criticisms of the concept leave us needing to either overhaul this term or replace it.

I wish to suggest the latter. While shifts in political opportunity structures can broadly point to whether opportunities for protest are opening up, and whether they are likely to trigger a protest cycle, they are too broad to tell us much about the development or success of specific movements. Following Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper,[68] we should note that POS has three major difficulties. (1) In pointing us to the "political," it emphasizes conditions relating to states, tending to neglect the role of counter-movements, allied movements, critical economic conditions, global trends and conjunctures, and various publics. (2) In pointing to "opportunity" as the label for changes relevant to movement actions, it tends to neglect how, in many cases, adversity – such as threats, excessive repression, or counter-movement actions – can energize and elevate movements, increasing their support and chances of success. (3) In pointing to "structures" (whether constant or changing) it tends to emphasize pervasive large-scale conditions, and suggest necessary and sufficient conditions for certain outcomes. In fact, different groups may face very different group- and issue-specific conditions regarding their mobilization and success, and such conditions are often more fluid and relational than they are "structural" in character.

I somewhat sheepishly offer an alternative term for what POS was supposed to designate – external relational fields. I wish to stress that the term itself is not important, and others may prefer different labels; rather, it is the content and the agenda for further research that derives from it that matters. I wish to suggest that while POS may describe simple macro conditions relevant to aggregate patterns of protest (e.g. democratization, political crises, and national patterns of authority), a more detailed analysis of the specific context of individual movements is required to understand their dynamics, and for that, I believe it is essential to map out the full range of relationships with other actors and groups that affects their activity.

By highlighting external relational fields, I mean to suggest that there is no clear set of necessary and sufficient conditions for the emergence,

growth, actions, and outcomes of social movements. It would be nice if things were that simple, but the accumulated empirical evidence of the last two decades of research on social movements suggests that they are not. Rather, it would appear that every movement (or related clusters of movements) faces its own group- and issue-specific fields of external relations. Such external fields include (at a minimum): (1) other movements and counter-movements that may compete for attention and resources, or provide reinforcement and alliances, or engage in direct competition or conflict with the movement; (2) political and economic institutions (and their history) that provide the framework in which movements recruit, act, and seek responses; (3) various levels of state authorities and political actors (including political parties and civil and military officials) whose responses to the movement and its actions affect its development and outcomes; (4) various elites – economic, political, religious, media – whose interests, capacities, and actions affect movement development and its outcomes; (5) various publics whose interests, capacities, and actions affect movement development and its outcomes; (6) symbolic and value orientations available in society that condition the reception and response to movement claims and actions; and (7) critical events – such as wars, economic crises, or incidents of violence or outcomes of specific episodes of confrontation. It is the *relations* among these elements of the external field – both relations among them and of them to movement claims and actions – that appear to shape movement dynamics.

Moreover, precisely because the empirical evidence shows that any one specific element, such as elite divisions or centralized state structures, can in some circumstances abet movement mobilization or success, while in other cases hinder mobilization or success, it is necessary to take a *relational* approach, in which the precise effect of specific factors depends on the particular movement, issue, and the relationships among other factors that are operating.

It may seem like this is simply offering a further laundry-list of factors, replacing the cool, parsimonious term of POS with a kitchen sink full of all possible factors affecting movements.

In fact, I would argue that most of our competent accounts of actual social movement dynamics *do* invoke a full range of such factors. McAdam's account of the emergence of the civil rights movement, the source of the "political opportunity" notion, invoked everything from the advent of farm machinery to pick cotton to the emergence of urban

black professionals, to the internal division between state and federal governments, to the impact of U.S. Supreme Court decisions to explain the growth of civil rights activism in the American South after World War II.[69] Since that work, the simplification of labeling such factors a "political opportunity structure" may have moved us in the right direction of looking beyond movements' interests, resources, and organization to understand their growth or success. However, clinging to this simplification may now interfere with us achieving causal analyses of movement dynamics with the specificity and causal richness that McAdam's own account displayed.

The research agenda that I believe emerges from recasting POS into the more flexible notion of external relational fields has two parts: one for studies of individual movements, the other for comparative studies of movement clusters or different movements across time and space. For studies that trace the development of individual movements, rather than identifying static "structures," or individual "changes" in structures that conduce to movement mobilization or success, such studies should aim to identify the key elements *and relationships* of the external relational field. That is, accounts of individual social movements should pay attention to the group- and issue-specific characteristics of a movement's external environment, and how those elements relate to each other and to the group in shifting patterns over time. I would, in fact, submit this is a more accurate statement of what McAdam actually did than to identify "political opportunity structures." Excellent examples of an explicit network analysis of this sort are provided in the essay by Mario Diani in this volume, Pam Oliver and Dan Myers's network analysis of the diffusion of collective action, and Maryjane Osa's work on shifting ties among labor, church, and civil society organizations in the anti-communist opposition under the banner of solidarity in the 1980s.[70]

In particular, drawing on the argument in the first part of this article, the study of external relational fields would not simply treat a movement as an "outside" actor seeking opportunities for "non-institutional" actions; rather, movements would be seen as elements in a complex field of players in politics and society that are seeking advantages by using a variety of tactics. Thus, movements could work through political parties and institutionalized action as well as by protest, and political parties and politicians could work through supporting movements, counter-movements, or protest actions. This approach would

allow, even encourage, the use of game-theoretic and network-analytic frameworks in the study of social movement dynamics, avenues that I believe have been underdeveloped.[71]

For studies that analyze clusters of movements or movement cycles, or undertake comparisons of movements across time and space, the relational approach suggests using dynamic analyses (differential equations for movement growth or event-history analyses, such as that of Susan Olzak[72]) in which conditions at a certain time are linked to specific observed conditions or patterns in subsequent times (or distinct places), yet the conditions and subsequent patterns are both able to change over time. Early studies of movement diffusion, and of patterns in the temporal incidence of movement emergence and success, were perhaps useful beginnings in this regard.[73] However, what is needed is more careful categorization of the independent and dependent variables regarding movements, in particular developing separate indicators for movement emergence, mobilization, activity, and success/failure. Rather than looking for necessary and sufficient conditions in which high or low values of the independent variables predict high or low values of the dependent variables, we will probably first need to chart patterns of relationships, and how such relational patterns are associated with various movement characteristics and trends in varied cases.

For example, Sid Tarrow has suggested that violence in movement action is most characteristic of the "downside" of a protest cycle, in which mainstream actors have grown tired or have achieved moderate gains and reduced their protest actions. What remains are more demanding extremist and radical elements still seeking more to take up violence as a way to press their further claims.[74] Yet this description does not at all apply to recent anti-immigrant violence in Germany, where violence among extremists *is* the characteristic protest action, rather than the tail end of a declining mass-mobilization.[75] It may be the case that *both* patterns are in fact sources of violence in protest – the tail end of declining mobilization *and* initial action by extremists who lack broader support may both be cases where movements adopt violence because they lack the popular support for larger scale, but more orderly, protests. Yet there may also be other patterns of violence, as in cases where state repression or counter-movement actions provoke violence as a response by a protest or guerrilla movement with growing popular support. In other words, we may need to catalog the range of

relational patterns that give rise to particular outcomes before we can speak sensibly of the "cause" or "causes" of such items as violence in social protest.

McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly have started in this direction by cataloging "mechanisms" that recur in numerous and varied episodes of political contention.[76] However, what I am suggesting here is less an identification of persistent or recurrent mechanisms in relational fields – however valuable that may be. Rather, what I am suggesting instead is a search for patterns in quantitative data on the emergence, growth, actions, and success/failure of large numbers of movements that identify the frequency of particular relational patterns and their association with particular aspects of movement dynamics and outcomes.

Not a conclusion

To return to the issue with which I opened this article, what can we say about the impact of the globalization of democracy on movement emergence and success? From the general principles of analysis of political opportunity structures, it seems clear that as democracy spreads and matures, social movement emergence and activity will grow and continue. In addition, if protest cycles and movement successes are linked to periods of economic and military conflict, waves of movements are likely to continue to emerge even in advanced democracies, much as they did in the 1960s and 1970s throughout the western democracies. While some have argued that the spread of democracies will reduce interstate wars, research by the State Failure Task Force (Goldstone et al., forthcoming) has found that partial and transitional democracies are highly prone to internal wars and political crises, as various groups struggle to establish their stakes in new and often imperfect democratic institutions.[77] Thus, even in a world of democratizing nations, we may expect expanding and ongoing social movement activity.

We should also not be complacent that violence will fade from politics as democracy spreads. Those who find themselves losing elections or committed to issues that have only modest electoral support may well try to accelerate their agendas by violence. It is disturbing that numerous acts of political violence, property destruction, and terrorism have occurred in advanced democracies – Aum Shinriko

in Japan; the "Red" terrorist groups in Italy, Germany, and Japan in the 1960s; the Oklahoma Federal Office bombing; and the still-unknown anthrax terrorist of the Atlantic seaboard in 2001 in the United States.

Open and democratic societies encourage protest, generally making it more useful and attractive; they do not render protest or even violence obsolete. In this respect, the "social movement world" is expanding and here to stay.

However, broad notions of political opportunity do not give us much leverage in understanding the dynamics of particular movements, namely which movements at which times are likely to grow and succeed, and which are likely to wither. For this, a more sophisticated approach than the simple listing of factors associated with POS is needed. Indeed, empirical studies consistently show that the factors associated with POS do not work in predictable ways. Rather, movement actions and success depend on a complex set of relationships among the movement, counter-movements, allied movements, varied elites, various state authorities, and various publics, as well as the economic, international, and ideological milieu in which these actors work to influence each other. Thus, an approach that seeks to map out the full external relational field faced by social movements seems to offer a better chance of understanding the dynamics of particular movements than the broad and aggregative approach generally implied by analysis of political opportunity structure.

Notes

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