CHAPTER 14

Adjusting the Lens: What Do Globalizations, Transnationalism, and the Anti-apartheid Movement Mean for Social Movement Theory?

Gay W. Seidman

"On or about December, 1910," Virginia Woolf ([1924] 1950) once wrote, "human character changed. The change was not sudden or definite [but] a change there was, nevertheless; and, since one must be arbitrary, let us date it about the year 1910. All human relations had shifted—those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature." Something in the air just before World War I, Woolf claimed, pushed Europeans to focus on psychological dynamics rather than external description, privileging individual perspectives over social status.

Just about a century later, a similarly intrepid observer might well claim that we are going through another major intellectual sea change, a shift in perspective. Somehow, the world appears to have changed: people everywhere seem to accept the once preposterous notion that local events can only be understood through a global lens and to view social processes primarily as local manifestations of global patterns. Internationally, human character and social relations appear to be going through a dramatic upheaval—judging by a sudden and overwhelming concern with the way local lives are shaped by global flows, as politicians, business leaders, and academics assume that globalization is a primary dynamic in all our lives.

This new sensibility appears to be as important to social scientists as to novelists and business leaders: increasingly, we focus on global dynamics rather than local ones, privileging *globalization*—a term that covers a multitude of technological, institutional, and cultural processes—over perspectives that emphasize the unique and distinct experiences of people in different locations. The implications of this paradigm shift are enormous, as much for the questions we ask and the assumptions we make in research as for the way we lead our daily lives: social scientists are only beginning to think through what it means for social theories and research projects to take a more global perspective on human character, human relations, and social institutions.

In this chapter, I will first briefly discuss some facets of what we often call globalization, insisting that it involves both material changes in the organization of our (global) society and changes in the way we perceive and talk about reality in the shift from a territorially defined understanding of social life to a social imaginary built up more through flexible networks, relationships, and institutions than organized around geographically bounded spaces. Then, after suggesting some of the ways these shifts might lead us to rethink our assumptions about social movements—using chapters from this volume to illustrate some challenges that globalization may pose for social movement theory—I will briefly describe what I consider to have been a truly transnational social movement, the anti-apartheid movement of the 1970s and 1980s, in an attempt to illustrate the ways in which transnational movements might require theorists to rethink basic assumptions about identity, mobilization, resources, and the targets of collective action. Finally, drawing on the chapters in this volume for guidance, I will suggest some of the directions that a more global social movement theory might take.

Globalization at the End of the Century

As many analysts have pointed out, globalization is hardly new: people in far-flung corners of the world have been linked for centuries by multifaceted social, political, and cultural exchanges. Many of the interconnected patterns currently attributed to new global forces have been in play for centuries (Arrighi 1994; Hirst and Thomson 1996; Wallerstein 1998). The same breathless sense of discovery and limitlessness in which business leaders speak of a new global economy infused nineteenth-century discussions of unregulated global financial flows (Helleiner 1994), while discussions of the promise implicit in new computer technologies often parallel the enthusiasm that greeted the pneumatic tire and the steam engine.[1] Modernity has long been global, and, for the world's elites at least, international linkages are not so novel. Furthermore, as the editors of this volume so elegantly point out, the processes commonly called *globalization* are so varied that the word should only be used in the plural. No single process can be labeled globalization except at the risk of severe oversimplification, serious misunderstanding, or both.

Yet for most of us the late-twentieth-century sense of global reach seems new and remarkable, at least at the level of daily experience. Innovations ranging from electronic mail to new financial instruments to new patterns of industrial outsourcing link the world in an ever-changing web, extending beyond the control of any single government. Although some authors argue that these changes simply mark a return to the unregulated international trade regime of the late nineteenth century, the sense that something significant has changed is remarkably persistent. For many analysts, the close link between territory, state, and political identity today seems almost a vestige from an earlier age; increasingly, it seems more appropriate to conceptualize human identity as fluid and changeable and human

times detachable from territorial identities, than to think of local communities and traditions as bounded, static, or timeless (Appadurai 1996; Yanagisako 1995).

For social scientists, this paradigmatic shift must alter both the questions we ask and the assumptions we make about how communities experience change. Just as multinational corporations are linked through e-mail and air travel, so are diasporic ethnic communities or communities of activists who work on issues of international human rights, environmental degradation, or gender inequality (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Ideas and resources seem to move around the world with astonishing speed and intensity. Political actors no longer limit their claims to territorial localities: local concerns about environmental issues are quickly reframed in terms of global dynamics (Rothman and Oliver 1998), as are discussions about gender inequalities or even issues as parochial as ethnic conflict (Basu 1995; Brubaker 1996; Malkki 1994). Global linkages have taken on new prominence in our conceptualization of human possibilities as we reach the end of the twentieth century: a new awareness of what the editors of this volume call the transnational public sphere is transforming the way local actors visualize the stage on which they perform.

To some extent, this shift in perception reflects real changes in the way we experience the world. Globalization, whatever it is, has taken place on several levels. Rapid flows of information, technology, and trade give new immediacy to events far across the globe and make national economies increasingly vulnerable to international pressures (Castells 1989; Sassen 1998). The new organization of production is of course uneven and incomplete, and some areas are far more linked to global production processes than others; while more advanced industrial areas remain central to global production, for example, most of Africa remains marginal. Yet the discourse of globalization in business journals takes on a life of its own. Capital has a new sense of its own mobility, while governments seem ever more concerned about whether state policies will attract or repel those fickle international investors (Harvey 1989; McMichael 1996).

Large institutional changes alter the context in which local processes occur: global institutions have assumed new powers and a new visibility. While international bodies like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) continue to work through national governments, many observers suggest that the character of national sovereignty has changed in the process: especially for the last three decades of the century international organizations have assumed increasing power over global economic forces, and even over local political processes, even as they continue to proclaim their respect for national sovereignty (Barnett and Finnemore 1999).

For local actors, the transnational public sphere takes on new importance—both as a site for contestation and as a source of new resources, ideas, and support. Though some people respond by reasserting local identities—like the conspiracy-minded Michigan farmer who placed a sign in a field near Ann Arbor in 1996 demanding "UN Troops Out of the U.S."—most of us recognize the growing tendency for the international community

active role in local disputes and policies, especially in places where weak national states have little leverage in international hierarchies. The Korean worker who interpreted rising unemployment in 1997 as the result of IMF policies—carrying a sign at a Seoul demonstration, in English, reading "IMF = I am Fired"—appears as aware of global forces as the refugee who measures his experience against international norms and laws, appealing for help to the "international community" (Malkki 1994). People around the world in the late twentieth century interpret local experiences in terms of international forces; they recognize that those forces impose real constraints on their choices, and many look beyond the local nation-state for resolutions to the problems they experience at a local level.

But even those of us whose lives are relatively untouched by international organizations can hardly ignore the extent to which the world is increasingly integrated: we are all touched daily by the cultural shifts linked to globalization—perhaps the most obvious, and least reversible, changes of all. Commercially, Hollywood films are as ubiquitous as McDonald's hamburgers, but just as importantly, serious musicians, novelists, and cookbook writers regularly repackage and hybridize local cultures in an appetizing bricolage for consumption across the globe—at least for consumption by those of us with the incomes required to purchase the world's varied flavors.

Of course, cultures have long interacted, and local consumption has been affected by imported products and possibilities since before silks and spices traveled overland from Asia to Europe and before the nineteenth-century hybridization that accompanied European colonial expansion. But in the late twentieth century it has become difficult even to claim that a particular cultural form is purely local. Increasingly, observers of specific cases point out the extent to which diasporic networks of migrants traveling, interacting, and returning have transformed and reshaped cultures across the globe in ways that undermine any serious discussion of a static cultural "tradition" of the sort that once informed anthropological studies (Cooper and Stoler 1998). If local tastes remain important in shaping how global cultural products are consumed in specific places, there is nonetheless a popular sense—in Brazil as in Beijing—that cultural processes involve global as well as local ingredients and ingenuity and that cultural meanings are in a state of constant flux and reinvention—just as local economies are in a state of constant vulnerability to the shifts and fluctuations of international investors and speculators.

These processes of globalization are uneven, incorporating people in different regions and different social strata in very different ways; the "global cities" that serve as the central nodes of global commerce and interchange involve as much exclusion and marginalization as inclusion, as much reinterpretation of global processes as reformulation of local ones (Sassen 1991). But in the late twentieth century the global seems to take on new importance, and understanding the human condition requires examining the global context as well as the local and considering how the interplay between the two reshapes both.

Social Movement Theory: Local Lens, Localizing Assumptions

This new awareness of global processes is visible throughout the social sciences and humanities, but perhaps it has provoked no more heated discussion than in debates about social movements. Social movement activists—and, although perhaps to a lesser extent, social movement theorists—have long been aware that local phenomena are linked to broader global processes, but in the late twentieth century that awareness seems to take on new importance. Social movements invariably involve the construction of collective identities and the mobilization of broad constituencies. This new global perspective on identities, networks, and communities—a perspective that emphasizes the interconnectedness between different localities and parts of the world and emphasizes the way international processes shape, constrain, and redefine local ones—has prompted social movement theorists to reconsider many of their basic assumptions.

These questions motivate many of the essays in this volume. When does a local social process become a global one? When does a local social movement become so linked into global networks that it is in fact a global social movement? What do global processes mean for the very local processes through which movements create collective identities and movement constituencies? Who represents movements on the global stage and how are those representations redesigned for international consumption? How do local movements change in response to global resources or audiences? What role do global norms and organizations play in provoking local movements? How might global political processes create new opportunities for local groups seeking to challenge powerful interests at home?

And then there is the other side. How do these global networks alter the internal dynamics of local social movements? How might global processes undermine local groups' abilities to set agendas and shape realities? How does differential access to international audiences—different access to computers and electronic mail systems, different abilities to reach the donors and professionals of the foundation world—affect local hierarchies of power? To what extent do these international linkages constrain the choices facing local activists?

Activists have long been aware of the way global dynamics and audiences might aid or constrain their causes—more aware, perhaps, than many academics. As several essays in this volume demonstrate, social movement activists have long appealed to a global vision of common humanity, and common universalistic norms, to build an international constituency for local movements: the antislavery campaign (Keck and Sikkink, this volume) as much as modern human rights movements (Ball, this volume) relied on international embarrassment and pressure for its efficacy, while concern with wrongs in far-off locations has long been the basis of international appeals for aid (Rucht, this volume; van der Veer, this volume).

International appeals and cross-border activism are not new. For centuries, activists have sought help abroad and internationalist activists have worked across borders: French activists aided the American Revolution, African-American missionaries publicized King Leopold's barbaric regime in the Congo (Hochschild, 1998), and trade unions have long sought to build an international alliance of working-class organizations. At least since the middle of the last century activists have appealed to an inchoate "international community," invoking universal norms to challenge long-established social practices. As the editors' introductory essay underscores, internationalism is perhaps especially visible in colonial and postcolonial settings: international hierarchies mean that activists in Asia, Latin America, or Africa are especially aware of the way global forces constrain possibilities. Historically, anticolonial activists could hardly ignore the role of global inequalities (Lo, this volume) any more than Palestinian refugees today can ignore the role of international politics in shaping the very space in which they live (Peteet, this volume). When environmental activists today invoke a common global destiny in efforts to protect whales or the rain forest—or when a Brazilian child advocates drawing on international norms to demand changes in local legislation (Guidry, this volume)—they echo the discourses of a shared global morality and the assertion of universal norms that have marked social movement activists' challenges to established social practices from at least the eighteenth century.

Yet, while activists have often acknowledged the importance of global dynamics in the way they understood and framed issues, academics have generally been more cautious—in all realms of thought, perhaps, but especially in terms of their views of social movements and collective action. Social movement theories have tended to view the world through a remarkably localized prism: local collective identities, campaigns, organizations, strategies. The fact that these appeals are never uncomplicated—that activists often disguise parochial interests in universal claims, that they often seek an audience that is not in fact listening, and that they often represent local issues in universal terms in order to gain international support in local struggles—this fact should not obscure the internationalist character of the claims of many social movements. If European workers abandoned the international socialist movement in the face of World War I, returning to nationalist jingoism just in time to support their countries' imperialist efforts, should that lead us to ignore completely the long history of attempts by activists to build an international workers' movement?

In part, I think, the academic emphasis on social movements as localized phenomena reflects the logic through which most social movement analysts have proceeded and the methods that researchers have used. In general, social movement studies have explored the construction of collective identities and the mobilization of social movements from the ground up, often beginning with individual participants and looking at factors that explain participation or abstention; or they use a case study approach to examine how local constituencies mobilize around specific

issues and/or to explore efforts by local activists to initiate some kind of social change at the local level.

Perhaps not surprisingly given the close links between academics who study social movements and activists, this grounded approach—which looks at cases within territorially defined sites and tends to view mobilization and framing in local terms—parallels the discursive strategies employed by many activists. Activists commonly legitimate and represent collective identities through geographically defined collective histories—especially, perhaps, in nationalist or ethnically defined movements, even when believing in those common geographic histories requires a significant stretch of imagination (van der Veer, this volume; Derluguian, this volume; Uehling, this volume). But frequently academics trying to study movements rely on those geographic and historical definitions in thinking about movements' potential constituencies, unconsciously reflecting movements' self-definition. Indeed, academic observers who challenge those collective histories, those geographically defined identities, risk undermining their access to movements: academics cannot undermine activists' basic claims of identity and collective interest without risking inadvertently undermining the movement's local legitimacy, and most academics (who have tended since the 1960s to sympathize with the goals of the movements they study) would probably undertake that project quite reluctantly.

But this bottom-up approach may limit social movement theorists' ability to explore fully the transnational side of collective action or social movement mobilization. By defining case studies territorially, academics coincidentally tend to underscore the local side of identities and strategies. Even with an eye to global processes—as with, for example, the diffusion of sport in the Caribbean (Perales, this volume)—many of the studies in this volume reflect a methodological choice that emphasizes the local identity of activists: the viewpoint of the researcher always starts from a geographically defined space, and so even globally oriented researchers are prone to describe local reactions to global processes rather than the global processes more broadly (see, however, Burawoy, forthcoming). This approach has often given a textured understanding of the processes of mobilization and the character of collective identities, but it has perhaps limited analysts' vision of broader changes in the character of collective action.

A second methodological choice is perhaps equally likely to lead to a local focus: many social movement theorists define movements in terms of their political targets rather than in terms of the universalistic appeals that activists make in the course of mobilization. Thus, for example, the civil rights movement is often viewed as especially American because American activists framed their demands in terms of inclusion in an American polity—at least when they were addressing American audiences. But as historians are increasingly recognizing (Frederickson 1995; Singh 1998; von Eschen 1997) a far more global vision motivated most activists. Not only did its leading figures speak in universal terms of a global hu-

manity but they actively promoted links across borders, speaking to international as well as domestic audiences and raising international issues as well as U.S.-specific ones. Many activists viewed their struggle in terms of an international campaign to end racial inequality globally, not just within the borders of the United States—although they certainly targeted the U.S. government as the site where their mobilization would most directly affect policymakers. Given the extent to which the American civil rights movement stands as an archetype in American social movement theory,[2] it is worth noting the extent to which a research focus on the broader vision of the project of the civil rights movement—beyond the immediate policy targets located within the American state—immediately opens up larger issues: Pan-Africanism, decolonization, or links between diasporic communities of people of African descent.

In an international system in which states are viewed as the only legitimate actors, the researcher's decision to define a movement's goals in terms of its policy targets—rather than a movement's larger claims of inclusion and global reach—leads almost inevitably to a focus on activists' identity as it is defined in national terms. Sidney Tarrow (1994), for example, insists that for all but a tiny network of intellectual activists national identities remain more significant than any global sense of solidarity, even in the globalized 1990s. In a case involving debates about overfishing the Grand Banks, Tarrow (1995) argues that, while fishermen from around the world may understand that they share the seas with fishermen from other nationalities, ultimately they define their interests in nationalist terms. But does this not risk confusing the character of collective identity with the state-centered institutions through which transnational identities must be expressed? If fishermen must channel their political demands through national channels in order to reach the international arena, does that negate any possibility that in a different institutional framework the same concerns might be expressed in more transnational terms?

Obviously, under the current state system social movement activists who seek to change existing reality tend to frame their demands in nationalist terms as a way to appeal to policymakers. If we focus only on those expressions of interest, local nationalisms will always tend to trump universalistic claims, and claims of global solidarity are mere chimera—as the collapse of the international socialist movement before World War I, when national jingoism trumped universalistic socialism, demonstrated. It is tempting to suggest, in response to Tarrow's example of the fishing rights conundrum, that the persistence of national identities within global social movements may simply reflect a realistic understanding on the part of activists that the institutional frameworks through which political aspirations must be channeled are primarily national ones in the current state system—rather than reflecting national limits to activists' visions.

Moreover, the assertion of national identities in international debates may well reflect what the editors of this volume rightly point out has been a long-standing tendency on the part of social movement theorists to restrict their vision to the industrialized countries of the world, to look at movements that can appeal to states that are relatively powerful on the international scene, and to look at the movements that have emerged under relatively open, democratic conditions. Most social movement activists are strategic in their choices of targets and institutional representations: if activists in relatively open states—and in states that are relatively powerful on the international stage—tend to turn to national-level institutions in their search for new policies, activists in relatively repressive ones frequently go outside the nation-state, appealing to global constituencies rather than local ones for support. Similarly, activists who view their "own" national states as relatively powerless in the international arena or unresponsive on a particular issue may well stress global identities, hoping to attract international support for issues that might in a different context have been considered a purely local affair.

Most people are capable of viewing the world globally even while they pursue strategies through local institutions or couch their concerns in nationalist terms to achieve those narrower goals. In a world where global goals can only be met through national states, activists may 'think globally, act locally' to a greater extent than academics recognize. Thus, in Tarrow's example, if international organizations were not organized as a collection of state representatives might Portuguese fisherman perhaps join Canadian ones in their appeals for assistance, emphasizing collective cross-border concerns as fishermen rather than national identities as Portuguese or Canadians?

But, as I will try to show using illustrations from the anti-apartheid movement, the institutional fact that international bodies are generally composed of national representatives forces potentially global identities into national frames. But it need not blind us to the possibility that activists might under other circumstances frame their concerns more globally. As academics begin to take more seriously a global perspective on collective action, perhaps they will begin to see the limitations inherent in a vision that views international activism as the work of a "principled issue network" of individuals rather than as a reflection of a sense of collective identity that transcends geographic borders. A focus on national identities may be inadequate to the complicated reality in which activists live, where identities and interests may be simultaneously defined in transnational and national terms: a "transnational public sphere" is simultaneously national and transnational, and activists with any sense will work in both spheres, using both identities simultaneously and strategically.

This possibility poses a real puzzle for social movement theorists. If social movements are defined in part by the targets they address, and if local activists understand that the nation-state remains the most accessible site for policy intervention, then social movement theorists who define movements' constituencies partly in terms of appeals to policymakers will almost always see national citizenship as a kind of paramount identity for activists.

What happens to social movement theory if we avoid privileging local or national identities, looking instead at the relationship between global processes and local ones? What does globalization mean for how people understand issues, for how they mobilize? What does globalization mean for the kinds of alliances activists form or the institutions to which they appeal? What resources are available for activists in a global world, and how do these resources shape or constrain local movements' strategic choices about framing and targets?

Global Identities: The Anti-apartheid Movement

What might a global identity mean, and what would a global movement look like? In this section, I would like briefly to turn to the international anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s. Discussions of global social movements rarely include a sustained discussion of this remarkably global movement that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. From the end of World War II, as former colonies took their seats in the United Nations General Assembly, apartheid was internationally condemned and finally declared a crime against humanity: as a system of laws imposed by a whites-only government, apartheid denied all political rights to the country's black majority, using legal racial classification to determine where individuals could live, attend school, hold down jobs, and even whom they could marry. But this international condemnation was not limited to the level of states' representatives or debates in the General Assembly. Over thirty years—generally in response to visible protests by black South Africans facing police bullets, imprisonment, and torture—the anti-apartheid movement gradually developed a grassroots constituency around the world. Within that movement, I will argue, activists developed a global antiracist identity that transcended, even challenged, state borders. More importantly, I will suggest, participation in that movement changed the way many activists viewed politics at home and added a global dimension to many discussions of racial inequality.

Admittedly, my view of this movement's importance is colored by my experiences within it. Like many academics who write about social movements, my interest comes in large part from my participation in a specific one; the line between activists and academics is as blurry in this realm as in any other area of sociology. From the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s, when South Africa finally held its first democratic elections and the country's black majority finally attained full citizenship, I participated actively in the American and international anti-apartheid movement. As an American undergraduate, I joined debates and demonstrations, writing articles and editorials urging universities to sell their stock in companies that had invested in South Africa. After college, I taught high school and wrote textbooks in Swaziland, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. When I returned to graduate school in the United States in the early 1980s, I was already part of what Keck and Sikkink (1998) might call a principled-issue network, committed to supporting anti-

apartheid activists inside South Africa and to raising international concern about what was happening in the distant corners of South Africa's *bantustans.*

For most of the 1960s and 1970s, the Western anti-apartheid movement—located mainly in Sweden, Britain, the United States, Canada, Holland, Australia, and New Zealand but also visible in countries as unlikely as Italy, Norway, and even Japan—focused on raising public awareness and changing international policies toward South Africa. Each national group worked to change their local national policy, but they were explicitly linked to a broader, somewhat amorphous set of organizations and loosely coordinated activities around the world. These activists can hardly be described as nationalist; clearly, the focus on national governments stemmed entirely from the recognition that international pressure on South Africa would have to come through the actions of sovereign states. Even at the local level, the general purpose of anti-apartheid groups was international: local groups sought to redefine the relationship of their local entity—whether it was a university, a city, or a religious body—to South Africa as a way to put pressure on the white minority to change.

At moments when the movement was merely stagnant, anti-apartheid groups involved a rather motley crew, the kind of principled-issue network described by social movement theorists who reject the idea that social movements can construct a truly global identity. Generally, activists included South African exiles and expatriates concerned about events in their home country, former civil rights activists offended by racist practices in South Africa, and liberal do-gooders looking for a relatively safe cause to champion. Although there were many moments of high excitement—when the South Africans tried to sneak yet another sports team into an international sporting event in contravention of an international sports boycott or when yet another massacre of black South Africans provoked an international outcry—the anti-apartheid movement generally seemed rather peripheral to local politics. Our meetings and campaigns were always well intentioned and serious, but in general we were hardly at the center of international policy debates.

But through the 1980s this small network mushroomed into what can only be described as an international social movement in which people literally knocked on our doors to ask what they could do to help. In 1984, a new constitution in South Africa prompted widespread uprisings in black townships; images of unarmed black protestors at funerals, facing tanks and live ammunition, provoked widespread condemnation. Since the early 1960s, South African anti-apartheid leaders had called on Western governments to impose international sanctions on South Africa, but—especially while the cold war was at its height—Western governments continued to treat South Africa's white minority regime as an ally, despite its racist practices. By the mid-1980s, as South Africa enforced a draconian state of emergency on an increasingly militant uprising, anti-apartheid groups around the world publicized events, using any tactic possible to undermine the regime, from putting pressure on multinational corporations who invested in South Africa

through shareholder resolutions or divestment motions to publicizing the ties between Western governments and the South African military.

In the process, the small principled-issue network that had once held the anti-apartheid movement together was literally overwhelmed, as ordinary citizens in an extraordinarily wide range of localities sought ways to demonstrate their opposition to apartheid's particularly virulent forms of racism. It is here, I would argue, that a new collective identity was constructed, giving participants a sense of belonging to something far broader than the local or national groups in which they participated. In Italy or France, no less than in New Zealand, participants viewed themselves as part of a *transnational* anti-apartheid movement. Although they always belonged to locally based organizations, their concern was with the transnational expression of opposition to South Africa's apartheid policies; even when they focused on local state policies—or even the policies of their local university or pension fund—they identified themselves as part of a transnational antiracist community.

For these grassroots participants, the impulse behind the anti-apartheid movement was clearly a universalistic one, asserting membership in a global community rather than in a local or national one; its activists appealed to a global vision of morality and community, and participation in the movement clearly reflected, at least for one moment, a sense by individuals of an identity that went beyond local borders. To use the editors' term, they clearly understood their participation in terms of a "transnational public sphere." Looking at any one part of the anti-apartheid movement, a researcher would have seen activists focusing on local issues, local concerns; and yet the impulse behind the mobilization involved an antiracist identity that cannot be understood in nationalist terms.

Obviously, not all participants in the anti-apartheid movement were equally involved in this transnational identity, and many of them would have instantly acknowledged the presence of hierarchies of commitment to that transnational identity within their groups. The small network of activists for whom the anti-apartheid movement had long provided a primary identity was clearly distinguishable from most participants; with ties to other activists, with a greater store of knowledge about the issue and the movement's history, they—or rather we—clearly had undue influence in directing and shaping the movement's strategies and discourse. Yet I think it would be inaccurate to dismiss the less knowledgeable, or less involved, participants from the picture: by focusing only on the network of activists and organizations that tended to speak for the movement, social movement theorists ignore the many thousands of participants who were clearly mobilized in the anti-apartheid movement and whose commitment to the global goal of ending racial inequality should be taken seriously.

The construction of a transnational collective identity does not, of course, imply that all strategies and targets were transnational. At the national level, activists focused on national policies toward South Africa, but when national politicians insisted that cold war loyalties to South Africa's regime were more important than targeting racial oppression activists often focused on more local links to South Africa as their only accessible targets. In the United States, this pattern was especially visible. Through the 1970s and 1980s, when American presidents generally refused to support most economic sanctions against Pretoria, anti-apartheid activists turned to universities, municipalities, and pension funds, insisting that stocks held in companies that invested in South Africa linked local institutions to a far-off system.

This strategy of finding local links to apartheid became even more visible in the mid-1980s, when the Reagan administration refused to impose sanctions although the uprising in South Africa made the nightly American news. In Washington in late 1984, the South African consulate made a strategic blunder: it called upon the police to arrest Randall Robinson and several other activists who had asked to speak to the consul. The episode triggered a new strategy for anti-apartheid activists: they began to engage in civil disobedience around the country, and Americans who wanted to find some way to express their outrage at apartheid sought out ways to get peacefully arrested. In many cities where there were no consulates, people displayed great creativity in identifying potential sites for displaying their concern about apartheid. In Berkeley, for example, people had to sign up in advance to be arrested for blocking the university administration building, as university students and ordinary Californian citizens objected to their taxes going to buy shares in corporations that did business in South Africa. On many college campuses, students erected shanty towns illegally, seeking to provoke almost the same images of bulldozers and forced removals in the United States that were familiar from apartheid South Africa. Lacking targets that could be directly linked to national foreign policy-making mechanisms, people across the United States found local links to South Africa and tried to cut them.

This was, then, a transnational movement, operating on a transnational stage, with transnational goals and strategies as well as national ones. Building on a transnational network of activists, it involved people around the world in a collective movement aimed at a global objective. Often involving transnational exchanges of ideas and resources, as well as personnel, the anti-apartheid movement built a transnational constituency for an international issue, treating the eradication of apartheid as an important step toward creating greater racial equality internationally.

But, like most collective identities, the collective identity involved in the anti-apartheid movement was fluid and multifaceted, and activists could shift the ground from which they spoke at different moments. Frequently, issues raised by the anti-apartheid movement had domestic as well as international implications, and activists often included domestic concerns as well as international ones in their agendas. Almost invariably, where the anti-apartheid movement really became a grassroots movement, anti-apartheid campaigns played into domestic debates as

well as international ones. In the United States, civil rights activists explicitly suggested that the anti-apartheid movement could play two roles, one international, one domestic. Protesting American policy in South Africa was important as a way to bring apartheid to an end, but it also allowed activists to introduce discussions of racism in a nonconfrontational way, strengthening an American constituency for an antiracist project at a time when the American body politic seemed to have turned away from affirmative action and civil rights.

Other branches of the international anti-apartheid movement had similarly Janus-faced agendas. The anti-apartheid movement had long been a fixture on Britain's postcolonial scene, staffed largely by South African expatriates and exiles but with strong ties to Britain's Labour Party. In the 1980s, however, it took on a newly visible militance; British participants, like their American counterparts, were certainly responding to events inside South Africa, but the movement's appeal was also strengthened by a deepening concern about racism inside Britain. These local issues rarely created direct conflicts between the movement's transnational segments—unlike, for example, the situation in the international labor movement, where debates over setting fair international wage standards frequently deteriorate into struggles over protectionism and competition for jobs and markets. But ignoring the importance of these local issues in explaining the character of the transnational movement in the 1980s would, I think, lead observers to overlook one of the more intriguing aspects of transnationalism.

And in both these cases—along with others, such as that of New Zealand—widespread participation in the transnational anti-apartheid movement rebounded onto domestic politics, as activists rethought domestic issues in light of what they had learned in the international movement. In the United States, many white participants joined the anti-apartheid movement out of revulsion for racism, but as they began to identify with an antiracist transnational movement they often began to look more closely—and critically—at racial practices in their backyard, reassessing the extent of segregation and the persistent impact of racial inequality on American lives. Conversely, many black civil rights activists claimed that involvement in anti-apartheid activism—particularly their exposure to the "nonracialism" of the African National Congress, the leading South African political group in the 1980s—prompted a rethinking of separatist attitudes toward white participation in antiracist movements and a reevaluation of the importance of international policy.

What does this example suggest for discussions of transnational social movements? Above all, I think, it underscores some of the methodological challenges posed by transnational movements: neither a locally oriented case study approach nor a focus on targets would reveal the extent to which participants assumed a transnational identity or viewed their actions as oriented toward transnational goals. But it also reveals some of the complicated questions involved in transnationalism. It would be erroneous, I think, to ignore the transnational character of this movement or to argue that activists and participants were not concerned with the movement's transnational goals. Yet it would be almost equally silly to overlook the local dynamics within different parts of the larger movement.

Confronting Globalization, Rethinking Movements

The anti-apartheid movement is hardly the only transnational movement of the late twentieth century. Although social movement theorists have been generally reluctant to label movements as transnational, activists in many movements of the 1990s—from the explicitly globally oriented environmental movement to movements that draw on universal principles but act almost entirely locally such as the women's and indigenous peoples' movements—are far less restrictive in their claims. Repeatedly in an era of globalization social movement activists define their constituencies, their audiences, the resources on which they draw, and, above all, the principles to which they appeal in global terms. What does this mean for social movement theory, and where should we locate the starting points for examining transnational movements?

Although each of the chapters in this volume pursues its own logic, analyzing a particular social movement rather than a larger set of issues, as a whole they point toward some possible answers as well as toward some of the puzzles for social movement theory raised by a more global perspective.

Perhaps this volume's most obvious contribution lies in the descriptions of several social movements whose members span borders and whose collective identity seems to surpass any single national territory. The antislavery, Solidarity, and human rights movements (Keck and Sikkink, this volume; Rucht, this volume; Ball, this volume) involve participants who have redefined their sense of moral obligation to include a larger community.

But the cases in this volume suggest that transnationalism is more complicated than simply an appeal to universal norms. Social movements that involve appeals to international audiences, draw on international resources, and target international bodies—surely these all beg questions about the relationship between the global and the local and about transnational identities and movement. Social movements that consistently draw on international norms to challenge local practices (Guidry, this volume), address international audiences through universal images (Bayard de Volo, this volume), use globalized frames of discourse to delegitimize their opponents in local arenas (Kubik, this volume), or define participants' identities in terms of international legal norms and sites created by international organizations (Peteet, this volume)—surely these cannot be understood only in local terms any more than the anti-apartheid movement can. If, in the late twentieth century, even nationalist movements can really be understood only in the context of international flows of resources and ideologies (van der Veer, this volume; Uehling, this volume), then it seems reasonable to ask about the global side of any

social movement and to assume that global dynamics have something to do with the way these movements mobilize participants, mobilize resources, and frame their strategies and goals.

The authors in this volume are careful to acknowledge that national frameworks continue to shape political action for most of us; and yet, based on the material they present, something important seems to be happening in the realm of social activists' vision of their constituencies and audiences. The shared networks, shared information, shared strategies—above all, the shared sense of moral connectedness and the construction of an identity that extends beyond national borders—suggest that somehow activists in these movements are increasingly likely to define their concerns in a way that is emphatically not limited to the single territorially defined community. There is at least a normative vision of a collective identity that goes beyond borders.

But these chapters also raise further questions about what it would mean to construct a global social movement. How might a new sense of global community affect social movement behavior in the future? Perhaps the first obvious impact on globalization is in the way social movement activists conceive of their constituencies and audiences and in their vision of who they represent. Increasingly, social movement identities are explicitly constructed to include people from many areas. In Brazil as well as in Europe, social movement activists have defined their concerns in universalist terms and sought to construct identities and constituencies that were consciously cross-border and internationalist in scope. Moreover, within many of these global movements, activists worked hard to prevent conflict among people of different nationalities, often reframing their concerns in ways that would be inclusive, rather than exclusive, in response to concerns about the perpetuation of global inequalities. Without denying the persistence of national interests, social movement theorists in the late twentieth century must nonetheless acknowledge the extent to which a new "new social movement" pattern has emerged, cutting across national boundaries.

Globalization offers new strategic options as well as new constituencies. Even in movements as persistently localized as the demand for land reform in Chiapas, Mexico, activists have proved astute at framing their concerns in ways that appeal to broader audiences, seeking resources and support far beyond national boundaries. And international activists have provided crucial resources for these local movements: ideas, funds, and international observers whose intervention can prevent repression—all these have become part of the repertoire on which social movement activists around the world can draw, and these concerns begin to play some part in how local activists frame the issues they raise locally.

If activists begin to conceive their constituencies in larger, cross-national terms, and if they begin to conceive of the issues confronting them in terms of global dynamics, how will that affect social movement strategies in the future? Social movement theorists are just beginning to look critically at the construction of

global social movements, exploring these processes without romanticizing them. If it is true that social movement activists are beginning to use new technologies to construct new identities, to frame their concerns in terms of a larger community, what kinds of resources are they drawing on and how do they gain access to them? The chapters in this volume begin to lay the groundwork for addressing some of the most pressing questions in transnational social movement theory. How do activists build these cross-border identities? What kinds of appeals seem to resonate most across borders, and what explains activists' decisions to frame local struggles in internationalist terms? Are these appeals increasing in the late twentieth century, with the use of new technologies, or have these larger appeals always been part of social movement mobilization? Who gives shape to these collective identities and under what circumstances do internationalist identities collapse and give way to more localized concerns? How do these global movements, if they exist, behave differently from more localized movements? How best can we study these movements, given the obvious problem that individual researchers tend to remain located in a specific spot and so their observations are refracted through a particular local lens?

And the transnational character of social movements at the turn of the century begs social movement theorists to consider the hierarchical character of global society. For example, several chapters in this volume illustrate local activists' conscious use of international resources—both international ideas and international donor funds—in framing their concerns and shaping their strategies and the effort to address international audiences as they mobilize. Activists as well as academics might ask whether the request for international funds limits local activists to issues that fit with donor agencies' aims. Do local activists' desires for external funding shape their demands in ways that undermine activists' ability to represent faithfully the concerns of local participants? Even if global forces do not redirect local groups, we must ask whether globalizing processes re-create local inequalities. Who gains access to these new technologies, these new audiences, these newly interventionist international organizations? What will determine the outcome of those tensions and how will that affect the ability of movements to mobilize in the future?

Finally, if in the 1990s the transnational public sphere seems to be taking on importance, it is worth remembering that this shift is neither inevitable nor irreversible. The history of the international labor movement is replete with examples of the resurgence of nationalism: despite a rhetoric of internationalism, national unions tend to frame identities and issues in ways that assume that workers in different countries stand in direct competition with each other, reinforcing a nationalist worker identity rather than an internationalist one. For over a century, the international labor movement has struggled with the problem of how to balance national labor movements' local concerns with those of a broader international worker movement. Can social movement theorists predict the collapse of transna-

tional ties within apparently global movements? Lurking in the background, too, are movements that emerge as a challenge to globalization. In the late twentieth century, globalization often appears to be the result of a hegemonic project, a process largely driven by those who are powerful and wealthy. Global social movements, on the other hand, often seem to embody local resistence to that project. What does that mean for the development of a transnational collective identity?

For activists as well as theorists, the relationship between global and local is fraught with tension. If activists must figure out how to negotiate the complicated strains that arise between local and global constituencies, social movement theorists must consider how to examine those tensions without exacerbating or exaggerating them and without treating all social movements as either homegrown novelties or new versions of cultural imperialism. How to raise internationally legitimate issues without undermining local legitimacy? How to address international audiences while still resonating with constituencies at home? How to attract international resources and activists without losing local control?

At the end of her essay on early-twentieth-century literature, Virginia Woolf warned her readers not to expect too much. "Do not expect just at present a complete and satisfactory presentation," she wrote. "Tolerate the spasmodic, the obscure, the fragmentary, the failure." A similar warning might well be posed to readers who are looking for global social movements in the late twentieth century—and to readers who are looking for a theory of global movements. We can barely distinguish a global from a local movement, and we are only beginning to understand that we might have other questions to ask. But rather than turning away from the challenge of reconstructing theories in the light of whatever it is that we call globalization, this volume invites us to enter the fray.

NOTES

1. In a relatively late example of technological euphoria, for example, the renowned sociologist Robert Parks ([1937] 1961) used language almost identical to the 1990s discourse of globalization but about an earlier generation of innovations: "Now that the aeroplane has . . . abolished the distances that once separated the nations and peoples and the radio has converted the world into one great whispering gallery, [the] great world—intertribal, interracial, and international—the world of business and politics—has grown at the expense of the little world, the world of intimate, personal loyalties in which men were bound together by tradition, custom, and natural piety."

2. American social movement theorists often seem to be thinking about the civil rights movement when they think about social movements generally—in sharp contrast to European social movement theorists, who frequently virtually ignore movements organized around racial inequality when they talk about "new" social movements. This difference may help explain some of the different perspectives exhibited by American and European social movement theorists in the 1980s. Generally, American theorists tended to take questions about the construction of a collective identity more or less for granted, focusing instead on questions of resource mobilization and strategies—perhaps because mobilization around racial identities and racially motivated collective grievances appeared relatively straightforward in the United States, where a fairly rigid racial ideology meant that racial identities were relatively unquestioned until recently. In contrast, European theorists, who focused more on the student, peace, and women's movements, considered the construction of collective identities a far more thorny issue (e.g., McCarthy and Zald 1979; McAdam 1988; Melucci 1989; Morris and Mueller 1992).

Globalizations and Social Movements

Culture, Power, and the Transnational Public Sphere

Edited by
John A. Guidry,
Michael D. Kennedy,
and Mayer N. Zald

Ann Arbor

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS