

Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties

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into street demonstrations. If we could explain how human beings bring off such improvisatory adventures, we could be well on our way to accounting for how sets of interacting people store histories in contentious repertoires, conversation, rights and obligations, war and peace, and similar phenomena.

Cultural ecology? Social life consists of transactions among social sites, some of them occupied by individual persons, but most of them occupied by shifting aspects or clusters of persons. None of the sites, goes the reasoning, contains all the culture—all the shared understandings or representations—on which transactions in its vicinity draw. But transactions among sites produce interdependence among extensively connected sites, deposit related cultural material in those sites, transform shared understandings in the process, and thus make large stores of culture available to any particular site through its connections with other sites.

All this may sound mysterious, implausible, and difficult. Yet as a practical matter we often assume a simple version of cultural ecology: challenged by an impending purchase, an intellectual conundrum, or a weighty personal choice, we turn to a wise friend or colleague not necessarily because she will have the right answer, but because she will know whom to ask or where to search. A computer model of cultural ecology would feature distributed intelligence.

A politically sensitive version of cultural ecology would take us into the thick of meaningful, solidarity-sustaining social ties. It would help us learn why ostensibly irrational high-risk activism occurs, and how mobilized people manage the contradictions of small-scale bonding and large-scale confrontation. Thus we might discover that identity politics creates its illusions of unity by means of incessantly negotiated interchange among distinct sites, and then fixes its illusions by means of collectively produced stories. We can see signs of cultural ecology, for example, in James Scott's, Viviana Zelizer's, and Eamon Duffy's documentation of dispersed local knowledge as a counter to uniform top-down templates.

Consider entrepreneurship, creative interaction, and cultural ecology to be three cloudy mirrors held up to narrative and identity processes from different angles. Analysts of stories, identities, and political change face the challenge of clearing the mirrors, or creating better glasses. Improved vision should help us explain how Europeans are creating new identities, acting as if they believed their own shared answers to the question "Who are you?" and creating consequential stories about the past, present, and future of Europe.

Chapter 15

Invention, Diffusion, and Transformation of the Social Movement Repertoire

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION TO THE 1888 ENGLISH EDITION OF THE Communist Manifesto, Friedrich Engels recalled the years immediately after the failed revolutions of 1848: "Wherever independent proletarian movements continued to show signs of life, they were ruthlessly hunted down" (Marx and Engels 1958: I, 26). He contrasted that dismal time with the subsequent advance of international working-class solidarity:

Thus the history of the "Manifesto" reflects, to a great extent, the history of the modern working-class movement; at present it is undoubtedly the most widespread, the most international production of all Socialist literature, the common platform acknowledged by millions of working men from Siberia to California. (Marx and Engels 1958: I, 27)

History did not treat Engels's optimism of 1888 kindly. But his vigorous vision of the previous forty years certainly reflected one of the 19th-century's most sensational examples of political transfer. Although no socialist regimes existed anywhere at the time, socialist creeds, organizations, practices, programs, and statements were moving widely across the Western world, and starting to engage activists outside the West as well.

By no means did 19th-century socialism constitute Europe's first contribution to the spread of political forms among polities. From a broad European

base, after all, the Roman Empire established relatively uniform political practices in significant sections of Asia and North Africa. The Catholic Church and then Protestant sects created globe-spanning networks of political diffusion along with their theological messages. During the same era that Engels was describing in 1888, furthermore, political entrepreneurs in Europe and North America were eagerly adopting a new form of popular politics that eventually established itself across the globe, wherever democratization began its uncertain but fateful course.

I mean the social movement, in the historically specific form that originated in northwestern Europe during the later 18th century, became widely available for popular making of claims there and in North America during the 19th century, then underwent combined spread and transformation across all the continents during the 20th and 21st centuries.

As it developed in the West after 1750, the social movement emerged from an innovative, consequential synthesis of three elements:

1. a sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities; let us call it a *campaign*
2. employment of combinations from among the following forms of political action: creation of special-purpose associations and coalitions; public meetings; solemn processions; vigils; rallies; demonstrations; petition drives; statements to and in public media; pamphleteering; call the variable ensemble of performances the *social movement repertoire*
3. participants' concerted public representations of WUNC: worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment on the part of themselves and/or their constituencies; call them *WUNC displays*

Unlike a one-time petition, declaration, or mass meeting, a *campaign* extends beyond any single event—although social movements often include petitions, declarations, and mass meetings. Campaigns center on *claims*: claims for the adoption or abolition of public programs, claims for recognition of the claimants' existence, and/or claims for ratification of their standing as specific kinds of political actors such as indigenous peoples or constituted parties. A campaign always links at least three parties: a group of self-designated claimants, some object(s) of claims, and a public of some kind. The claims may target governmental officials, but the "authorities" in question can also include owners of property, religious functionaries, and others whose actions (or failures to act) significantly affect the welfare of many people. Not the solo actions of claimants, object(s), or public, but interactions among the three constitute a social movement.

The social movement *repertoire* overlaps with the repertoires of other political phenomena such as trade union activity and electoral campaigns. During the 20th century, special-purpose associations and crosscutting coalitions in particular began to do an enormous variety of political work across the world well outside social movements. But the integration of most or all of these performances into sustained campaigns marks off social movements from other varieties of politics.

The term WUNC sounds odd, but it represents something quite familiar. WUNC displays can take the form of statements, slogans, or labels that imply worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment: Citizens United for Justice, Signers of the Pledge, Supporters of the Constitution, and so on. Yet collective self-representations often act them out in idioms that local audiences will recognize, for example:

worthiness: sober demeanor; neat clothing; presence of clergy, dignitaries, and mothers with children

unity: matching badges, headbands, banners, or costumes; marching in ranks; singing and chanting

numbers: headcounts, signatures on petitions, messages from constituents, filling streets

commitment: braving bad weather; visible participation by the old and handicapped; resistance to repression; ostentatious sacrifice, subscription, and/or benefaction

Particular idioms vary enormously from one setting to another, but the general communication of WUNC connects those idioms.

Taken singly, each of these elements drew on and adapted previously existing political practices, for example, sporting of electoral colors; humble petitions to kings; or marches of militias, artisans' guilds, and religious organizations. But the combination of campaign, repertoire, and WUNC displays acquired a generality and staying power none of its predecessors had ever achieved. Together, furthermore, they made a powerful assertion of popular sovereignty: we, the people, have the right to voice on our own initiative; worthy, united, numerous, and committed, we have the capacity to change things.

Many political transfers center on specific programs or practices and involve self-conscious deliberation at the receiving end concerning whether to adopt the item and how: enact constitutional provisions, create health insurance, build model housing, agitate for British-style parliamentary reform, and so on. Invention, diffusion, and transformation of the social movement interacted

with these other sorts of political transfers, but generally involved more extensive changes in the political context than did narrower shifts. The social movement's invention, diffusion, and transformation deeply altered the arena of contentious politics—contentious in the sense that social movements involve collective making of claims that, if realized, would conflict with someone else's interests, politics in the sense that governments of one sort or another figure somehow in the claim making, whether as claimants, objects of claims, allies of the objects, or monitors of the contention (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001).

Never, so far as I know, did activists ever debate the general question "Should we adopt the social movement model as a whole?" Yet once the social movement crystallized, campaigns, performances, and WUNC displays evolved mainly as a bloc rather than as a mere mail-order catalog of individual political tools. People who started to demonstrate, for example, also typically began forming special-purpose associations and conducting press campaigns.

That evolution *en bloc* identifies important resemblances between social movements and other major political inventions such as electoral systems, newspapers, interest-group organization, and public-opinion polling; despite adaptation and variation from country to country and time to time, the sheer existence of these institutions in one regime has provided significant models for other regimes. To sort out the parallels fully, we would have to untangle three sets of causes:

- parallel changes in political regimes, such as democratization, that produce similar effects more or less independently
- transfers and adaptations of organizational forms, such as legislatures, that then produce similar effects in different settings
- political transfers of specific institutions as such

For the sake of clarity and economy, let us concentrate here on relatively direct transfers from one national regime to another. In this brief chapter, I can only sketch a way of thinking about social movement history that should therefore help in the analysis of political transfer at large. Instead of presenting all the fascinating nuances and qualifications that the history of social movements requires, I will lay out the argument in great raw chunks for greater visibility.

Precisely because the social movement combined and adapted previously established political practices, any search for original invention of the social movement necessarily identifies multiple candidates. Activists in the Nordic countries, for example, began using popular associations in religiously based

reform campaigns during the later 18th century, and multiplied such campaigns during the 19th (Lundqvist 1977; Öhngren 1974; Seip 1974, 1981; Stenius 1987; Wåhlin 1986). Given its deployment of petitions, pamphlets, and popular associations, one might also tag the Dutch Patriot mobilization of the 1780s as an originator of the social movement (te Brake 1989, 1990; Kossmann 1990; Schama 1977).

France could likewise qualify as a founder. Between 1787 and 1793, French revolutionary activists certainly formed politically oriented associations at a feverish pace, made concerted claims by means of those associations, held public meetings, marched through the streets, adopted slogans and badges, produced pamphlets, and implemented local revolutions through most of the country (Hunt 1978, 1984; Jones 2003; Markoff 1996a; McPhee 1988; Woloch 1970, 1994). My sometime-collaborator Sidney Tarrow has tentatively identified the American Revolution as the matrix from which the full-fledged social movement emerged (Tarrow 1998: 38). So both France and the American colonies might dispute Scandinavian and Dutch claims to priority in the social movement's invention.

Finally, Great Britain's own popular mobilization on behalf of American colonial rights as well as its almost contemporaneous initiation of national campaigns against the slave trade contend strongly for recognition as the crucial starting point for social movements at a national scale (Brewer 1976, 1989; Carrington 2002; Davis 1987; Drescher 1982, 1986; Rudé 1962, 1971; Temperley 1981; Walvin 1980, 1981). Proliferation of candidates on two sides of the North Atlantic recalls R. R. Palmer's famous argument that the democratic revolution arose in substantial areas of the Atlantic region more or less simultaneously during the 18th century (Palmer 1959, 1964).

In that case, the search for separate starting points might turn out to be idle, since the individual manifestations of the social movement would simply represent multiple responses to the spread of the same powerful ideas. Even in that case, however, it would be worthwhile to trace the original appearance and subsequent spread of the social movement's major elements. That tracing would help us explain later episodes in which social movements clearly formed outside their areas of original prevalence. As I read the evidence, in any case, the sheer spread of ideas falls far short of explaining the social movement's diffusion and adaptation (Tilly 2004c).

In order to sort out priority claims as well as to trace the subsequent spread of the social movement, it helps to break the central question into four parts. Observing popular collective action in any particular regime, we can ask separately about resemblance, combination, availability, and spread:

1. *Resemblance*: Does this particular campaign, performance, or WUNC display resemble those that commonly occur in full-fledged social movements?
2. *Combination*: Does this particular campaign combine performances and WUNC displays in a recognizably similar manner to social movements elsewhere?
3. *Availability*: In this setting, is the characteristic combination of campaigns, performances, and WUNC displays now widely available for different issues, claimants, and objects of claims?
4. *Spread*: Did this regime's available combination of campaigns, performances, and WUNC displays provide influential immediate models for social movement activity outside the regime?

If we ask only the resemblance question, we can no doubt trace back social movements for centuries before the 1760s. After all, such characteristic social movement performances as marches and public meetings have long, long genealogies, and such episodes as the Protestant Reformation surely included sustained campaigns. The combination question bites harder, since it pretty much narrows us to the candidates I mentioned earlier: Nordic countries, the Netherlands, France, the American colonies, and Great Britain.

Adding the questions of availability and spread, however, tips the balance toward Great Britain, where from antislavery campaigns during the late Napoleonic Wars onward the characteristic combination of campaign, repertoire, and WUNC displays not only characterized popular politics continuously, but also provided significant models for social movement activity elsewhere. Even in the new United States the social movement complex did not become a readily available and imitable model of public politics until somewhat later, with British-initiated antislavery providing a major stimulus to that political transformation.

A century-by-century comic-book history of the social movement from the 18th century onward would look something like this:

18th century: Multiple elements of the social movement beginning to cohere, for example, in John Wilkes's British expansion of election campaigns and public marches on behalf of free speech and citizens' rights or Samuel Adams's linking of Boston's skilled workers and merchants in campaigns against Great Britain's arbitrary exactions. Consider a characteristic, if minor, example of political transfer: the cap of liberty that eventually figured so widely in late 18th-century and early 19th-century social movements. The Liberty Cap, de-

rived from the headgear that Romans placed on the head of an emancipated slave, had a long iconic history in Great Britain. Borrowed from the Dutch as William of Orange became English King in the Glorious Revolution of 1688–1689, it had represented Dutch liberation from Spain. In Britain, it came to signify liberty in the Wilkite sense (Epstein 1994: 78–80; see also Harden 1995). In fact, during the Wilkite agitation of the 1760s William Hogarth produced a famous, savage drawing of the ugly Wilkes holding a pole topped by a Liberty Cap.

During the 19th century we find the social movement operating chiefly in relatively democratic Western countries, but the roster now extends at least intermittently to most of northwestern Europe; some southern European countries such as Spain, Italy, and Greece; most of North America; Latin American countries including Argentina and Uruguay; and some hotspots among European colonies such as India. Among the century's social movement transfers we witness the generalization of street demonstrations, May Day, and red or black flags to symbolize insurrection. We also register the formation of intellectual and political exiles who support dissident activity in their home countries, and in the process often export ideas or practices from their host regimes (Anderson 1991; Hanagan 1998, 2002; Keck and Sikkink 2000).

The 20th century, in this comic-book history, accelerates the pace of innovation and diffusion. Across the world, we observe increasing reliance of social movement activists on access to mass media eventually including not only newspapers but also radio, television, and eventually electronic communication (Granjon 2002; Hocke 2002; Koopmans 2004; Scalmer 2002a, 2002b). In a parallel way, we witness the rise of the professional, durable social movement organization and its entrepreneurs as coordinators of claim making (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Mayer 1997; Meyer and Tarrow 1998). We see student movements proliferating and communicating not only within schools but also on the public streets. Among workers, we notice the invention and diffusion of such models as the factory occupation. At least in the more democratic Western countries, we witness a certain regularization of relations between demonstrators and specialized police forces (Earle, Soule, and McCarthy 2003; Emsley and Weinberger 1991; Fillieule 1997b; Lindenberger 1993, 1995; della Porta 1995; della Porta and Reiter 1998; Robert 1996; Sommier 1993; Tilly 2003: 201–31).

The incipient 21st century alters the social movement scene once again. Although social movements in recognizable 20th-century style continue to predominate even in a Western Europe under transformation by the European Union (Imig and Tarrow 2001), international coordination of protests against

such transnational institutions as the World Trade Organization becomes more extensive and frequent (Anheier and Themudo 2002; Bennett 2004a; Smith 1997, 2002; Tarrow 2002, 2003; Lesley Wood 2004). Despite the fact that the nerve centers of those protests continue to locate in rich northern countries, elsewhere dissident members of elites—notably students and professionals—adopt campaigns, social movement performances, and WUNC displays from time to time as they simultaneously address international media and voice opposition to their own regimes. International transfers include the human chain to advocate debt relief for poor countries and the ubiquitous circle-diagonal symbol, on the model of a European no-parking sign, calling for the ban of the World Trade Organization.

Instead of taking these great chunks of time, we might also trace the social movement's history by following one or another of its major performances through the two and a half centuries in question. A history of the street demonstration, for example, poses important questions for political transfer. Examined closely, the demonstration separates into three partly distinguishable streams: the public meeting in an enclosed space, the assembly in an open public space, and the disciplined street march. The three sometimes combine, as when participants in a mass meeting march through city streets from their stadium to city hall. Yet each stems from a somewhat different prehistory, with substantial country-to-country variation according to political structure and legal codes.

Broadly speaking, the social movement versions of public meetings adapted the rights of corporate groups such as religious congregations to assemble for their private business, public assemblies extended civic ceremonies such as celebrations and executions to citizen-initiated gatherings, and street marches converted authorized processions (once again, usually of corporate bodies) into initiatives taken by the demonstrators themselves. In individual countries, different versions of the demonstration have produced abundant histories (see, e.g., Blackstock 2000; Deneckere 1998; Duyvendak 1994; Farrell 2000; Favre 1990; Fillieule 1997a; Jarman 1997; Munger 1981; Pigenet and Tartakowsky 2003; Robert 1996; Schweitzer and Tilly 1982; Tartakowsky 1997, 1999, 2004). Yet the central models of public meeting, open assembly, and street march have acquired enough similarity that a viewer of television through most of the world can almost instantly recognize a demonstration as it flashes across the screen.

The demonstration's unity in diversity poses an important problem for students of political transfer. Sidney Tarrow rightly stresses modularity as a distinguishing characteristic of social movement performances (Tarrow 1998: 37—

41). As compared with local shaming ceremonies, institutions of popular justice, and patron-client politics, such performances as the demonstration and the petition drive transferred much more easily across places, regimes, issues, and actors (Tilly 1993b).

Nevertheless, three features of the demonstration and related performances introduce significant particularity into their histories: first, their evolution from distinctive national traditions; second, the negotiation and adaptation that goes into the very process of diffusion; and third, the local culture that informs the actual operation of any transplanted performance (Auyero 2001; Avritzer 2002; Barber 2002; Chabot 2000; Chabot and Duyvendak 2002; Cope 1996; Esherick and Wasserstrom 1990; Faue 2000; Greiff 1997; Jarman 1997; Marston 1989; Mirala 2000; Scalmer 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Andrew Wood 2001). "Modular" performances ordinarily show two faces: one presenting a recognizable visage to the outside world, the other encoding local secrets and symbols. How that happens presents a puzzle of capital importance for students of contentious politics and political transfer.

In this brief introduction to the problem, as promised, I can do no more than sketch a way of thinking about it. Let me suggest that we identify a small bundle of mechanisms as they recur in different combinations with varying aggregate effects across episodes of political transfer. They include tactical innovation, bargaining, negotiated diffusion, brokerage, certification, and local adaptation. Speaking in terms of social movements rather than of political transfer in general, let us consider each one in turn:

Tactical innovation may result in part from prior deliberation on the part of political entrepreneurs, but it always occurs in the course of interaction among claimants, objects of claims, and third parties. It involves modifying known interaction routines, noticing the modification's effects, and incorporating the modified routine into the local claim-making repertoire. Thus we see 19th-century Western European demonstrators substituting written signs containing demands or slogans for the nonverbal symbols and banners that prevailed during the early part of the century.

Bargaining includes proposing terms—and often counter-terms—for some possible interaction, then reaching agreement among parties concerning both the performance of that interaction and the response of the parties to its outcome. In this regard, we regularly discover 20th-century movement organizers working out a meeting place or line of march with local police.

Negotiated diffusion identifies the familiar sequence in which a local group of activists learns of a tactical innovation made elsewhere, deliberates on its adoption, and creates a local variant of the interaction routine. For example, the network

called Jubilee 2000 stimulates widespread adoption of the human chain as a way of dramatizing demands for poor countries' debt relief (Pettifor 2001).

Brokerage often figures in negotiated diffusion. In its simplest form, brokerage consists of an intermediary's creating closer connections than previously existed between two or more social sites: persons, groups, places, or something else. Brokers sometimes continue to mediate the connections, and sometimes step away once the connections exist. As a case in point, consider the enormous influence of women's organizations as standardizers of American feminist claim making across the country after 1890 (Clemens 1997).

Certification occurs when some authoritative entity—a ruler, a political leader, a tribunal, a nongovernmental organization, or something else—endorses an action, person, group, stated identity, or claim, thus signaling an increased likelihood that the entity and its allies will act to support the action, person, group, stated identity, or claim. De-certification also occurs when an authoritative entity condemns an action, person, group, stated identity, or claim, thus signaling increased probability of negative response to future appearance of the condemned element. Think about how the U.S. government provided backing to activists during the early phases of the American civil rights movement, not to mention how the government later turned against black nationalists (McAdam 1999, introduction).

Local adaptation happens when in the course of political interaction a tactical innovation adopted from elsewhere modifies, with participants incorporating locally relevant symbols, rituals, persons, and/or social connections. Consider how much the same American civil rights activists modified the practice of nonviolence as they engaged in active, risky making of claims (Chabot 2000; Chabot and Duyvendak 2002).

Let me be clear. I don't claim that tactical innovation, bargaining, negotiated diffusion, brokerage, certification, and local adaptation coexist in every transfer of the social movement from one place to another. Even less do I claim that the ensemble exhausts the roster of mechanisms causing political transfer at large. At a minimum, for example, any comprehensive history of constitutions and their duplications would have to assign a central place to conquest. I do claim, however, that in the history of social movements the six mechanisms have frequently occurred in each other's company, and that their specific combinations and sequences have strongly affected how social movements changed.

If this claim holds up, it sets an important agenda for historical research. Through what agents, channels, and mechanisms did the actual diffusion of the social movement's elements occur? For recent social movements, the question has taken on new interest, as transnational coordination of social move-

ment programs and actions increases (Bandy and Smith 2004; Bennett 2004a, 2004b; Chabot and Duyvendak 2002; Imig and Tarrow 2001; Mertes 2004; Rajagopal 2003; Scalmer 2000, 2002b; Tarrow 2001, 2002, 2003; Tarrow and McAdam 2004). But well-grounded historical analyses remain rare. Understandably, students of social movements past and present customarily locate them firmly in their local or national contexts as they exaggerate the autonomy and originality of those movements.

In one of the more thoughtful reviews of the topic, John Markoff stresses three factors that promote social movements' crossing of national frontiers:

1. replication of structural circumstances from one country to another
2. transmission of a cultural model through available media and by means of easily transferable inventions
3. movements of people—for example, sailors and students—across national frontiers (Markoff 1996b: 29–31).

We should probably add a fourth factor to Markoff's list: deliberate creation of international organizations for the promotion of programs and coordinated actions (Anheiter and Themudo 2002; Keck and Sikkink 1998, 2000; Riles 2000; Smith 1997, 2002).

Negotiated diffusion, brokerage, and certification, followed by local adaptation, figure prominently in all factors but the replication of structural circumstances. During the later 20th century, partly in response to the rising prominence of international institutions such as the European Community and the World Bank, the fourth factor—deliberate creation of international organizations—began to play a much larger part in the political transfer of the social movement repertoire. At the same time, that transfer began to transform the repertoire, for example, by establishing international days of protest timed to the staging of international economic forums (Lesley Wood 2004).

What happened earlier? As my earlier cartoons suggest, from the 18th century onward political brokers (e.g., Thomas Paine), international organizations (e.g., antislavery societies), and mass media (e.g., newspapers) all promoted transfer of social movements ideas, programs, and practices from country to country. But how they interacted and changed from then until now remains uncertain for lack of adequate historical work. A rich set of opportunities opens up for historical research on political transfer. For the moment, my sketch of relevant mechanisms raises questions rather than provides answers.

Looking at any particular locality, we can sketch an idealized cycle in which tactical innovation and bargaining occur simultaneously, negotiated diffusion

and brokerage overlap, brokerage and certification increase the probability of negotiated diffusion, de-certification decreases that probability, but local adaptation terminates the cycle as a new round of tactical innovation begins. The social movement as a whole emerged through multiple cycles of this kind, but so on a smaller scale did each of its elements: the writing of pamphlets, the petition drive, the street march, the campaign for recognition, the wearing of slogan-bearing badges, and so on down the entire roster.

Of course, the serious work starts there. We must ask whether the idealized cycle actually recurs in sufficiently regular form to justify identifying it as a robust process and seeking to analyze its overall dynamics (Tilly 2001a). We must scrutinize the individual mechanisms to determine not only how uniform they are but also what triggers them, in what circumstances, and exactly how they produce their effects. Unless we eventually develop some power to anticipate which forms of political transfer will and won't occur in specified circumstances, the whole exercise may provide the means of more coherent conversation about the subject, but it won't contribute much to the long-term goal of systematic explanation. Judging from the help these simple ideas offer in unraveling the complex history of social movements, however, they deserve careful attention elsewhere in the realm of political transfers.

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