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PROTEST AND DEMOCRACY

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Rethinking Protest Impacts

Moisés Arce, Roberta Rice, and Eduardo Silva

What role do social protests play in democratic change? Why do similar types of protest movements produce different kinds of outcomes? How are protest movements realigning politics around the globe? These questions stand as the final challenge for this volume. Throughout this book we have endeavored to understand the causes and consequences of the 2011 global protest cycle that began with the Arab Spring uprising in Egypt's Tahrir Square in January and concluded with the clearing of New York's Zuccotti Park in November. During that year of contention, untold numbers of citizens took to the streets and to social media to call for new forms of democratic political representation, deliberation, and decision-making. According to Tilly and Tarrow, the self-immolation of a young, college-educated Tunisian street vendor in December 2010 touched off "the most remarkable protest cycle since the movements of the 1960s in Europe and North America" (2015, 134). For the most part, the Arab Spring ended where it began—in Tunisia—in terms of its ability to precipitate democratic regime change. Nonetheless, the 2011 protest cycle marked the beginning of a new era of global politics and of a new agenda for social movement research. Two major themes have arisen out of this volume. The first theme is the important role that grievances played in fueling the 2011 protest movements. The second theme is the central role that political opportunity structures played in conditioning the impacts of social movements, if not in their emergence.

The volume's introduction sought to explain the factors driving the recent global protest cycle. In other words, we treated protest as a dependent variable. In this concluding essay, we look at protest as an independent variable by assessing its influence on political change. We begin by elaborating upon our original framework of analysis in light of the findings of our contributors. We have argued that protest movements are more likely to affect political and institutional change when they are part of a cycle of protest, when the grievances expressed by protesters resonate with the broader society, and when the political system is responsive to the demands of the protesters and the protesters are willing to engage in a process of negotiation.

The remainder of this chapter analyzes the interactive relationship between social protest and political change in the cases considered in the volume before turning its attention to the pressing question of how to assess movement impacts in a changing world.

Analyzing Movement Impacts

What happens once a protest cycle has ended? Scholars frequently lament the lack of attention to movement impacts in the social movement literature (see for instance Amenta and Caren 2007; Bosi, Giugni, and Uba 2016; Earl 2007; Whittier 2007). The existing literature does offer us some clues as to how best to assess the political consequences of social movements based on three kinds of impacts: a) direct institutional or policy impacts; b) cultural or biographical impacts on the lives of individual protesters; and c) indirect or unintended effects of social movements on contentious politics more generally. Political change is the result of continuous interactions between different actors in the political system, particularly between social movements and the state. According to Bosi,

> This changing power relation between the different actors is, more often than not, a critical catalyst for a change in the distribution of power—whether this has positive effects, or results in a backlash for the social movement and its constituency. What we surely can say is that no protest wave

> leaves the power relation between the movement's constituency and the state unaffected. (2016, 338)

Clearly, protest movements have consequences at a variety of levels of analysis (micro, meso, and macro) and across a number of different areas (social, cultural, economic, and political). To advance our understanding of when these various impacts are especially heightened, our volume proposes a new framework with which to analyze social movement consequences.

The literature on political and institutional impacts takes its cue from the early work of William Gamson on social protest success (discussed in chapter 7 by Donoso and Somma). Gamson (1975) identified *new advantages* and *acceptance* as two key social movement outcomes that can be objectively assessed and measured. New advantages are said to be accrued when a state-oriented challenger's goals or demands are realized through the passage of favorable legislation or the extent to which political parties or governing agencies adopt aspects of a social movement's agenda. Acceptance relates to whether or not a social movement challenger is recognized as a legitimate representative of a sector of society through acknowledgment by governmental officials. Gamson's state-oriented assumptions about movement success are particularly problematic for gauging the 2011 protest movements that explicitly rejected established political institutions as a means of change. According to Castells, it is difficult to "assess a direct effect of social movements on the political system in accordance with the values and proposals put forward by the movements. This is because the process to translate outrage expressed in society into hope of new politics is mediated by political machines that are not prepared, and not willing, to articulate this hope" (2015, 294). A recent analysis of the latest global protest cycle surmised that "in the process, new political actors, groups, and leaderships appear to have surfaced, *some* authorities have lost office, *some* dictators have fled, and *some* reforms have been made (Davies, Ryan, and Milcíades Peña 2016, 2; emphasis in original). For the most part, social movement success indicators are not well specified in the literature, with most scholars agreeing that the direct political effects of social movements are contingent and conditioned by political context (Amenta and Caren 2007; Bosi, Giugni, and Uba 2016).

In light of the challenges of assessing external movement influences, another body of work focuses on internal dynamics by examining the personal effects of movement participation on the lives of activists. The protest movements of the 1960s, for example, inspired a series of personal or biographical studies of protest participants that pointed to a powerful and enduring impact of participation in movement activities on the political and personal lives of the participants, shaping their political orientation and behavior well into the future (Giugni 2007). At stake in this body of literature is not the direct impact of social movements on democratic politics, but the influence that these movements have on the minds of people, individually and collectively, which may influence democratic cultures and practices over time. For instance, Castells (2015) introduced the concept of a "rhizomatic revolution" in his analysis of Spain's 2011 *Indignados* or 15-M movement as a way to explain the potential culture shift that it produced. The key features of this anti-austerity movement were a refusal to adopt any political agendas, plans, or programs, and a rejection of all formal leadership and organization. The result, according to Castells (2015, 145), is a continuously growing lateral revolution that may produce a significant change in the way democracy is practiced in Spain in the years to come. Despite the inherent methodological challenges of studying self-selected individuals and long-term culture shifts, this emerging body of work serves to remind us that social movements can have impacts on different areas of human life, and that they can occur at different levels of analysis.

A final area of research on the political consequences of social protest has to do with the dynamic interaction between social movements and the field of contentious politics in general, or "mobilization outcomes" (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). A small body of work on generative effects addresses how social movements influence each other. For instance, influential movements, such as the African-American civil rights movement, can generate "spin-off" movements or spawn countermovements that can alter the protest environment (Whittier 2007). Social movements that exist alongside each other can, and often do, change how activists define themselves, frame their issues, devise their strategies and tactics, and establish their presence. Whereas spin-off movements take on a momentum of their own by borrowing from the collective action frames and protest

repertoires of an influential social movement, countermovements emerge in response to the policy gains or direct political impacts of a successful social movement campaign. The 2011 global protest cycle, which generated significant political opportunities for mobilization, opened the door to countermovements and antiestablishment political reactions in Europe and the United States, the effects of which are still being felt today (see chapter 8 by Ted Goertzel for a discussion of the 2016 election of American president Donald J. Trump). In short, social movement consequences are notoriously hard to define, let alone predict. Yet this is exactly what we propose to do.

Our volume seeks to advance the literature on when social movement impacts are more likely to be especially pertinent. We have suggested that protest movements tend to influence political and institutional change when the following conditions are met: a) when they occur during phases of heightened conflict; b) when their moral and material claims evoke strong reactions from the public; and c) when their respective political system is open to negotiation with protesters. Taken together, these three claims advance our thinking on the political impacts of protest by constituting a framework for explaining movement impact or influence.

Firstly, protest cycles enhance a particular protest movement's chances at successfully promoting political change by the way in which they support new collective action frames, tactical innovation, and scale-shift. According to Ayres and Macdonald (chapter 3, this volume), the 2011 protest movements are part of a third global protest cycle against economic globalization. As reported by Tilly and Tarrow (2015), this latest cycle of contention is the largest and most influential since the classic protest cycle of the 1960s. The collective action frame that connected today's globally dispersed protest movements underscored the political and economic exclusion experienced by a new generation of highly educated and underemployed youth, oftentimes referred to as "the precariat" (Standing 2014). Instead of focusing on specific policy measures, the 2011 protest movements emphasized a general mood of discontent (e.g., "The Indignant Ones"), the extent of the public they claimed to represent (e.g. "We are the 99%"), and on the tactics they employed (e.g. "Occupy Wall Street"). Beyond occupying urban public squares, the key tactical innovations of the contemporary protest movements included the effective use of social

media to broadcast their message (see Larson, chapter 4) and "scale-jumping" or making strategic use of the transnational arena rather than abandoning the local, regional, and national spheres as part of a multiscalar dynamic (see Ayres and Macdonald, chapter 3). In reference to the 1964 student protests in Berkeley, California that touched off a decade of campus revolts across much of the United States, Mason has stated: "You may have thought such days were gone—such idealism, such eloquence, such creativity and hope. Well, they're back" (2013, 4). If past experience is a guide to future possibilities, this latest protest cycle promises to leave a lasting legacy of political change.

Secondly, grievances and claims play an essential role in mobilizing public support behind protest movements and in strengthening their capacity to bring about change in the desired direction. As Simmons (chapter 2, this volume) has proposed, a meaning-based approach to understanding mobilizing grievances recognizes social movement claims as both materially and ideationally constituted, evoking emotions, images, or memories that are unique to particular times and places. For example, the global financial crisis of 2007–08 may have served as the backdrop for the 2011 global protest cycle, or what della Porta and Mattoni (2014) have termed "movements of the crisis," yet some movements began only after a catalyzing event generated the moral shock needed to draw broad-based support for change from civil society. As documented by Kingston (chapter 6, this volume), in the period leading up to the Arab Spring uprisings, arbitrary and lethal acts of state violence against ordinary citizens had surpassed threshold levels and generated intense sociopolitical scorn and disdain for most of the political regimes in the region. In this instance, the 17 December 2010 public suicide of a Tunisian fruit vendor in the face of continued police harassment served as the trigger for the popular uprisings that spread across the Arab world and resulted in democratic regime change or reform in some of the region's republican regimes. In the case of Portugal, the spark that gave rise to what is referred to as the struggle of the "Desperate Generation" or the 12-M movement occurred on 23 January 2011 at a music concert by the Portuguese group Deolinda. The band's debut song, "How Silly Am I," aimed at a generation of unpaid interns and contract workers, started a national dialogue on the precarious condition of Portuguese youth that ended with the 23 March 2011 resignation of

Prime Minister José Sócrates (Estanque, Costa, and Soeiro 2013). While there is little in common between a suicide and a song, the grievances at the core of both performances resonated with their respective societies to the extent that the protest movements that emerged had profound consequences for the political regimes in power.

Finally, domestic political institutions serve to mediate the impacts of protest movements by the way in which they absorb or resist pressures for change. In established democratic systems with strong and effective political institutions, protesters tend to "move indoors" as discontent is channeled into routinized forms of politics (Mainwaring and Scully 1995). As Donoso and Somma's study (chapter 7) of the successful Chilean Winter protests against for-profit postsecondary education in that country indicates, both the permeability of political institutions to protesters' demands and the willingness of the protesters to engage with those institutions increases the likelihood of bringing about political and institutional change. In contrast, countries with ineffective or weakly institutionalized political institutions tend to be characterized by more confrontational politics or "transgressive contention" (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). In this context, where political regimes are more likely to resist change and protesters are less willing to work with existing institutions, the direct political impacts of social movements are likely to be minimal. The work of Boulding (chapter 5, this volume) reveals the important role played by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in fomenting protest and political change in countries of the Global South characterized by ineffectual democratic institutions. Based on public opinion data gathered just prior to the 2007–08 global financial meltdown, Boulding found that NGOs served as mobilizing structures for protest where democratic institutions were performing poorly. In sum, protest movements may produce dramatically different kinds of political outcomes depending on the quality of representation embedded in their respective domestic political institutions.

Movements of the Crisis and their Consequences

Iceland and Tunisia proved to be the early risers of the 2011 global protest cycle (Castells 2015; Mason 2013). The first protest movements to emerge in a protest cycle are influential in reshaping political opportunities for

mobilization in the social movement sector. Early risers also set the master frame of protest for subsequent movements within the cycle. For example, the African-American civil rights movement of the late 1950s established a civil rights master frame that shaped the later demands of the student movement of the 1960s as well as the women's and gay rights movements of the 1970s (Whittier 2007). The start of a protest cycle is also when newly invented forms of collective action or the novel recombination of existing tactics emerge and, if they work, are adopted by subsequent protest movements (Wang and Soule 2016). In the cases of Iceland and Tunisia, protest movements began on Internet social networks before they manifested in urban space. In both countries, protesters were highly successful in bringing about political change in the desired direction—so much so that demonstrators in Cairo's Tahrir Square in January 2011 chanted, "Tunisia is the solution," while in May 2011 Spain's *Indignados* shouted, "Iceland is the solution" (Castells 2015, 20).

The Icelandic "Kitchenware Revolution" was one of the first mass mobilizations in response to the devastating impacts of the 2008 global financial crisis on northern economies and societies (Flesher Fominaya 2014). A lone act of resistance that was recorded and uploaded to the Internet proved to be the catalyst or spark that drew thousands of protesters into the downtown core of Reykjavik with their pots and pans to demonstrate against the government's mismanagement of the economic crisis. On 11 October 2008, local singer Hordur Torfason took his guitar to the steps of the parliament building and sang about Iceland's so-called gangster bankers, or "banksters," and their corrupted allies in government (Castells 2015, 34). The protests that followed resulted in the resignation and prosecution of a number of government officials, the introduction of strict new banking and financial regulations, and the move to establish a new constitutional order. As noted by Castells (2015, 38), the Icelandic revolution was not simply about restoring the economy but about transforming a political system that was perceived as subordinated to the banks and incapable of representing the public interest. The protests lasted until new elections were held in early 2009, which saw a left-of-center governing coalition come into power. One of the most significant political outcomes of the protests was the drafting of the world's first "Wiki constitution" by way of a constituent assembly that solicited citizen feedback through

social media and electronic messaging. According to Flesher Fominaya (2014, 154), even though the new constitution has yet to be legislated into law, Icelandic protesters were far more successful in getting their central demands met than their counterparts in Europe or the United States, in large part due to the willingness of Icelandic politicians to listen and respond to the will of the people.

Tunisia's "Revolution of Liberty and Dignity," which was in response to the plundering of the economy by the country's ruling elite and the repressive regime that sustained such activity, resulted in the ouster of President Ben Ali on 12 January 2011 and the shift from a one-party state to a multiparty democracy (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). The tangible political transformation that occurred in this case was facilitated, in part, by Tunisia's high rate of Internet usage and its strong culture of cyberactivism, which effectively transmitted Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation in front of a government building in the impoverished central region in December 2010 to a broad cross section of the Tunisian public (Castells 2015, 29). The video of what happened that day went viral and touched off a nationwide protest movement calling for regime change. Less than a month later, Ben Ali and his family had fled the country, taking refuge in neighboring Saudi Arabia. According to Kingston (chapter 6, this volume) the fall of Ben Ali marked the end of one of the Arab world's most repressive regimes and the first popular uprising to topple an established government in the Middle East since the Iranian Revolution of 1979. The 26 October 2014 parliamentary elections, the first democratic election since the uprising took place, resulted in a win by a secularist center-left party. According to Tilly and Tarrow (2015, 135) it appears, at least for the time being, that Tunisia has managed to build a democracy out of a shaky truce between secular and Islamic parties. Tunisia deservedly stands out in the region for its successful democracy protests.

The movements of the crisis in Iceland and Tunisia may have come about by way of a series of complex contextual and contingent factors, yet their concrete political and institutional gains inspired similar protest movements around the world. Weyland (2012) has suggested that protesters elsewhere were overly optimistic in assessing their own domestic opportunities for mobilization. Our volume suggests that the protest cycle that began in Iceland and Tunisia opened up opportunities for mobilization

in other countries, but in the absence of broad-based social support and a political regime willing to accommodate protesters' demands, subsequent movements faltered. The centrality of political opportunity structures for explaining movement dynamics has come under increasing scrutiny in the social movement literature. As many of our contributors have noted, protesters can, in a sense, open their own windows of opportunity to mobilize through their politics of contestation. Political process theorists have long suggested that institutional conditions—such as the presence or absence of institutionalized channels of representation and state repression or tolerance of dissent—create political opportunity structures that are relatively open or closed to social mobilization (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). A purely structural approach to political opportunities, however, risks missing contingent factors that may translate objective conditions and resources for political mobilization into significant political opportunities. Goodwin and Jasper (1999) have previously made the argument that culture and agency matter more than structures in explaining movement emergence. Our volume suggests that instead of focusing on the explanatory power of political opportunity structures for generating protest, we are perhaps best served by examining how such opportunities facilitate or inhibit movement impacts. In other words, we propose that political opportunity structures are more important to movement success than they are to movement emergence.

New Challenges: Protest and Political Change in a "Brave New World"

To date, the hard-earned cumulative knowledge about the relationship between movements and their political outcomes was based largely on studies of well-established US social movements and, to a lesser extent, European ones. As this volume highlights, however, the world of social movements is changing (again). In economically advanced countries, significant "turbulence" in global capitalism generated new protest phenomena. In Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa new waves of protest spread against neoliberal globalization, for democracy, and for ethnic, cultural, and national rights. These developments suggest promising directions for future research.

What is new in the economically advanced countries? The financial meltdown of 2007–08 and the subsequent Great Recession in the United States generated a wave of sustained protests led by Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party. Protests similar to Occupy, such as the *Indignados* in Spain and movements against economic stabilization and economic restructuring more generally, broke out in Europe. These protests offer an opportunity to assess both the policy and broader political impact of radically different forms of movement organization, strategy, and tactics. Occupy Wall Street and the *Indignados* were spontaneous, loosely organized, and coordinated networks that prized autonomy from politics. That principle influenced their decision to embrace strategies of aggressive disengagement from institutional politics (Byrne 2012). By contrast, the Tea Party was more organized and had links to conservative think tanks and the Republican Party. Future comparisons could help us evaluate the effects of organizational structure, coalitional proclivities (and hence of more direct and indirect connections to policymaking) on agenda setting, policy formulation, and legislation. Occupy Wall Street placed a new issue on the political agenda of the 2012 US presidential campaign—growing income inequality. Before then, the question was largely invisible in the public sphere. It gave President Obama's reelection campaign momentum. However, little legislative action followed. In 2016, the issue fueled social democrat Bernie Sanders's bid for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, which he lost to Hilary Clinton. By contrast, the Tea Party pushed a well-established issue in US political debates (taxes) and engaged full-on with the political establishment. Its electoral mobilization strategy helped to place more radical conservatives in Congress that successfully pressed for anti-tax legislation. In 2016 the Tea Party contributed to Donald Trump's election to the presidency. By contrast, it remains to be seen whether Occupy's actions initiated a longer-term politics around the issue of income inequality.

Similar questions concerning ideational foundations, organization, tactics, and strategies also apply to the near- and longer-term consequences of economic stabilization and adjustment protests for the European Union. On the one hand, like Occupy, decentralized, democratic anti-austerity movements with horizontal forms of leadership, such as Spain's *Indignados*, burst on the scene in 2011 condemning hollow forms

of democracy that no longer represented the interests and welfare of a nation's citizenry as a whole. Unlike Occupy, the most lasting political legacy may have been the decision to leverage the movement into a political party, Podemos, which made significant electoral headway in 2015, transforming Spain's two-party system into a three-party system. On the other hand, globalization and austerity also fueled conservative nationalist, antiimmigration movements that have also built up political parties that have made significant electoral inroads in Europe.

Protest movements in Latin America, the Middle East, or Africa feature prominently in this book, and they are fertile ground for new directions in research on the political impacts of protest movements. The economic, political, and cultural contexts of these regions are different from those of the economically advanced democracies. In Latin America, for example, democratic institutions are often weaker and, in some cases, conceptions of democracy depart from liberal-democratic forms. Executive branches are generally stronger than legislatures. This affects the structure of opportunities and threats, as does the fact that rule of law tends to be less robust. Studies could assess the reasons for and effectiveness of movement strategies that engage the legislative and judicial branches of government in the policy process, including payoffs for efforts to establish political parties or to get representatives elected to the legislature.

By the same token, political institutions in Latin America and elsewhere in the developing world tend to be weak, brittle, and to have limited territorial reach. Laws are often poorly implemented or radically changed in their spirit in the regulatory phase of the policy process. Therefore, as is beginning to happen, it is important for research to move beyond the policy formulation and policy outcome stages of the policy process (a law, decree, or regulation) and into the study of policy implementation in order to gauge effective outcomes of movements.

Finally, we should keep in mind that in many developing countries struggles for political and socioeconomic rights are often in the embryonic stage. Hence, perhaps we should attach greater significance to symbolic victories, such as recognition of the movement's right to exist and act (public visibility) or getting issues and rights on the agenda, than we do in the case of advanced countries where many rights are already established.

Here, again, we have an opportunity to study the trade-offs between shorter- and longer-term perspectives on outcomes.

The Middle East and Asia are comprised of countries that have only very recently been democratized, are still democratizing, or remain authoritarian. These regions offer a chance to build on the literature on transitions from authoritarianism that sprang from the Latin American experience (1970s to early 1980s) and the velvet revolutions of Eastern Europe (late 1980s and early 1990s). Here is a rich laboratory to analyze the impact of protest and social movements on democratization. We could reassess whether movements play a greater role than the previous literature gave them credit for and, equally important, the conditions under which they do so. Studies of policy and institutional impacts of movements for democratization could be very useful as well. After all, the process of political liberalization and democratization does require authoritarian rulers to make policy decisions (Almeida 2003). Here, too, is an opportunity to advance our knowledge on the role of social movements and protest in the construction of new democratic regimes.

Last but not least, the spread of transnational governance and an international political economy driven by neoclassical economics influenced the proliferation of transnational activism. Since many movements are active in local, national, and transnational campaigns, we need more studies that assess how the interaction across scales affects the political outcomes of movements. We have solid research to build on, such as the pioneering studies of Keck and Sikkink (1998) and Tarrow (2005). Later research examined the formation, trajectory, and effects of transnational agrarian movements in various policy areas. These included land reform and food sovereignty (Borras, Edelman, and Kay 2008); transnational activism against oil development in Ecuador (Wiedener 2007); labor mobilization against export-platform manufacturing plants in Mexico (Carty 2004); and anti–Free Trade Area of the Americas campaigns in Latin America in the 1990s and early 2000s (von Bülow 2010). Others focused on transnational activism's impact on the formation of international regimes in human rights, Indigenous rights, gender rights, environmental protection, and sustainable development (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Martí i Puig 2010; Smith 2008). The fact that interactions are playing out over multiple scales complicates the issue of specifying outcomes and causality

even more because it adds complexity to context and multiplies targets (Silva 2013).

This serves as a reminder that establishing causality from social movements in general is no easy task (Amenta et al. 2010). For one, the plurality of actors that may influence policy change makes it difficult to attribute impacts to social movements, which in and of themselves are complex networks of organizations raising a multiplicity of demands and following diverse strategies. Here, despite these difficulties, there is some agreement in the literature that the intertwining of organizations, strategies, and actions contributes to positive outcomes (della Porta and Diani 1999, 331). Secondly, the close relationship between multiple related variables makes it difficult to disentangle cause and effect. Mobilization by itself often is not sufficient to cause observed changes. Third, and closely related, other actors and conditions frequently mediate outcomes. Indeed, we can expect that most political outcomes of movements will be mediated by other actors or factors rather than direct, or that they will be indirect, meaning that movements start a process of change that other actors or factors complete without movement involvement.

A fourth major question regarding causality in the political impact of social movements involves a temporal dimension. As della Porta and Diani (1999, 232) point out, social movements seek to bring about long-term change. However, the height of mobilization and protest usually results in short-term, incremental reforms. This dovetails with a further issue: judging short-term versus long-term goals. The evidence shows that movements tend to have greater impact in obtaining their goals in the early phases of collective action and less in later periods as pushback develops against their achievements. This affects the longer-term implementation and feedback stages of the policy process. By the same token, sometimes the early phases of protest lead to small concessions, which in turn incentivize more protests in the hope of obtaining greater concessions. So the cycle sometimes follows a pattern of protest, concessions, more protest, more concessions. This gives us another angle on how movements may have to adjust their short- versus long-term goals.

We have a variety of methodological tools at our disposal to think more rigorously about the effects of protest and social movements, especially in relation to teasing out causal connections. Ecological data gathering

on movements, their organization, strategy, goals, and political effects is the logical starting point for analysis (Amenta et al. 2010, 300). That data can then be applied to qualitative historical and comparative case studies that are especially useful for understanding causal relationships (Mahoney 2008). In these studies, we should use process tracing to establish connections between causes (movements, protest, and others) and effects. Where policymaking is concerned, analysis must show that a) action altered agendas and plans of authorities and targets; b) that challengers caused changes in the content of proposals by state actors and legislative representatives; c) that influential legislators changed their votes on bills; or d) that movements affected the speed or nature of policy implementation (Amenta 2006). Comparative case studies employing the methods of difference and similarity (or most similar systems and dissimilar systems) are especially useful for teasing out causal linkages in cases of mediated effects (Amenta et al. 2010, 301).

Quantitative analysis tends to dominate US studies of the relationship between social movements and their political outcomes. Multivariate quantitative methods that include interaction effects are useful for analyzing the contingent nature of protest outcomes, especially for establishing the net effect of social mobilization (Bosi and Uba 2009). Several methods are useful for analyzing temporal dimensions. These include time series for individual cases, hazard-rate models for multiple case studies, and generalized linear regression models in cases where the outcome is continuous (Amenta et al. 2010). Some studies have begun to combine quantitative with qualitative methods. Again, these have been conducted mainly in studies of US movements. This leads to calls for more analyses that combine the two in order to more fully understand the complex causal relationships between social movements and the policy and broader political outcomes of their contentious action.

If indeed the global protest cycle of 2011 was the most important cycle since the 1960s, what political changes or trends might it have contributed to in the current juncture? One noticeable change was the emergence of new types of movements along the Occupy-*Indignados* model, decentralized, eminently democratic and horizontal in leadership structure, and explicitly not interested in engaging with the political process. This is not just a European phenomenon, as it was also present in the Arab Spring

and in citizens' movements in Latin America, such as Mexico's #YoSoy132 student movement in search of greater freedom of the press (Castells 2015). Their appearance opens questions about the characteristics of such movements, with some suggesting that they are more akin to episodic protest events. Their significance lies in their mass quality; they are the multitude, a new phenomenon generated by the contemporary phase of globalized capitalism. Do their consequences differ appreciably from those we might attribute to more traditionally defined social movements?

At the core of the 2011 global protest cycle were demands for greater democracy, more responsive and accountable democracy. In economically advanced democracies, and in Latin America, democracy seemed hollowed out, responsive only to the demands of globalized capital and generally unresponsive or unaccountable to the needs of the citizenry. In the Middle East, the demand was more basic—democracy instead of authoritarian rule. Future research could track the effects these movements may have had on party systems, broader socioeconomic policies, interest intermediation regimes, mechanisms for holding elected representatives accountable, democratization, or liberalization of authoritarian regimes. A key question might be: Is a new democratic ethos flourishing that can underpin changes in political culture?

The current juncture also offers a cautionary note. Not all movements are progressive. Reaction is setting in. This is all too evident with the rise of conservative populism, nationalist, and anti-immigration (if not outright racist) sentiments flourishing all around us in the advanced capitalist countries. In addition to tracking their development, it could be interesting to see if, and how, more progressive movements handle, corral, and/or otherwise seek to contain them.

Conclusion

This volume has attempted to shed new light on the relationship between protest and democracy in the era of free markets. The financial crisis of 2007–08 that began in the northern economies has had dramatic consequences for the established democracies of Europe and the United States as well as for diverse political regimes in the Global South. The massive protest movements that emerged in response to the economic downturn

captured headlines around the world and caught many analysts by surprise. The 2011 protest movements have since garnered significant analytical attention due to their innovative nature, geographical spread, and widespread attention to political and economic inequality and uncertainty (Davies, Ryan, and Milcíades Peña 2016). It is clear from our current vantage point that the movements of the crisis were part of a new global protest cycle, the impacts and implications of which continue to reverberate throughout the world's political regimes as they spawn countermovements and upend electoral contests for established political actors. As Tilly and Tarrow (2015, 229) remind us, all cycles of contention must come to an end, but what matters is the process of political change that they help to set in motion. We hope this book contributes to an understanding of what future scholars may deem to be a critical turning point in global contentious politics.

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