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AN ANALYSIS UPON MANY DIFFERENT ALTERNATIVE ASPECTS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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An Analysis upon Many Different Alternative Aspects of Social Movements

Amit Ganpat Gorkhe[1]* Dr. Arun Kumar Singh[2]

[1]Sociology, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith

[2]Sociology, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith

Abstract – Social and material inequalities have often formed the bases on which the largest social movements have emerged. In the West, for example, we see a history of robust social movements organized around labor, gender, and race. Each of these categories represents not only a group of people wishing to improve their lot, but also a systemic social division in which one group is allocated less than another. The structural approach to social movements brings to the forefront of analysis the institutionalized injustices and inequalities over which contested politics are fought.

Social movement actors form organizations to influence states and institutions. These structural elements of activism are of primary interest to structural approaches to the study of social movements. Inequalities of political access have motivated some of the largest and most successful social movements in India.

Structural approaches to social movements, in short, can be seen to cover an enormous terrain that takes us from questions about the nature and causes of inequality to the creation of social groupings to the causes of institutional change. Two concepts that have emerged from what is largely a state-centric body social movements research—political contexts and mobilizing structures—provide useful analytical tools for helping scholars analyze the ways states and other actors and structures shape social movement dynamics.

We emphasize a global perspective in our discussion of the structural approaches to social movements, because we find it increasingly difficult to ignore the ways that national states are embedded within broader sets of relationships to other states and to global institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

Social Movement as a term connotes different meaning to different people. After reviewing an extensive array of literature, Nancy Langton defines social movements as Collective behaviors engaged in by non-institutionalized groups oriented towards achieving specific goals, particularly the goal of extracting or resisting social change.

Social movements adopt three basic strategies to get their mission fulfilled: militancy, size and novelty. Researchers working in the classical tradition put emphasis on violence or militancy as the basic resource available to a social movement. Violence is a high-risk option as it can bring backlash from authority. Some success may come but at a high cost. However, in a democracy, the size of social movement matters more.

Social movements employ both orthodox tactics and un-orthodox ones in attempting to achieve their goals.

Tarrow argues that novel or unorthodox forms of protest are more important than the size of the support or militant method used by social movements. Novelty might give the social movements initial strategic advantage vis- -vis the authorities, but in the long run movements need the larger support. By introducing new form of protests, social movements may expect to get the attention and enlarge their support base.

Some social movement scholars have raised concerns with political opportunities as an analytic category. For example, Goodwin and Jasper (2009) argued that the concept of political opportunity was so vague and pliable as to apply to anything at all external to a social movement organization. They also argued that, as applied to studies of social movements, political opportunity theory tends toward a tautology: any source that produces social movement activity is *post hoc* identified as an opportunity. They also were concerned that cultural

factors are either subsumed under this concept or ignored altogether.

Social movements are made up of actors with a creative capacity and a desire to transform; thus, they contribute to the debate and the outlining of the virtuousness of social justice as the foundation of societies, as well as for transnational relationships and exchanges. Participant actors contribute to redeeming the value of freedom as a basic element of emancipation, demanding that this value and its associated factors not be understood as an abstract principle of emancipation, as prevailed in the formation of the modern political citizen. Freedom should now be couched in and supported by experience and recognition within the social context, combining individuality and collectivity, reason and subjectivity.

While scholars have examined many different aspects of social movements, surprisingly little attention has been paid to social movement decline (Goodwin and Jasper 2003, Owens 2009). The Indian environmental movement provides a useful case study for examining and theorizing demobilization because of its precipitous fall from a growing mass movement in the late 1980s to a barely-visible shadow of itself in the post-transition years.

Social movements were considered to be mobs, characterized by a herd mentality. Those who participated were assumed to be psychologically unbalanced, often due some form of "strain" imposed social breakdown or *anomie*. While the aberrant psychological explanation of social movements has been generally dismissed by contemporary social movement scholars, some scholars continue to emphasize the importance of strain, social breakdown, worsening conditions or suddenly imposed grievances in the mobilization of a movement.

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India is the largest democratic country in the world. The success of democracy depends upon the political parties. Democracy revolves around the pivot of Party organization. In India there is a multi-party system. Various political parties exist and they present alternative political programmes before the electorate and seek the mandate of the people. The party which secures majority in the legislature forms the government and the other parties form the opposition.

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. The opposition parties have to be alert and vigilant as to strengthen democracy. As Lord Bryce observed "the Parties keep a nations mind alive as the rise and fall of the sweeping tide freshens the water of long ocean inlets. The political party always try their best to organize and mobilize public opinion, Put forth their manifesto of an alternative political programme before the people and seek the mandate of voters. Thus the concept of mobilization gains significance. It provides an opportunity to the voters to select and vote for any party of their choice. Mobilization of voters is traditionally considered as an principal function of political parties. When traditional societies move towards modernity and ideal democracy, political mobilization becomes a necessity. In this transitional stage different leaders organize people on various socio economic and political bases to achieve certain goals. Newly emerged groups have to compete to secure goods and services, to achieve social equity and to participate in the democratic political process. In such process competition develops among the various groups to mobilize their own people to the maximum extent to gain optimum benefits. Such mobilization provides as input to the political system which in turn comes out with output in the form of reforms, concessions, and facilities etc to the various mobilized groups. Political mobilization has become an important component of political analysis. Mobilization involves releasing the inert inactive concealed and potential resources into active and usable resources to achieve goals. Elite play an significant role in mobilization process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Study on the usage of social media in stimulating social movements has only begun to surface in the last decade. Although social media is a relatively young phenomenon in our world, works on social movement and collective action, providing scholars with important information in order to understand the impact of social media as an organizational tool (Leenders & Heydemann 2012). While most of these studies have focused on specific case studies – particularly in the Middle East following the 'Arab Spring' – to demonstrate how social media facilitated and promoted social movements, none show a worldwide view of its impact in the mobilization process.

The study focuses on modernization theory and relative deprivation as a departure point for the discussion emphasizing on the role of individuals' grievances as the base condition for social movements. The study uses resource mobilization theory, as well as social networks, and traditional media to explain the mechanisms that aid in the formation and sustenance of social movements.

Samuel Huntington (1998) contributed greatly to the Modernization theory. He argues instability surfaces when institutions cannot keep up with societal and economic changes. Consequently, society will strive to

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replace the current institutions with ones that can meet current social and political demands. However, Ted Gurr (2000) adds relative deprivation to fill in a gap in modernization theory. Gurr argues that even if institutions are able to catch up with societal and economic changes the feeling of relative deprivation will also lead people to mass organize. Relative deprivation argues that people are motivated to organize out of a sense of deprivation or inequality brought forth by a comparison to others, or in relation to their own expectations. In this case, people will join social movements because their expectations will have outgrown their actual situation. As the gap between an individual's value expectations and value attainment grows wider, social frustration will grow. This gap is relative to the situation of an individual's neighbors. If everyone in an area is experiencing the same low level of value attainment, then relative deprivation will not develop.

Both relative deprivation and modernization theory explain the motives for social mobilization as a function of individuals' grievances and anger. Rational choice theory also introduces individuals as rational actors who make choices based on the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action that will most likely maximize their utility. More importantly, all of these theories offer some of the first explanations for social movements.

Social, institutional, and economic contexts provide the underlying motives and conditions for social movements (Oleinik 2012). However, grievances alone or even rational thought are not enough to bring people to act. First and foremost, social movements need *organization* and resources. Resource mobilization theory argues that resources – such as time, money, organizational skills, and certain social or political opportunities – are critical to the formation and success of social movements. Although types of resources may vary, the availability of applicable resources, and actors' abilities to use them effectively are critical for collective action. Resource mobilization theory was also unlike earlier collective action theories in that it was the first to recognize the importance of influences outside the social movement under study. It is also important to consider questions of repression, censorship, threat, and potential costs that might hinder individuals from participating in mass mobilization (Osa & Schock 2007).

Charles Tilly criticizes previous approaches to social movement theory for placing the individual as the primary unit of social movements. Rather, he argues that the primary unit is the interaction between individuals. Individuals only participate in collective action when they recognize their membership in the relevant collective. The degree of group identification appears to be a strong predictor of collective action participation. Such identification can only grow out of *communication* between individuals (Lim 2012). Thus,

social movements depend on social networks that will function as an initial core made up of densely know clusters of stronger ties that then mobilize weakly linked individuals spreading discontent into a mass movement.

Clay Shirky (2011) is one of the early scholars to write about social media as a new social networking tool for collective action. He argues that over the years, the world communication system has gotten denser, more complex, and more participatory. People have gained greater access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speech, and thus, an enhanced ability to undertake collective action.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: A DEMOCRATIC DILEMMA

State is unique among the other social institutions, which tries to ensure its rules to dominate the other institutions such as the family, the clan, the race, the cast, the tribe, the community or the market. As Joel S. Migdal writes, Since the beginning of the contemporary state system in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries change has moved towards accepting an axiom that the state organization should provide the predominant (if not exclusive) set of rules of the game in each society. The capacity to exert control over other social forces has been a defining feature of state. The works of Karl Marx and Max Weber, which has been the foundation of two main traditions in modern social science, argue that the state as an institution monopolizes the legitimate use of violence and organized coercion in society. However, rules that structure the interaction of state and other components of society are always being contested and often being restructured. The states as well as societies vary in their abilities to restructure the interaction process in a normal way. Their struggle and accommodation produce a range of outcomes. The state may dominate the social forces altogether and penetrate at all levels, the state may completely fail to influence the society and collapse, and finally, state and social forces may indulge in incorporating each other's concerns and demands.

Protest reflects the key aspect of this relationship between the state and society. State is responsible for formulating and carrying out policies for a society. State may lack the resources to meet the demands and expectations of various competing social groups.

That may lead to anger among some groups in the society, which can take the shape of protest movement. Protest arises from disagreement over limited issues, such as opposition to particular policies of a government, or antagonisms between groups competing for political influence. The character of the protest is its short duration, low degree of organization, and limited goals.5 The type

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of political system sharply affects the nature of protest. The democracies are distinctive in having more extensive but less deadly protest than the autocracies.6 The structure and ethos of democratic regimes are such that they are adjusted to respond to limited challengers in a conciliatory way, which reinforces the utility of protest over rebellion. On the other hand authoritarian regimes generally rely more on coercive control, which increases the relative utility of rebellion for challengers. Ronald A. Francisco s empirical evaluation of the relationship between coercion and protest in three coercive states (the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, and the Palestinian *Intifada*) finds that the protesters react violently to extremely harsh coercion.

TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is not merely a competition for market shares and well-timed economic growth initiatives; neither is it just a matter of trade opportunities and liberalization. Globalization has also evolved into a social and political struggle for imposing cultural values and individual preferences. The current global economic system optimizes the values and criteria of performance, efficiency and productivity; nowadays, performance defines the new *locus* for the belonging of global subjects who ought to thrive on the accomplishment of shortterm responsibilities at any cost. Being efficient and cultivating performance has become the new global avatar for the myth of progress and development; global performance provides a new sense of universality for national communities.

It goes without saying that such an over-estimation of economic performance, which in general one finds in the discourse of many global economic players, has direct implications for democratic life. According to this viewpoint, political negotiations must also follow the pattern of efficiency and, thus, fall into the market's timetable; there should be no room for doubt and long deliberation in a global risk society.

In this context, the political mobilization of Brazilian social movements against the globalization process targets not only the capitalist principles of market liberalization, but also the negotiations of a trade agreement in the Americas. Likewise, after the demonstrations against economic globalization in Seattle, Prague, Nice and Genoa, and especially after the successive World Social Forums (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Mumbai and in many other cities around the world, the so-called alternative globalization movements have turned from a logic of reflection and debate into dynamics of resistance and contestation against the global political and economic *status quo*. The four World Social Forums, organized between 2001 and 2005 in Brazil, showed that transnational networks of social movements intended to go beyond mere street demonstrations and further discuss with other alter-globalist players possible alternatives in their fight for global social justice (Fougier 2002; Milani

and Keraghel 2006). However, the growing expansion of transnational social movements also stems from the frustration of citizens complaining concomitantly about the democracy deficit at two levels: nationally and globally. These movements are particularly revealing in current world politics, where the classical clear-cut distinctions between domestic and foreign policies, high and low politics, hard and soft power, tend to vanish into thin air.

Global social movements also act transnationally in order to generate domestic outcomes, but they mainly aim at changing practices and influencing ideas and norms in world politics. Some of them expect that the use of information, persuasion, and moral pressure should contribute to changes in international institutions and mechanisms of global governance. Others deploy and engage competing justifications as a political process, becoming true moral entrepreneurs in instigating campaigns around particular issues. The Narmada Movement in India.

CONCLUSION

Research Mobilization approach, with the help of social network analysis may be able to find the reasons for the asymmetrical success of social movements. The social network, both formal and informal ones, enhances a group's capacity to join together in collective action, to address common problems or to pressurize the authority to address these issues. For the successful mobilization..

In the relationship between social network and social movement, the line of causation can run in others direction. Successful mobilization of a movement can help to build trust among the protesters, leading to generating and strengthening social network. At the same time, social network, based on both *bonding* as well as *bridging* ties, can help the mobilization of the protests.

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Amit Ganpat Gorkhe[1]* **Dr. Arun Kumar Singh**[2]

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Corresponding Author

Amit Ganpat Gorkhe*

Sociology, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith

E-Mail – amit.gorkhe@gmail.com

Amit Ganpat Gorkhe[1]* Dr. Arun Kumar Singh[2]