"The World Says No to War": Transnational Mobilization and Implications of February 15, 2003

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Introduction

The mobilization on February 15, 2003 across the globe to protest against the impending invasion of Iraq was the largest anti-war protest in human history.[1] On that one day, an estimated 16 million people in hundreds of cities across the world rallied to thwart the rapid march by the United States and others to war.[2] Peter Tyler, reporter for *The New York Times*, declared, "The fracturing of the Western alliance over Iraq and the huge antiwar demonstrations around the world this weekend are reminders that there may still be two superpowers on the planet: the United States and world public opinion."[3] February 15th was remarkable not only in its scope, but also in its haste. It was the first major transnational mobilization attempting to prevent a war, yet its roots were only three months earlier. Further, the study of Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani in 2004, highlights that most of the participants of February 15th were protesting for the first time.[4] Yet while February 15th has been recognized by leading social movement scholars as a watershed moment in global social movements, it has received little substantive scholarship. Investigation into the roots and dynamics of this historic day underline the lessons of national social movements seizing transnational opportunities to more effectively mobilize and advocate peace.

Among the many queries surrounding February 15th, a simple question dominates: How did its organizers execute it in such a short period of time? Subsequently, what lessons can be learned about the evolution of transnational advocacy networks from this rapid mobilization? In this paper, I explore the roots and developments that led to the anti-war protests of February 15th, drawing out the theoretical lessons epitomized by its occurrence. I particularly show how other transnational mediums, particularly the World Social Forum and global justice movement, coupled with the rise of internet communication technology, made swift coordination possible. Drawing upon the framework of Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, I show how February 15th exemplifies the expansion of transnational activist networks, particularly utilizing symbolic and leverage politics to influence national policy choices[5]. However, I question to what degree the mobilization of February 15th was transnational over multinational. Analyzing the "transnational opportunity" methodology of Stefaan Walgrave and Joris Velhulst[6] and utilizing the extensive work of Sidney Tarrow, I contend that February 15th was the most modern

example of "rooted cosmopolitanism," where actors promoting transnational activism operate in particular national spaces with particular national goals[7]. Understanding the dynamics of "rooted cosmopolitanism," especially with awareness of contemporary international relations, allows us to assess the efficacy and possibilities of transnational anti-war networks at our current juncture.

The March to February 15: The Transnational Narrative

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to rigorous analysis of the implications of February 15th is the lack of clarity on how exactly the historic day happened. The root of the global protests was the European Social Forum (ESF) in Florence, Italy in November 2002.[8] During the forum, participants staged the first European protests against the impending war and issued an anti-war rally call for European anti-war coalitions to begin planning for "enormous anti-war demonstrations in every capital on February 15." One month later, a meeting between prominent European peace groups and the newly formed New York-based United for Peace and Justice solidified plans for the day of protest.[9] The platform accepted at the meetings reads:

> "To this end we have decided to continue our coordination at a European level, to set up a European wide antiwar website, and to have a common banner on each of our demonstrations demanding No War on Iraq. We are committed to spreading antiwar coordination both inside and beyond Europe, and to holding another enlarged meeting after the February 15 demo. We will continue to campaign until this war is stopped. We urge the movement in countries not represented at our meeting to join in our initiatives. We urge every organization that opposes this war to work for a massive mobilization on February 15. Together we can stop the war."[10]

The anti-war call for mobilization was articulated and disseminated at the third World Social Forum held in Porto Alegre, Brazil in January of 2003.[11] The final plans for February 15th were set in meetings held between peace activists at that forum.[12]

Beyond the haste of organizing, the coordination of a massive day of global protest was remarkable. In countries throughout Europe and North America, coalitions were established to move organizations towards a common peace agenda. Following the World Social Forum, these coalitions created Web sites and added Web links to other allied coalitions.[13] Most of these coalitions chose a common slogan coupled with a graphic symbol, "a missile crossed out with the words 'stop the war.'"[14] The slogan was chanted in cities throughout the world, providing a tangible medium of transnational solidarity and synchronization.[15] Studies conducted in 2003 found that the diverse February 15th movements harmonized their foci and goals, particularly coalescing toward "a new form of moralistic and legalistic anti-Americanism.[16] Further, many of these coalitions adopted coordinated posters with the larger and quite appealing slogan, 'the world says no to war,' thus highlighting the power of a global civil society. This posturing not only led *The New York Times* to dub the movement the "second superpower," but it led writers such as Jonathan Schell to declare "On that day, history may one day record, global democracy was born."[17]

Advancing Internet Technology

This remarkable coordination was possible only by advancements in Internet technology; advancements that began with the global justice movement protests in Seattle in 1999. The

Seattle protests were the first time that activists across oceans were able to communicate and coordinate rapidly. Andrew Boyd writes, “Sharing the Internet’s architecture of interconnected hubs and spokes, the new movement was a coalition of coalitions, a decentralized network of campaigns ‘intricately and tightly linked to one another.’”[18] Anti-war coalitions quickly utilized their Web sites as hubs of information and coordination. In the United States, the United for Peace and Justice Web site was the anchor for diverse bodies within the peace movement. Launched in October of 2002, it had hundreds of thousands of visitors a day by the beginning of 2003.[19] At the same time, an extensive e-mail circuit was set up between coalitions in different countries to synchronize messaging and organizing of February 15th.[20] Further, Web pages, listservs and electronic newsletters were utilized by coalitions to communicate across borders and catalyze collective action within their own borders.

Advancing internet technology not only allowed for organizers to execute a synchronized day of protest, but also facilitated empowerment of participants in the actions. According to a 2005 study, many of the participants in the global day of protest heard about the event through email or other Internet communication services. In addition, a large number of participants reported using the Internet to do research about the issue, address logistical needs and coordinate with other protest participants.[21] Electronic digital media can offer highly personalized channels with which to build and maintain communication.[22] According to Donatella della Porta and Lorenza Mosca, “The Internet provides social movements with a cheap and fast means of international communication which simplifies mobilization and favors highly flexible, loose organizational structures.”[23] February 15th marked the permanent arrival of Internet-dominated global social movements.

Global Justice Movement Roots

The use of the Internet as a means of transnational communication was just one of the many tools taken from the global justice movement that sparked the success of February 15th mobilization.[24] The global justice movement provided a framework and tools that allowed the organizers of the anti-war movement to achieve such tremendous success. The first obvious connection between the two movements is that coordination and planning for the global day of anti-war protest happened at the social forums born out of the Seattle experience. Further, while many participants were protesting for the first time[25], most of the organizers of February 15th protests around the world were activists within the global justice movement. Many of the organizations and activists who were intimately involved in the evolution of the global justice movement turned their attention to the Iraq war at the end of 2002, seeing it as the latest frontier to challenge growing undemocratic American hegemony. The Bush administration policy post-September 11, particularly the war in Iraq, provided global justice activists a challenge and opportunity to reframe their message for mobilization. Thus, they brought the Internet communication and other modern tactics to bear on a larger, but related campaign.[26] Yet, beyond the obvious connection of shared activists, the post-Seattle global justice movement presented a new model for transnational activism that came of age with the February 15th anti-war protests. According to Jackie Smith, “By facilitating flows of information across national boundaries, organizations with transnational ties helped cultivate movement identities, transcend nationally defined interests and build solitary identities with a global emphasis.”[27]

Transnational communication and coordination coupled with national coalitions and mobilization proved highly successful as 10-16 million people marched in hundreds of cities around the globe on February 15th.[28] The London demonstration, with more than one million

people, was likely the largest protest in the city's history.[29] Madrid had anywhere from one to two million people, while Paris had 250,000 and Berlin 500,000.[30] Rome, with three million protestors, was recognized by the 2004 Guinness Book of World Records as the largest anti-war protest ever. In New York City, more than 500,000 people stood in over sixteen city blocks beginning at the United Nations building. Beyond the large number of protests in the United States and Europe, masses marched in Tokyo, Seoul, Bangkok, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, New Delhi, Calcutta, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Beirut and Damascus. Jews and Palestinians protested jointly in Tel Aviv, and a few protestors rallied in Antarctica.[31] Thus, February 15 was the first day ever of coordinated global protest on all seven continents.

Building on such an unprecedented scope, the protests of February 15th has particularly good timing. This timing made them relevant and helped protests globally and locally to receive massive media attention. The protests came in the wake of then-Secretary of State Colin Powell's presentation about weapons of mass destruction on February 5th to the United Nations. The day before the protests, chief weapons inspector Hans Blix reported that Iraq had begun cooperation with United Nations inspections.[32] These developments provided news pegs that increased the efficacy and media relevance of the global day of protest. For days and even weeks following the protests, major news agencies such as *The New York Times* presented analysis of this vocal global opinion and second "superpower."[33]

The Impact of a Historic Day

While February 15th was certainly a success in mobilization, analysis of its impact on changing policy was less clear. On the surface, the Bush Administration marched ahead with its planned war against Iraq, a war that continues today with over 2,000 U.S. troops dead and more than 10,000 U.S. troops wounded. The war has also resulted in tens of thousands of Iraqi deaths. Thus, in the primary goal of preventing the war, the February 15th mobilization failed. This failure raises important questions about the nature of democracy, globally and nationally, at our current juncture. How can a global mobilization of more than 10-16 million people have little to no impact on policy decisions, particularly policy to engage in an interstate war?

Yet, according to some analysts such as David Cortright, the movements that coalesced on February 15th did have significant political impact. Cortright argues that the U.S. decision to approach the United Nations before invading was a success of grassroots advocacy. When it brought its case to the United Nations, France, Germany, Russia and six non-permanent members refused to support the invasion. Cortright further contends that the global anti-war movement played a key role in strengthening the United Nations' role. He writes, "By defending the UN, despite its many shortcomings, and insisting upon international authorization for the use of force, the peace movement helped to build the domestic opposition to war and strengthened respect for international law."[34] To date, the failure of the United States to win U.N. approval has hindered the political legitimacy of the mission and their ability to build a real coalition.[35] Others have argued that the mobilization of February 15th finally opened legitimate support mechanisms for post-September 11th dissent against U.S. foreign policy. However, final assessment of the February 15th movements will require analysis of not only its immediate effects, but its long-term institutional impact on the evolution and efficacy of global social movements.

Movements Beyond Borders: The Potency of Global Civil Society

In their groundbreaking book, *Activists Beyond Borders*, Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink state, "By thus blurring the boundaries between a state's relations with its own nationals and the recourse both citizens and states have to the international system, advocacy networks are helping to transform the practice of national sovereignty."[36] Keck and Sikkink highlight the increasing globalization of social movements whereby loose networks of actors can and do coalesce to increase efficacy nationally and internationally. They identified four tactics that such networks use: information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics and accountability politics.[37] Notwithstanding minor revisions, their theoretical analysis remains relatively undisputed. Looking at the events of February 15th, Keck and Sikkink's framework is useful for scrutiny. In what ways were the movements and activists of the day operating beyond borders? How did the transnational mobilization transcend state boundaries and challenge national sovereignty? Finally, how did the global protest utilize Keck and Sikkink's typology of tactics? I argue that activists were utilizing transnational opportunities to organize beyond borders, solidifying the facade of a united global civil society, merging symbolic and leverage politics for international, but more directly national policy change.

While some, such as Walgrave and Verhulst, contend that global social movements and transnational advocacy networks must be distinguished as separate phenomena,[38] I argue that Keck and Sikkink's framework is applicable across the spectrum of advocacy/activist networks, ranging from loose to tight-knit groups. Collective action is not only possible throughout this spectrum, but takes on diverse shapes and sizes in unique contexts. The protests of February 15th portrayed themselves as transnational actors, working across borders and creating a global movement beyond traditional states. This transnational identity arose from the experience of the global justice movement, which portrayed itself as the transnational civil society counterpart to the rising power of the Bretton Woods financial institutions. In response to globalization, "activists have responded by creating transnational subpolitics of their own, with multi-issue agendas and diverse action repertoires as defining elements."[39] They have sought to develop a transnational front, which is useful for both symbolic value and practical information sharing. Thus, while remaining loose coalitions of multiple, diverse organizations, the key organizing bodies of February 15th sought transnational identity and coordination for their collective action. As Keck and Sikkink show, transnational networks arise when activists "believe that networking will further their missions and campaigns."[40] Through transnational networks, the national coalitions of February 15th were able to quickly frame news developments and respond as an organized and powerful movement.

Yet, transnational movements do not arise easily or in a vacuum. Keck and Sikkink write, "We are much more comfortable with a conception of transnational civil society as an arena of struggle, a fragmented and contested area, where 'the politics of transnational civil society is centrally about the way in which certain groups emerge and are legitimized.'"[41] Walgrave and Verhulst add to this when they write that the potential for transnational political opportunities "leads to more or less integrated and largely similar mobilizations in different countries."[42] They utilize a "transnational opportunity methodology" to explore the political opportunity structure available to movements. In the case of the mobilization against the war, transnational opportunities included advancements in Internet communication, the blossoming social forums, world news developments, contentious politics at the United Nations and arising national coalitions seeking collaboration.[43] Seizing such a favorable transnational political opportunity structure, involved coalitions postured themselves as a movement beyond borders, a potent

global civil society that could not only lobby international organizations but also national bodies. Through framing, they sought to employ a powerful symbol of a world united as a means to pressure policy change.

The united coalitions that executed the global day of protest merged symbolic and leverage politics, building upon and adapting the typology of Keck and Sikkink. According to these scholars, symbolic politics are "part of the process of persuasion by which networks create awareness and expand constituencies."[44] Social movements and networks call upon symbols, stories and actions to help a targeted audience interpret events and news. In leverage politics, however, symbols become power, which allows networks to influence policy and action. Keck and Sikkink write, "By leveraging more powerful institutions, weak groups gain influence far beyond their ability to influence state practices directly. The identification of material or moral leverage is a crucial strategy step in network campaigns."[45] The February 15th movements sought first a symbolic power by mobilizing a historically global day of protest. Organizers, initiating the first calls for mobilization at the European Social Forum, envisioned the powerful facade of a united international civil society decrying the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

Yet, there was more than orthodox symbolic value. The involved organizations and coalitions believed this symbol could generate leverage power that would force the United States to hesitate in its march to war, consult international governmental bodies and ultimately stray from war. They sought to become a real "second superpower" that could, by massive numbers and symbolic unity, pressure and shame the Bush Administration away from the march to war. In such, they adapted the Keck and Sikkink typology to merge symbolic and leverage politics, utilizing symbols that intrinsically hold leverage. In doing so, the masses of February 15th worked to build a new non-governmental civil society power that could sway international "politics as usual" and move the world order in a more hopeful direction. One of the most remarkable elements of the transnational mobilization was its potential to institutionalize an avenue for challenging world affairs. Thus, February 15th demands revision and expansion of the work of Keck and Sikkink to show how transnational advocacy/activist networks can seek to become powers themselves that rival their competitors. These networks seek this power through symbols that demand leverage and clout. Yet the mobilization of February 15th, though deemed so powerful by mass media, failed to actually gain the necessary leverage to stop the war. This raises our final question of how transnational or global the mobilization actually was, and particularly how much power it held as a movement beyond borders.

Evaluating Transnationalism vs. Multinationalism

It is indisputable that February 15th was a historic international day of protest that involved people from all corners of the globe. Yet, there is little consensus on whether the February 15th movement was a truly transnational development or just multiple national social movements utilizing transnational political opportunities for national gains. While the international movement against the war in Iraq may lie within the scope of Keck and Sikkink's typology, it begs the question of whether it was really a movement across borders or movements communicating across borders. I argue that the history of organization towards and after February 15th suggests that it was the latter: national movements communicating across borders to utilize transnational opportunities, make transnational claims and project a transnational identity. I contend that the February 15th movements were ultimately multinational, seeking transnational identity solely for a merged symbolic and leverage politics.

The political opportunity structure of social movements developed in the 1980's contended that the greatest determining indicator of movements were political opportunities in given national contexts. Jackie Smith challenged this structure of analysis in the 1990's, arguing that transcontinental movements could evade national political opportunities to operate in the blossoming international political environment.[46] Yet, Smith's contribution raised the question of how to comprehend and differentiate national and transnational political opportunities. In their extensive work, Walgrave and Verhulst utilized a "transnational opportunity" methodology to show that "February 15 was a day of protest with theoretically the most favorable transnational opportunity climate ever."[47] They write, "Triggering event, protest timing, issues, claims and goals were the same in all protest countries."[48] Yet, while they highlight international coordination in such climate, they hesitate to assume as Jackie Smith does that such opportunities presume the development of a transnational identity. They limit their conclusion to showing how the international climate presented opportunities for coordination of national movements to achieve common goals and maximal mobilization.

Evaluating this climate and transnational opportunity methodology, Sidney Tarrow argues, contrary to Smith, that this is likely just a "temporary spurt of transnational contention" where "rooted cosmopolitan" activists utilized a favorable transnational climate to succeed in their national contexts.[49] Tarrow writes that the activists of such transcontinental events are rooted in domestic contexts, yet able to "shift their activities among levels, taking advantage of the expanded nodes of opportunity of a complex international society."[50] He argues that a new global civil society is not arising; simply domestic civil society actors and bodies that are able to maneuver across and within borders given a particular opportunity structure. He writes, "What is 'rooted' in this conception is that, as cosmopolitans move physically and cognitively outside their origins, they continue to be linked to place, to the social networks that inhabit that space, and to the resources, experiences, and opportunities that place provides them with."[51] This understanding of "rooted cosmopolitanism" as the key feature of modern global social movements provides a critical lens to highlight realities about the network of February 15th protests.

When millions of people took to the streets on that Saturday in February, they were joining people all across the world. They were participating in a truly transnational moment, arising out of an opportune international climate; however, they were not, regardless of the hopes of many, joining a movement ultimately transnational. First, while some of the protestors, particularly organizers, had operated in the global justice movement, the majority of participants were first-timers who were solely outraged by the U.S. march to war in Iraq.[52] Second, the transnational coordination, though initiated by activists at the World Social Forum, remained a loose and rapid coordination of more solidified national coalitions. These coalitions, forming out of national political opportunities, were key bodies that facilitated transnational coordination and mobilization.[53] Further, the lack of unity between peace movements across borders has limited transnational coordination to February 15th and a few other occurrences. The lack of sustained and substantive cooperation or networking suggests "rooted cosmopolitanism" over a budding permanent "global civil society."

The protests of February 15th were remarkable in their rapid synchronization; yet, this rapid synchronization was unique and remains unique in transnational relations between movements against the U.S. war in Iraq. Since the protests on February 15th, there has only been one other instance of transnational coordination: the two-year anniversary protests against the war in March of 2005. Those protests, however, only coordinated message and demands.[54] In this

way, the transnational mobilization of February 15th pales in comparison to the sustained coordination of anti-nuclear movements in the 1980's, particularly in Western Europe and the United States.[55] Research is needed to understand how the transcontinental climate and opportunity structure for social movements in the last two to three years has changed. Why, in the wake of the world's largest transnational day of protest, have the movements remained disconnected? Perhaps with the end of the United Nations debate on the legitimacy of war, transnational opportunities diminished. There has also not been a formulation and articulation of a serious challenge to the militarization of U.S. hegemony.[56]

Today, two and a half years after February 15, 2003, connections between the U.S. and European peace movements are non-existent. U.S.-lead organizers and activists lack mechanisms and even the phone numbers of their European counterparts to begin such coordination. There is no directory of email addresses for activists across borders to utilize shared information.[57] While some contend that the World Social Forum and subsequent regional and continental forums remain the networking center, many of the lead activists in national peace movements have not attended. This lack of transnational coordination has been coupled with the quieting of national peace movements. In the United States, the peace movement has failed to mobilize the same numbers or receive the same media attention that it did around February 15th. There have been recent glimmers of hope for U.S. mobilization, but lack of opportunities and policy consensus have hindered substantial action over the last two years. Even in light of public information discrediting the U.S. justification for invasion, movements particularly in the United States and United Kingdom have remained stale and ineffectual. These movements have either succumbed to a lack of opportunity structure or failed to seize existing opportunities. It is likely both. This inability to build upon the historic successes of February 15th not only highlights the limits of "rooted cosmopolitanism," but demands study for the efficacy of future global social movements.

February 15th's Lessons for Today and Tomorrow

The unprecedented transnational mobilization of February 15th demands study of its implications for social movements today and tomorrow. The protest coordination of February 15th highlights the power of transnational synchronization to create movements that wage both symbolic and leverage politics against national and international governmental bodies. This shows that movements of transcontinental nature can gain symbolic and potentially even leverage power just by their transcontinental facade and subsequent coordination. The movements that coalesced in global protests on February 15th seized transnational opportunities, allowing them to empower the United Nations and global civil society to challenge the U.S. invasion. This shows the power that such movements can have by working with and through international intergovernmental bodies. Building on the networks presented by the World Social Forum and the rise in the Internet, activists were able to swiftly coordinate timing, messaging, publicity and facade for an international event that dominated the media and made history. Through digital electronic communication and message unity, the protests of February 15th were able to mobilize unprecedented numbers of first-time protestors. This historic day of anti-war protest solidified new technology-based models of transnational activism that were introduced by the global justice movement, models that can and should be utilized in future international campaigns.

Yet, February 15th also highlights gaps and failures that will need to be considered for future international advocacy movements. First, the movements involved with February 15th

faced an identity crisis following the U.S. decision to invade Iraq without United Nations authorization. While these national movements had been able to seize transnational opportunities to make transnational claims and demands, they soon faced a climate with a weaker transnational opportunity climate and a seemingly much greater national political opportunity structure. In this changing climate, many of these movements fell stale and quiet in the wake of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, failing to explore and seize opportunities within their own political contexts to mobilize for policy change. The cosmopolitan activists that Tarrow describes need better insight and awareness of the changing opportunity structures.[58] Particularly in the United States, the movement against the war has lacked creativity and boldness in the first two years after the initial invasion. Coalitions such as United for Peace and Justice have failed to engage the numbers that they did prior to the invasion. Successes have been limited to vigils and rallies on the anniversaries of the invasion and benchmarks of 1,000 and 2,000 U.S. soldiers killed. Even during the 2004 U.S. election season, the anti-war movement failed to really enter and engage the debate over U.S. foreign policy.

However, this identity crisis was not only a failure to evaluate opportunity structure, but also a failure to articulate an agreeable policy position. In the wake of the invasion, the United States peace movement teetered between advocating withdrawal and a number of other more convoluted policy stances. There was substantial lack of consensus on how to reconcile ending the U.S. occupation of Iraq with establishing peace in a war-ridden Iraq. The message utilized by the February 15th protests was simple and facilitated mass mobilization; nevertheless, this simplicity hindered more substantive critiques of U.S. hegemonic policy post-September 11th. Following the February day of protest, the transnational movement of national coalitions was unable to quickly transition to new messages that were relevant, challenging and easily articulated. This lack of unity created a schism in the peace movements that hindered efficacy. Finally, the culture post-September 11th has really repressed minority voices and dissent to dominant policy. Movements of the future, particularly peace movements, will need to find comprehensive avenues to present critiques and alternatives to U.S. hegemony.[59]

Finally, while the success of February 15th lay in its rapid and easy coordination, its failures were in movements' inability to create sustainable networks and structures for such synchronization, symbolic leverage and information sharing. Today, anti-war activists across borders lack even the phone numbers and email addresses necessary to contact each other. In the wake of February 15th, there should have been serious efforts to create databases and networking structures to continue information sharing. There could have been joint organizing conferences to evaluate the efficacy of the transnational mobilization and prepare for future action. Without established structures, the unprecedented networking in the months before February 15th diminished with the lack of transnational opportunities. In order to compete with the permanent bodies of power in the international system, social movements of the day must create structures of continuity that will give them sustained relevance. Such permanence through institutions and structures may move us towards an actual global civil society that can wage effective symbolic and leverage politics.

Conclusion

February 15, 2003 was a historic day that showed the potential for contemporary global social movements to mobilize massive numbers across borders, challenging the most powerful political bodies. With roots in the global justice movement that came of age with the Seattle protests of 1999, February 15th solidified a new model for rapid, Internet-based transnational

synchronization of protest actions. In such, the movements forced the United States to attempt to seek United Nations authorization, giving new legitimacy to global institutions and international law. Yet, as successful and unprecedented as the global protest day was, it failed to achieve its primary objective of preventing the war. It also failed to sustain its relevance and leverage over time. Thus, February 15th remains a quintessential case of the limitations of "rooted cosmopolitanism," where nationally-rooted movements seize favorable political opportunity climates to achieve their goals. Without the permanence of institutions and structures, "rooted cosmopolitan" movements cannot truly move beyond borders to create a formidable global civil society. Until social movements are able to build meaningful structures to bring continuous pressure to bear on international relations, their impact will be short-term and transient. Connected, legitimate grassroots institutions fostering and housing global social movements are the only way to challenge elites' continued dominance of policy affairs. Future research must consider how to best construct such institutions to maximize the efficiency and sustainability of global social movements. For without such institutions, the historic mobilization of February 15th and its transnational model remain incomplete towards changing the tide of history.

Notes

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