

## **Globalization and transnational diffusion between social movements: Reconceptualizing the dissemination of the Gandhian repertoire and the “coming out” routine**

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Since the end of the Cold War, research on globalization has rapidly entered the mainstream of social science. Scholars have developed various definitions to capture the dynamics of this pervasive yet elusive process. David Harvey stresses the compression of space and time, Anthony Giddens highlights the growing impact of distant events on local experience, Roland Robertson emphasizes the intensification of consciousness in a shrinking world, and Manuel Castells focuses on the role of information in a global network society.<sup>1</sup> These influential theorists generally concur that, with the rise of new communication technologies and the demise of the Soviet Union, a new form (or at least a new historical phase) of globalization has emerged.<sup>2</sup> Although they do not necessarily use these terms, they also agree that globalization represents relatively unintentional and “deterritorialized” processes, while transnational diffusion (or transnationalism) involves the relatively deliberate and “grounded” construction of cross-border networks between individuals, groups, organizations, and countries.<sup>3</sup>

As a rule, though, contributors to this field are more interested in the political, economic, and cultural implications of universal developments than in the inner workings of transnational diffusion. By taking the worldwide spread of capitalist markets, modern culture, communication technologies, migrants, and rationalized systems of government as points of departure, they tend to gloss over the particular processes that generate and sustain globalization. Leslie Sklair, for instance, asserts that global capitalism drives practices in the contemporary world system, with transnational corporations, the transnational capitalist class, and consumerism as the primary economic, political, and cultural-ideological institutions. Rather than examining precisely how and why these actors originally forged transnational connections, he

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concentrates on the ways in which they are transforming the world in name of “the global capitalist project.”<sup>4</sup> Arjun Appadurai, on his part, claims that the existence of global media channels allows local persons and collectivities throughout the world – in poor as well as rich countries, in the countryside as well as in cities, at home as well as abroad – “to annex the global into their own practices of the modern.” Again, he first presupposes the omnipresence of “globoscapes” and then analyzes their micro repercussions, instead of focusing directly on the twists and turns of cross-border cultural flows.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, John Meyer and other world society theorists accept the ubiquity of media networks and Western rationality before exploring the dissemination of Western state structures across the world. For them, transnational diffusion is the logical result of global institutional isomorphism, not a contingent process that is at least partly indeterminate.<sup>6</sup>

Since it takes the macro reality of globalization for granted prior to investigating the specific contours of transnational diffusion, such research usually leaves one problematic assumption unexamined: the assumption that today’s turbulent world basically emanates from developments in Europe, the United States, and other Western democracies.<sup>7</sup> While opinions about globalization’s temporal origins vary widely, therefore, most scholars do not question its geographical source. Some argue for the sixteenth century as starting point, others for the period between 1875 and 1925, or the end of World War II.<sup>8</sup> Few writers, however, doubt the premise that contemporary conditions are the historical result of complex economic, political, and cultural processes within the West.<sup>9</sup> We contend that this premise leads to a perspective characterized by “essentialist diffusionism,” a perspective that seriously undermines the analysis of reciprocal transnational diffusion between non-Western and Western parts of the world.

Geographer and historian Jim Blaut demonstrates that essentialist diffusionism as a coherent belief system originated in the nineteenth century, at the height of European imperialism, but continues to influence contemporary social theory.<sup>10</sup> He suggests that essentialist diffusionism relies on the following fundamental propositions: 1) innovation and progress stem from Western democracies in the core of the world system; 2) non-Western countries in the world system’s periphery are usually stagnant and traditional; 3) Western progress derives from superior rationality, spirit, and values; 4) the cultural reason for non-Western backwardness is inferiority in above areas; 5) non-Western countries can only advance through rapid diffusion of

progressive ideas and practices from the West; 6) in exchange, Western democracies receive material wealth and manpower from non-Western areas; and 7) ideas and practices that diffuse from the non-West to the West are ancient, savage, and destructive.<sup>11</sup> After World War II, this model began to take the form of modernization theory, which shifted focus from colonialism to development of the Third World. Although the contemporary model highlights the spread of economic and political “modernization” instead of imperial conquest, it retains the assumption of centrifugal diffusion without explaining why innovations only spread from core to periphery and from the West to the non-West. Moreover, it retains the assumption that diffusion either proceeds quickly and smoothly, or not at all.<sup>12</sup>

Classical diffusion theory is arguably most explicit in its promotion of modernization theory and essentialist diffusionism. In the late-1950s, Everett Rogers and like-minded sociologists began arguing that since diffusion within peasant communities generally flows from pro-development “cosmopolitans” to traditionalist “laggards,” modernization efforts should concentrate on convincing the former to adopt.<sup>13</sup> This pattern, they asserted, not only applies to the “developed” West, but also to the dissemination of Western innovations to and within “underdeveloped” rural areas outside the West. From the beginning, therefore, classical diffusion theory has accepted the main propositions of essentialist diffusionism identified by Blaut and today it continues to serve as the primary guide for diffusion researchers.<sup>14</sup>

Rogers’s *Diffusion of Innovations* remains the clearest and most comprehensive statement of classical diffusion theory.<sup>15</sup> In it, he defines diffusion as “the process by which an *innovation* is *communicated* through certain *channels* over *time* among the members of a *social system*.”<sup>16</sup> First, he asserts that the diffusion item is a new, readily observable, and fully formed idea, practice, or product. Next, he identifies two types of communication channels, interpersonal networks and the mass media, and divides the receiving population into five categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Within these groups, the cosmopolitan opinion leaders are the main actors; they serve as trustworthy role models for their traditional followers.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, communication between transmitters and receivers is most likely when they share “common meanings, a mutual subcultural language, and are alike in personal and social characteristics.”<sup>18</sup> Then, he explains that diffusion involves a linear sequence of stages (knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation,

and confirmation), a predictable rate of adoption (gradual at first, rapid in the middle, and tapering off at the end), and a recurrent causal law.<sup>19</sup> The latter consists of two steps: initial *information* about an innovation flows via media sources to opinion leaders, while interpersonal *influence* with regard to adoption spreads from opinion leaders to their local followers.<sup>20</sup> And finally, Rogers claims that diffusion only takes place *within* a social system that provides a favorable structural environment for reception.<sup>21</sup> Thus, classical diffusion theory not only takes for granted that innovations originate in the Western core and enter receptive communities on the non-Western periphery,<sup>22</sup> but also that diffusion within these communities trickles down from “modern” opinion leaders at the top of the social hierarchy to “traditional” followers at the bottom.<sup>23</sup>

Despite their emphasis on universal flux and fluidity, contemporary globalization theorists generally accept that inventions and social change started in modern European or Anglo-Saxon countries and moved outward to traditional countries in Asia, Africa, and South America. They also frequently imply that the “de-civilizing” aspects of globalization are the result of counter-diffusion from the periphery to the core, or of “peripheralization” within the core.<sup>24</sup> Paul Kennedy, for one, wonders whether progressive “Western values” will survive in a world overwhelmingly populated by unenlightened non-Western people. Similarly, Anthony Giddens stresses that those who “defend traditions in a traditional way” (whether they come from peripheries within or outside the West) undermine the reflexive and dialogic essence of the “cosmopolitan” global order. And Benjamin Barber sees the militant conflict between the core’s McWorld and the periphery’s Jihad as the main factor impeding a global civil society based on liberal Western ideas.<sup>25</sup> In the end, therefore, the blessings and solutions originate in the core, while the problems and clashes start in the (core’s) periphery.

This article does not seek to develop the late Blaut’s arguments into a full-blown critique of modernization theory or globalization research. We leave that daunting task to scholars such as Edward Said, Janet Abu-Lughod, Jack Goldstone, Kenneth Pomeranz, Samir Amin, and Andre Gunder Frank.<sup>26</sup> We merely wish to apply the insights of Blaut to our own field of study – contentious politics – and begin constructing an approach to transnational diffusion between social movements that avoids essentialist diffusionism.<sup>27</sup> Our first section, therefore, reviews recent scholarship on inter-movement diffusion and argues that

current definitions, concepts, and empirical studies reproduce some of modernization theory's biases. The next section outlines a perspective that builds on alternative foundations. Then, we apply our approach to two different cases: the Gandhian repertoire's passage to the American civil rights movement and the cross-border flow between gay and lesbian movements throughout the world. The first case involves transnational diffusion *before* the present age of globalization, while the second concerns transnational diffusion *in the midst of* globalization. And finally, we draw some conclusions and suggest areas for future research.

### **Contentious politics and transnational diffusion**

After concentrating on national dynamics during the 1970s and 1980s, contentious politics scholars now take the impact of globalization on collective action seriously. Following McAdam and Rucht's groundbreaking article in 1993, the number of studies on transnational diffusion between social movements has grown considerably. As in the globalization literature, however, these studies take the centrifugal nature of cultural flows and communication for granted. They assume that innovative protest methods or routines originate in the West and spread outward – initially within the world system's core and eventually (after becoming “modular”) to its periphery. In this section, we discuss three areas where contentious politics scholars' essentialist view of diffusion is most obvious: in their definitions of transnational diffusion, in their theoretical applications, and in their empirical studies.

#### *Defining transnational diffusion*

Prominent authors in our field nearly always take the definition developed by Everett Rogers as starting point.<sup>28</sup> Doug McAdam and Dieter Rucht, for instance, list the following fundamental elements:

- (1) a person, group, or organization that serves as emitter or transmitter; (2) a person, group, or organization that is the adopter; (3) the item that is diffused, such as material goods, information, skills, and the like; and (4) a channel of diffusion that may consist of persons or media that link the transmitter and the adopter.<sup>29</sup>

Each of these elements is essentialist in the sense that they are treated as pre-given, fixed, and coherent entities rather than as emergent,

dynamic, and relational processes.<sup>30</sup> McAdam and Rucht then highlight that actions by adopters must lag behind those of transmitters, and that transnational dissemination is only possible when structural similarity and institutional equivalence allow adopters to identify with transmitters.<sup>31</sup> Basically, therefore, they stress the same characteristics as Rogers: the innovation (or diffusion item) must be distinct, communication channels consist of interpersonal and media links, reception evolves in temporal stages, and diffusion occurs within a (local, national, or international) social system. They only contest the classical model at the margins, arguing that in the contemporary world, mass media sources are not necessarily less influential than interpersonal networks,<sup>32</sup> and that receivers may tinker with diffusion items.<sup>33</sup> Other social movement scholars have followed their lead and similarly employ definitions that contain the four classical elements.<sup>34</sup>

The fact that social movement scholars generally use the classical interpretation of transnational diffusion may seem harmless enough. But since Rogers was one of the founding fathers of modern diffusionism,<sup>35</sup> it is almost impossible to accept his definition without replicating some of its underlying biases – despite conscientious efforts to avoid them. While our own work builds on its shoulders, therefore, we want to eradicate the remnants of essentialist diffusionism (and modernization theory) that continue to taint contentious politics research.<sup>36</sup> Let us give just one example.

Recently, Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly published an important book that lays out a new agenda for studying contentious politics and that evades some of the lingering traces of modernization theory.<sup>37</sup> Yet, their analysis of diffusion between activist groups remains essentialist. They argue, for example, that diffusion and brokerage are two distinct (although sometimes linked) social processes:

*Diffusion* involves the transfer of information along established lines of interaction while *brokerage* entails the linking of two or more currently unconnected social sites.... Contention that spreads primarily through diffusion will almost always remain narrower in its geographic and/or institutional scale than contention that spreads through brokerage.... Why? Because the diffusion pathway will not easily transcend the typically segmented lines of interaction that characterize social life. Brokerage by definition brings together different actors with frames and forms of action that cross these segmented lines.... [D]iffusion requires a much lower investment of time, entrepreneurship and frame transformation than brokerage.<sup>38</sup>

In assuming that diffusion resembles short-term emulation rather than creative learning, they corroborate the classical perspective that diffusion either proceeds rapidly within a conducive social system or, if structural conditions are unfavorable, not at all. They assert that brokerage, in contrast, does produce connections between distinct social systems, because it involves persistence, inventiveness, and skill.<sup>39</sup> By employing an essentialist definition of diffusion (and juxtaposing it to an essentialist definition of brokerage), these authors reproduce the “stop-or-go” myth as well as classical diffusion theory’s “two-step flow hypothesis.” Moreover, while they discuss an impressive number of non-Western cases, they do not consider transnational connections between Western and non-Western groups or *centripetal* cultural flows – not even as a result of brokerage. Less renowned researchers of contentious politics tend to embrace similar views of diffusion, thereby solidifying the underlying biases of essentialist diffusionism.

### *Conceptualization*

Based on the type of definitions sketched above, leading authors have formulated several theoretical concepts to facilitate analysis of transnational diffusion between social movements. Most important for our discussion are the cycle (or wave) of protest and the distinction between initiator and spin-off movements.

According to Sidney Tarrow, the main features of a protest cycle include: “heightened conflict, broad sectoral and geographical extension, the appearance of new social movement organizations, and the empowerment of old ones, the creation of new “master frames” of meaning, and the invention of new forms of collective action.”<sup>40</sup> Widespread political turbulence, in other words, tends to sweep across a society at certain moments in history, flow outward from center to periphery, catalyze existing as well as emerging protest groups, produce unprecedented worldviews, and inspire modifications in repertoires of contention. The image provided by Tarrow clearly meets the criteria for essentialist diffusionism: domestically, collective action and innovations diffuse from urban centers to rural areas; transnationally, collective action and innovations initially diffuse among core countries in the world system (especially between the United States and Europe), and only spread to peripheral countries after becoming modular.<sup>41</sup> Although he acknowledges *that* non-Western people may receive diffusion items

generated in the West, he pays little attention to *how* such cross-border dissemination evolves or *why* it occurs in some times and places and not others.<sup>42</sup>

Doug McAdam introduces the categories of initiator and spin-off movements to answer how and why transnational diffusion between social movements takes place. The former refers to extraordinary social movements that “signal or otherwise set in motion an identifiable protest cycle,” while the latter denote more common social movements that “in varying degrees, draw their impetus and inspiration from the original initiator movement.”<sup>43</sup> The initiator movement, he asserts, emerges primarily as a result of favorable political opportunities – i.e., as a result of “changes in either the institutional features or informal political alignments of a given political system that significantly reduce the power disparity between a given challenging group and the state.”<sup>44</sup> Spin-off movements, in turn, import the cultural items introduced by their inventive predecessor through domestic or transnational diffusion, and adapt them to their own environments. For latecomers, therefore, social identification with early risers, institutional conditions, and cultural opportunities are decisive.<sup>45</sup> While McAdam is certainly more concrete about the dynamics of diffusion than Tarrow, he also takes essentialist diffusionism as a point of departure. In the first place, the only initiator movements he refers to are an American and a European one (the civil rights movement and Solidarity, respectively). Secondly, he assumes that diffusion only occurs during a protest cycle and that the direction of flow is centrifugal: from core *toward* periphery. Thirdly, he agrees with classical theory’s hypothesis that “diffusion tends to spread along the lines of established interpersonal communication.”<sup>46</sup> Fourthly, he argues that groups with social and geographical proximity to the initiator will be the first to receive its innovations, while distant groups will not adopt until the end of a protest cycle.<sup>47</sup> And finally, he asserts that structural equivalence allows for social construction of similarity, which subsequently motivates latecomers to adopt an early riser’s inventions.<sup>48</sup> In short, innovations originate in the Western core, are most likely to spread to familiar and closely linked groups in comparable social systems (i.e., *within* the liberal democratic parts of the world), and only reach non-Western groups in the periphery after becoming modular.<sup>49</sup>



*Empirical studies*

Essentialist definitions and concepts have led to essentialist empirical studies of diffusion. Tarrow refers to the French Revolution, the European revolution of 1848, the Popular Front in the United States during the 1930s, and especially the Italian labor strikes between 1965 and 1975 as examples of protest cycles.<sup>50</sup> McAdam identifies the American civil rights movement and Poland's Solidarity as initiator movements, and traces the diffusion path from the American to the German student movement during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>51</sup> Following in their footsteps, Ruud Koopmans looks at protest waves in Germany and the Netherlands between 1975 and 1989, Marco Giugni at European peace movements between 1981 and 1983, and Sarah Soule at the student anti-apartheid movement in the United States during the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>52</sup> Suffice it to say that most studies on contentious politics concentrate on inter-movement links within the Western core without providing historical evidence for dissemination to the non-Western periphery and without even considering reverse transnational diffusion flows.

Partial exceptions to this generalization include Jeffrey Ayres, who explores contemporary "cyber-diffusion" across national borders; David Snow and Robert Benford, who analyze Western influences on the Chinese democracy movement of 1989 and dissemination from a Japanese Buddhist movement to the United States in the 1960s and 1970s; and especially Ron Guidry, Michael Kennedy, and Mayer Zald, who highlight that the "transnational public sphere" provides opportunities for groups in core as well as peripheral countries.<sup>53</sup> But while these authors break important new ground, they do not present another framework for studying transnational diffusion between social movements. Although they criticize certain problematic implications of the dominant approach, they do not deconstruct its foundations and attempt to reconstruct an alternative approach. At the risk of stepping on some big toes, the following section outlines possible ways for moving beyond essentialist diffusionism.

**Toward an alternative framework**

We are acutely aware that deconstructing existing scholarship is much easier than reconstructing it on a more solid footing, and readily acknowledge that the former is only useful insofar as it facilitates the

latter. To avoid overstretching our argument, therefore, we concentrate on providing another definition, developing additional theoretical concepts, and introducing new empirical studies. Further research will have to resolve whether our approach is really less essentialist than current approaches to transnational diffusion between social movements.

#### *Redefining transnational diffusion*

As we indicated earlier, contentious politics scholars and classical diffusion theorists basically agree on the fundamental characteristics of transnational diffusion. They concur that: (1) the diffusion item must be clearly discernable; (2) interpersonal and media channels interact, but are distinct; (3) the temporal process is linear, sequential, and follows two predictable steps; and (4) diffusion spreads *within* a social system (or within a population), whether it is within national borders or within liberal democratic regions.<sup>54</sup>

In contrast, we argue that diffusion items may be dynamic, ambiguous, and malleable, both in the transmitting and receiving context. In many cases, they are not finished products but works-in-progress. Secondly, we emphasize how receiving groups interpret and employ a foreign innovation instead of whether the communication channel is relational or non-relational, established or new. The key receivers in this regard are not mainstream opinion leaders or media sources, which generally introduce and perpetuate stereotypical perceptions of diffusion items, but what Thomas Rochon calls “critical communities” – networks of excluded citizens who identify new social problems, formulate new modes of thinking and feeling, and develop new political and cultural solutions.<sup>55</sup> Thirdly, we stress that transnational diffusion may evolve non-linearly, may skip stages (forward as well as backward), and often relies on fluid and dynamic mechanisms.<sup>56</sup> And last but not least, we focus on transnational diffusion between heterogeneous and relational *fields* of diffusion – i.e., between the non-West and West, between the periphery and the core, between the “non-democratic outskirts” and the “democratic heartland” – instead of within hierarchical and orderly social systems.<sup>57</sup> With Blaut, therefore, we acknowledge the “psychic unity of mankind” and accept that: “in all human communities we should expect to find the same capacity for creation and invention; hence invention and innovation should have an equal probability of occurring in all places.”<sup>58</sup>

### *Reconceptualization*

Implementing our definition requires a different set of theoretical tools. Although the protest cycle and the distinction between initiator and spin-off movements facilitate analysis of rapid and short-term processes, they do not help us understand gradual and unexpected developments. To capture such unpredictable twists and turns, we will draw on three pairs of concepts: hyper-difference and over-likeness, dislocation and relocation, brokerage and collective appropriation. While none of these interrelated concepts is new, few scholars use them to study transnational diffusion between social movements.

Hyper-difference and over-likeness represent the interpretive obstacles that *mainstream* receivers construct, and that *critical* communities must overcome before they can fully appreciate the innovative qualities of the diffusion item and seriously consider applying it in their own context. The former, as Richard Fox puts it, “depends on a magnification of difference, a supposition that a cultural practice located elsewhere cannot travel anywhere else,” while the latter indicates that “the modern condition of information-saturation about culture elsewhere, like an overexposed photograph, may minimize real contrasts and may so wash out difference that we see similarity when it is not there.”<sup>59</sup> Hyper-difference produces an exaggerated Other and over-likeness leads to a total assimilation to Self. Although hyper-difference is the most obvious form of negative stereotyping, therefore, even the positive intentions of over-likeness impede the transnational diffusion process.

To transcend these interpretive obstacles, critical communities need to uproot the diffusion item from its place of origin and embed it into their immediate surroundings. Dislocation refers to potential adopters’ cognitive and emotional recognition that the foreign innovation may also work outside of its original environment, while relocation involves collective experiments with new protest ideas and practices in the receivers’ settings.<sup>60</sup> In short, these two concepts highlight that transnational diffusion is not just a “deterritorialized” flow of information, but involves much creative reinvention and pragmatist agency on the part of receiving actors.<sup>61</sup>

Finally, brokerage and collective appropriation are the main mechanisms that allow receiving critical communities to make the difficult transitions from hyper-difference/over-likeness to dislocation, from

dislocation to relocation, and from relocation to full implementation in the form of a social movement. If these reciprocally interrelated mechanisms do not move in the right direction, however, they actually constrain attempts at adoption and application.<sup>62</sup> We define brokerage as the formation of new links (or the consolidation of old ones) among transmitters and receivers, and collective appropriation as the ways in which receiving critical communities alter their strategies and collective identities in order to apply the diffusion item in their own settings.<sup>63</sup> Again, though, the impact of these diffusion mechanisms is not necessarily positive: it is the *quality* of ties and contributions that matters, not the quantity.<sup>64</sup>

#### *New empirical studies*

Our definition and theoretical concepts could serve as an underlying framework for a wide range of research projects. We make a start with two empirical accounts of transnational diffusion: the Gandhian repertoire's journey to the American civil rights movement and the global dissemination of the "coming out" routine among gay and lesbian movements. The first concerns cross-border flows originating in the non-Western periphery and entering the Western core before the current era of globalization. The second, in contrast, involves the worldwide spread of certain homosexual practices at a time when distinctions between West and non-West, core and periphery, local and global no longer seem to exist. In their own ways, therefore, both cases provide fertile ground for contesting the biases of essentialist diffusionism. The former explicitly focuses on centripetal transnational diffusion between transmitters and receivers from different cultural environments. The latter highlights that even when reciprocal transnational connections appear to be pervasive, Western as well as non-Western receivers still need to engage in creative dislocation and relocation.

#### **Empirical applications of our preliminary framework**

The definition and theoretical concepts introduced above guide our two case studies. First, we illustrate that both diffusion items were dynamic, ambiguous, and malleable, not only in their places of origin, but also in their fields of reception. Then, we show that the "oppositional" *content* of receiving critical communities (as well as the intellectual, emotional,

and physical labor performed on the basis of this content) was more relevant to the adoption process than the interpersonal or mass media *form* of communication channels.<sup>65</sup> Next, we demonstrate that the transition from mental awareness to practical application was always dubious and often involved non-linear disjunctures. In both cases, overcoming the obstacles of hyper-difference and over-likeness required deliberate mental dislocation and physical relocation. And finally, we describe how two relational mechanisms – brokerage and collective appropriation – propelled (or deterred) transnational diffusion *within* as well as *between* distinct fields of diffusion. We do not claim that our empirical analysis is comprehensive; we merely wish to validate that a non-essentialist approach to our cases is both desirable and feasible.

### *Diffusion items*

#### *1. The Gandhian repertoire of contention*

The Gandhian repertoire underwent constant modifications, from the moment of its invention in South Africa to its widespread application during the Indian nationalist movement and, eventually, its adoption by the American civil rights movement. The Gandhian repertoire first emerged on September 11, 1906, in the Empire Theatre of Johannesburg. At a mass meeting of Indians in South Africa, the audience collectively pledged to disobey the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, the main target of their grievances.<sup>66</sup> This act, as Gandhi later wrote, symbolized the advent of *satyagraha*, the core concept in the Gandhian repertoire.<sup>67</sup>

Satyagraha relies on three fundamental precepts: *satya* (or truth), *ahimsa* (or nonviolence), and *tapas* (or self-suffering). Gandhi interpreted *satya* as the absolute end of all human efforts: to come face to face with God. But since no human being is capable of absolute truth, Gandhi argued that *ahimsa* was the optimal means to act on the basis of each individual's relative truth. To ensure that *ahimsa* remained active and pure, moreover, each Gandhian activist had to accept the persuasive power of *tapas*. Translating these three precepts into individual and collective action implied *satyagraha*, which, according to Gandhi, was the sure way to conquer all forms of injustice. During the eight years following its advent, the Indian minority in South Africa applied this new principle in various collective action campaigns, developing practical forms of action, organization, and discourse along the way.<sup>68</sup>

When Gandhi returned to India in 1915, he set out to adapt the evolving Gandhian repertoire to his home country's environment, where an Indian majority struggled against foreign rule by a colonial government. Faced with these new circumstances, the Gandhian repertoire changed from a protest method for seeking minority rights and political reform to a militant weapon aimed at expelling the British Empire from India. Particularly during the nation-wide Rowlatt Bill satyagraha of 1919 and the Noncooperation Movement of 1920, the Gandhian repertoire started focusing on mass rebellion and structural transformation rather than merely legal justice and inclusion.<sup>69</sup> The *forms of action* at this time included boycotts, strikes, noncooperation, and civil disobedience. Ashrams (i.e., self-sufficient communes), temporary satyagraha committees, loose associations with permanent organizations, community service, purification, and strict guidelines for behavior and strategy were essential elements of the Gandhian *organizational style*. And the *discursive language* concentrated on transcending oppositions between emotions (e.g., love) and rationality (e.g., discipline), religion and politics, nonviolence and militancy, private and public life, collective identity and strategy, idealism and pragmatism, love for British rulers and hatred of British rule, and so forth.<sup>70</sup>

Despite significant developments in the Gandhian repertoire's three fundamental dimensions, these campaigns failed due to internal violence and between 1924 and 1929 Gandhi retreated from the political arena, emphasizing grassroots constructive work, instead of dramatic direct action. Then, following the triumphant Salt March movement of 1930 and 1931, the Gandhian repertoire matured as the forms of action, organizational style, and discursive language coalesced into a dynamic and effective means of mass resistance. This crest did not last long, though, and during the 1940s the Gandhian repertoire began to decline, as domestic conditions grew more volatile and Indian political leaders increasingly lost faith in nonviolence. While Gandhi himself remained politically active, the influence of his collective action methods waned after World War II, particularly when India gained independence in 1947 and agreed to the Partition the following year.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile, in the wake of events in 1920, the outside world's fascination for the Gandhian repertoire had grown, particularly among religious pacifists and civil rights activists in the United States. Although their interest in Gandhi's ideas and persona instigated the transnational diffusion process, American activists during the 1920s did not believe that Gandhian practices could be implemented in the United States.

But by the end of the 1930s, several critical community members started to recognize the Gandhian repertoire's practical significance and traveled to India to question Gandhi himself on the matter. Around the same time, an Indian activist came to live in the United States and encouraged American activists to apply satyagraha in their own country. These figures subsequently influenced a new generation of American activists who, in the early 1940s, engaged in the first collective experiments with Gandhian direct action.

While satyagraha entered its demise in India, therefore, it began to take root in the United States. Like in India, every round of application by American civil-rights activists led to adaptation and reinvention of the Gandhian repertoire. During World War II, Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) activists, for instance, experimented with Gandhian sit-ins in Chicago, while the March on Washington Movement (MOWM) introduced the idea of "nonviolent good-will direct action." Following a brief period in the limelight, these American Gandhians returned to obscurity after World War II, as the traditional repertoire of rhetorical agitation and legislative action reemerged.

Then, unexpectedly, the African-American community in Montgomery fully implemented the Gandhian repertoire in 1955 and 1956. By creatively grafting the diffusion item onto a form of direct action (the bus boycott) that suited circumstances in the South, and by appropriating the organizational and discursive expertise of experienced Gandhians, Montgomery activists transformed their local campaign into a full-fledged social movement. This reinvention process continued over the next ten years, especially during the student sit-ins of 1960 and the Freedom Ride of 1961, until the cry for Black Power in 1965 heralded the end of the Gandhian repertoire's diffusion to the United States as well as the end of the civil rights movement's nonviolent phase.<sup>72</sup>

## 2. *"Coming out" as a form of protest*

Identifying a single innovation spreading among gay and lesbian movements is even more difficult than defining the Gandhian repertoire. Homosexuality is a complex phenomenon with a long history and with diverse forms of experience and expression. Dennis Altman captures this ambiguity best when he writes:

Our gayness is not something, like skin color, or sex, or infirmity, immediately apparent to both us and others. We have to discover our homosexuality, and having discovered it, we have a wide range of options, hardly available to others who are stigmatized, as to how far we should reveal our stigma.<sup>73</sup>

Nevertheless, in 1969 the Gay Liberation Front in the United States introduced the notion of “coming out” as one specific way of dealing with social repression, both internally and externally. We argue that, although it has never gone uncontested, “coming out” represents the diffusion item disseminating within and between gay and lesbian movements since the end of the 1960s.

Although it probably as old as humanity itself, organized gay and lesbian activism did not arise until the late-nineteenth century in Europe and the 1950s in the United States. In Great Britain, men such as Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis started writing books on homosexuality and promoting legal liberalization in the 1890s. In 1897, German physician Magnus Hirschfeld founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee (SHC), the first organization openly to demand homosexual reform.<sup>74</sup> The rise of feminism around 1914 provided gay and lesbian networks with another boost, leading to trans-Atlantic ties with intellectuals like Radclyffe Hall and Margret Sanger.<sup>75</sup> The rise of Nazism and World War II brought these early efforts to a temporary halt,<sup>76</sup> but after the war Dutch activist Niek Engelschman revitalized homosexual resistance by initiating the Cultural Recreational Centre (originally, the “Cultuur- en Ontspanningscentrum” (COC)) and holding an International Conference for Sexual Equality, calling on the United Nations to grant the status of “human, social and legal equality to homosexual minorities throughout the world.”<sup>77</sup>

That same year, in the United States, Harry Hay and several Communist friends founded the Mattachine Society, hoping to make fellow homosexuals aware of their oppression as a group. Confronted with McCarthyism, though, the Mattachine Society soon forced out Marxist elements and shifted its focus to social integration and political assimilation. Based on an equally moderate strategy and collective identity, Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon originated the San Francisco Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) in 1955. With the Mattachine Society, the DOB subsequently formed the organizational center of lesbian and gay protest until the early 1960s, emphasizing unity among the homosexual minority and aiming at full acceptance in mainstream American culture. But while they published magazines like *One*, the *Mattachine Review*, and *The Ladder*, and won an important legal victory in the U.S. Supreme Court, the two groups failed to improve public attitudes or legalize homosexual practices. In the late 1960s, Frank Kameny (leader of the Mattachine Society chapter in Washington, D.C.) began promoting forms of nonviolent direct action similar to the civil rights movement’s,



and in 1968 he organized the North American Conference of Homophile Organizations (NACHO) to prepare for a nationwide gay and lesbian liberation movement.<sup>78</sup>

The event triggering the social movement Kameny had in mind took place in New York, where in June of 1969 the police raided Stonewall Inn, a popular bar among homosexuals. While harassment by the authorities was quite common, the reaction to it was not: for the first time, gays and lesbians actually fought back and, in the aftermath of the riot, they created the New York Gay Liberation Front (GLF) to give substance to their disaffection. Over the next few years, GLF chapters surfaced in other parts of the United States, while homosexuals in Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada also organized under the umbrella of gay liberation.<sup>79</sup>

It was within this context that “coming out” as a means of direct action emerged. Before 1969, gays and lesbians usually acknowledged their identity and desires only to other gays and lesbians. After the birth of GLF, public declarations of homosexuality became a form of collective action and an expression of commitment. As Jeffrey Weeks explains:

Coming out had three distinct aspects: first of all it involved coming out to yourself, recognizing your own homosexual personality and needs; secondly, it involved coming out to other homosexuals, expressing those needs in the gay community and in relationships; but thirdly, and most crucially, it meant coming out to other people, declaring, even asserting, your sexual identity to all comers. This could be done on a personal level, but most satisfyingly it could, through GLF, be done collectively. Solidarity and strength through collective action underlined the new sense of well-being. And it promised a new community, a real community where one could *be*, as opposed to the traditional sub-culture where one had to *pretend*.<sup>80</sup>

While the act of “coming out” became a prerequisite for participation in the gay and lesbian movement, therefore, each individual could decide autonomously how to do so. Such flexibility allowed gays and lesbians throughout the West to translate this protest method according to their own tastes, cultural norms, and preferences without necessarily diluting its meaning or content.

By 1971, the euphoria of radicalism had died down, reducing the speed and reach of GLF’s dissemination.<sup>81</sup> But after more than a decade of abeyance, the gay and lesbian movement’s innovative practice un-

expectedly returned to prominence when a large number of gay men in the United States became infected with HIV and began suffering from AIDS. While its three fundamental elements (personal recognition, openness within homosexual communities, public and collective assertion of sexuality) remained the same, this time “coming out” meant identifying oneself as a “person living with HIV/AIDS” (PLWHA) rather than merely as a gay or lesbian.<sup>82</sup> In contrast to the initial version of the diffusion item – which appealed almost exclusively to homosexuals in Europe, North America, and the Australian continent – the latest version has spread to non-Western parts of the world as well, following the devastating trail of HIV/AIDS.<sup>83</sup> Like before, moreover, its malleability enables homosexuals in Asia and South America to adopt the most recent form of the diffusion item without ignoring their own political, social, and cultural circumstances.<sup>84</sup>

### *Receiving critical communities*

#### *1. Gandhian networks in the United States*

Around 1920, several critical communities initiated the Gandhian repertoire’s diffusion from India to the United States. By inflecting information provided by mainstream media and opinion leaders with “oppositional” content and sharing their views with likeminded colleagues, critical community members helped spread awareness of Gandhi’s ideas and practices. John Haynes Holmes, for instance, a prominent leader of the religious-pacifist critical community and co-founder of its central organization, the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), was one of the first and most enthusiastic supporters of Gandhi in the country.<sup>85</sup> At every opportunity, he promulgated his opinion that Gandhi was “the greatest man in the world today” and that Gandhian nonviolence confirmed the significance of the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus Christ’s ethics of love. Through his extensive correspondence with Gandhi himself, his Community Church in New York, and his involvement in various liberal and Christian networks, Holmes stimulated fellow religious pacifists to take the Gandhian repertoire seriously.<sup>86</sup>

Similarly, during the 1920s, W. E. B. Du Bois was the towering figure in the critical community consisting of African-American intellectuals and artists. Like Holmes, Du Bois repeatedly expressed his admiration for Gandhi and the Indian movement, which, for him, symbolized the struggle of his race against the worldwide color line. As a result of his countless articles in *The Crisis* and other indigenous newspapers,

his leading role in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), his impressive career as a sociologist, and his involvement in various causes, Du Bois inspired his associates to help him draw the African-American minority's attention to the diffusion item.<sup>87</sup>

During the 1930s, less visible individuals and new critical communities moved beyond their predecessors' initial attempts at reception. Richard Gregg, a young member of the FOR, traveled to India, wrote *The Power of Nonviolence*, and communicated his insights and experiences to other religious pacifists.<sup>88</sup> Several African-American theologians at Howard University, including Howard Thurman and Benjamin Mays, also crossed the Pacific Ocean, met with Gandhi, and shared observations with members of their critical community – both in word and print. Moreover, Krishnalal Shridharani, an Indian participant of the 1930 Salt March and a member of the Indian exiles' critical community, came to live in the United States to propagate his country's struggle for independence and publish *War Without Violence: A Study of Gandhi's Method and its Accomplishments*.<sup>89</sup>

In the early 1940s, several religious pacifists and African-American activists started translating their knowledge of satyagraha into concrete action. Three young FOR secretaries decided to use the Gandhian repertoire to fight racial segregation in the United States: James Farmer, an African-American disciple of Howard Thurman; Bayard Rustin, an African-American Quaker; and George Houser, a white Methodist. Together, they created the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and experimented with the ideas of Gregg, Thurman, Mays, and Shridharani in practice. Around the same time, African-American labor leader A. Philip Randolph also tried to incorporate nonviolent direct action methods into the March on Washington Movement (MOWM), the organization he had created to desegregate the armed forces and defense industries.

Then, after a lull of about a decade, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) fully implemented the Gandhian repertoire during the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 and 1956. Two experienced Gandhians, Bayard Rustin and Glenn Smiley, ensured that the boycott followed the principles of satyagraha. During the ensuing civil rights movement, moreover, each of the three organizations favoring direct action adopted the Gandhian repertoire. The Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) served

as the institutional vehicle for King and other ministers involved in satyagraha campaigns.<sup>90</sup> The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), founded after the student sit-ins of 1960 and 1961, referred explicitly to nonviolent direct action in its statement of purpose.<sup>91</sup> And CORE, which staged a comeback with the Freedom Ride of 1961, remained committed to its original aims – at least until 1965.

## 2. *Worldwide gay and lesbian networks*

As indicated earlier, it was the AIDS epidemic that catalyzed diffusion of the “coming out” practice *beyond* Western liberal democracies. Like the first wave, though, the origins of the second wave lay in the United States, the core country of the world system. Following the discovery of HIV infection in 1981, preexisting gay networks responded immediately to inform homosexuals, challenge discriminatory treatment, ensure adequate health care, create social support groups, and pressure the federal government into action. In addition, several new organizations arose, including the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC) in New York, and soon numerous grassroots activists and lesbian groups joined them. Together, this amalgam of relatively moderate associations represented the initial homosexual critical community responding to the AIDS epidemic.<sup>92</sup>

Around 1987, with nearly half the men in gay neighborhoods testing positive, activist Larry Kramer (cofounder of the GMHC) established the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP!), which rapidly expanded into cities such as Seattle, Boston, San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, and New Orleans. Building on the legacy of the Gay Liberation Front and other radical social movements, ACT UP! represented a more militant critical community, well known for its imaginative forms of nonviolent direct action and democratic organizational style.<sup>93</sup> Although ACT UP’s impact in the United States was fleeting, its strategy and collective identity diffused to gay and lesbian groups throughout the world – initially to Western countries, but subsequently also to Asia and Latin America. In France, for instance, ACT UP! – Paris adopted the structure, organization, and protest methods of its predecessor in New York. Contrary to other French gay and lesbian networks, ACT UP! – Paris was explicit about its militancy, calling for greater visibility of AIDS victims and a frontal attack on all forms of stigmatization.<sup>94</sup>

Gays in Latin America also established transnational ties with their Western counterparts. Grosfogue, Negron-Muntaner, and Geroas de-

scribe how activists in Puerto Rico, for example, constructed a two-way “air bridge” with the United States, involving:

... migration of HIV-positive Puerto Ricans to the United States in search of better medical treatment and support networks, formation of activist communities linking U.S. and island-based AIDS activists, sharing of resources and information and return migration of People with AIDS from the United States to Puerto Rico.<sup>95</sup>

Moreover, Brazilian homosexuals (who had already formed a social movement at the end of the 1970s) traveled to the United States and Europe to learn from the AIDS movement emerging after 1987. The mainstream media’s coverage of international events such as Gay Pride marches, the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) conference in Rio de Janeiro, and issues related to AIDS stimulated a growing number of activists to “come out” in public, participate in conferences such as the Brazilian Gathering of Lesbians and Homosexuals, and establish the Brazilian Association of Gays, Lesbians and Transvestites as well as various smaller groups.<sup>96</sup>

Similarly, AIDS activism in the United States and Europe helped generate new organizations in Australia. While the federal government sponsored the Australian Federation of AIDS Organizations (AFAO) and helped finance state-based AIDS Councils to prevent the spread of AIDS, the Australian ACT UP! tried to avoid bureaucratization and to promote radical direct action.<sup>97</sup> Although this critical community was short-lived, it exerted considerable influence on gay and lesbian groups in Asia. Looking for ways to deal with HIV/AIDS in their own surroundings, contemporary organizations like Pink Triangle in Malaysia, the Library Foundation in the Philippines, and KKLGN in Indonesia all look to Australia for resources, innovative protest methods, and inspiration. Just as Puerto Rican homosexuals are traveling northward to gather information and forge networks, therefore, gay Asian migrants, tourists, and students are traveling southward to do the same.<sup>98</sup>

*Creative reinvention: Toward dislocation and relocation*

*1. Gandhian networks in the United States*

Although we have identified (representatives of) the main American critical communities responding to the Gandhian repertoire between 1920 and 1965, we have thus far said very little about *how* reception

worked in practice or *why* it led to collective application in some places and at some times, but not others. To answer these questions, we must focus on the extent to which receivers dislocated the diffusion item from India and relocated it in the United States. Both forms of creative reinvention were necessary to penetrate the diffusion barriers erected by the mainstream media and opinion leaders.

During the 1920s, Holmes, Du Bois, and their respective critical communities actually perpetuated the mainstream's stereotypical interpretations of Gandhi,<sup>99</sup> and invoked his protest methods to reproduce their own traditional forms of resistance. Holmes reinforced the *over-likeness* obstacle by equating Gandhi with Jesus Christ, and Indians' battle against the British Empire with Christians' struggle against the Roman Empire. Although he inspired a large number of followers to obey nonviolent ethics in their personal lives, moreover, he did little to promote collective application of the Gandhian repertoire's militant aspects. As fellow FOR member A. J. Muste later wrote: "For many U.S. activists..., even Christian ones, a Christ-like Gandhi gave no political direction."<sup>100</sup> Du Bois, on his part, confirmed the *hyper-difference* perspective by claiming that the Gandhian repertoire could only work in a traditional and "Eastern" social system like India – where asceticism, fasting, and nonviolence were ingrained – not in a modern and "Western" social system like the United States.<sup>101</sup> Applying it in the American context, he declared, "would be regarded as a joke or a bit of insanity."<sup>102</sup> Instead, he believed that agitation in the courts, legislative pressure, and public propaganda by the African-American "talented tenth" and organizations like the NAACP remained the most effective means for achieving civil rights.<sup>103</sup>

Especially in the second half of the 1930s, American receivers began to recognize that the Gandhian repertoire was not merely an Indian phenomenon and took important steps toward its dislocation. By observing Gandhi and satyagraha with his own eyes, Gregg's understanding of the diffusion item was much more intimate and pragmatic than that of fellow religious pacifists. When he returned to the United States, he not only wrote his book on the efficacy of nonviolence, but also sought to convince other members of his critical community that Gandhi's approach was truly innovative and applicable in their own settings. Shridharani reciprocated the contributions by Gregg and set the cross-fertilization process in motion: while Gregg was an *American* who experienced nonviolent direct action in India and brought it back home, Shridharani was an *Indian* who participated in the

satyagraha movement and carried its methods to his host country. Like his American counterpart, Shridharani wrote a book stressing the militancy of the Gandhian repertoire and personally promoted its adoption by American activists.

Around that time, Thurman and Mays also traveled to India – ostensibly to hold inter-religious meetings, but mainly to interview Gandhi and ask him whether African Americans could initiate satyagraha campaigns as well. Gandhi’s responses were surprisingly positive. He concluded his interview with Thurman by remarking: “Well, if it comes true, it may be through the Negroes that the unadulterated message of nonviolence will be delivered to the world.”<sup>104</sup> And when Mays expressed skepticism about the Gandhian repertoire’s relevance for minority groups, he replied: “... a minority can do much more in the way of non-violence than a majority.... I had less diffidence in handling my minority in South Africa than I had here in handling a majority.”<sup>105</sup> After returning to Howard University, both used their professional stature and media access to share their observations with the African-American public. While Gregg and Shridharani contributed to dislocation among religious pacifists, therefore, Thurman and Mays inspired the minority community to extract nonviolent direct action from its original environment.

Building on their predecessors, activists in CORE and the MOWM experimented with partial implementation of the diffusion item during the 1940s. In 1942, Farmer sent two memos to FOR leader A. J. Muste, outlining his plan for attacking racial segregation with the Gandhian repertoire:

Segregation will go on as long as we permit it to. Words are not enough; there must be action. We must withhold our support and participation from the institution of segregation in every area of American life – not an individual witness to purity of conscience, as Thoreau used it, but a coordinated movement of mass noncooperation as with Gandhi. And civil disobedience when laws are involved. And jail where necessary. More than the elegant cadre of generals we now have, we also must have an army of ground troops. Like Gandhi’s army, it must be nonviolent. Guns would be suicidal for us. Yes, Gandhi has the key for me to unlock the door to the American dream.<sup>106</sup>

More specifically, he wanted to reinvent “the Gandhian steps in organization and execution” to draw a mass following of pacifists as well as non-pacifists, and mobilize them into a disciplined, unified Gandhian social movement to win first-class citizenship for the African-American

minority.<sup>107</sup> Because such an initiative would involve non-pacifists, Muste and the national council decided to allow Farmer to found a new organization, but with only indirect affiliation to the FOR. With his colleagues, he created CORE in April of 1942 and led several small-scale satyagraha campaigns in Chicago. Inspired by these dramatic events, activists in Seattle, Denver, New York, Philadelphia, and Evanston soon set up their own CORE chapters.<sup>108</sup> Thus, this critical community's initial activities symbolized the inception of relocation from India to the United States.

In the meantime, another critical community had joined CORE in efforts to build a Gandhian social movement aimed at African-American liberation. In September of 1942, during a conference in Detroit, Randolph first declared that the MOWM would employ what he called nonviolent "goodwill" direct action as a fundamental means of protest:

[T]he Negro needs more than organization. He needs mass organization with an action program, aggressive, bold and challenging in spirit . . . Witness the strategy and maneuver of the people of India with mass civil disobedience and non-cooperation and the marches to the sea to make salt.<sup>109</sup>

The MOWM rapidly expanded and organized various Gandhian forms of protest throughout the country. In the summer of 1943, moreover, it held a conference with the explicit purpose of further adapting the diffusion item to American conditions, inviting satyagraha experts from the FOR, CORE, and Howard University. Although race riots, the end of World War II, and the ensuing Cold War precluded full implementation at this time, Randolph and the MOWM took yet another step toward the Gandhian repertoire's relocation onto American soil.

## 2. *Worldwide gay and lesbian networks*

Although we previously pointed out that Western, Asian, and Latin American groups received the "coming out" routine, we did not explain how they overcame diffusion obstacles and achieved adoption through mental dislocation and physical relocation. Clearly, though, the groups that eventually applied the diffusion item within a social movement had been more successful at discursive translation and creative reinvention than those that did not.<sup>110</sup> The former took advantage of opportunities and defied threats – even when the odds seemed unfavorable – while the latter either lacked urgency or feared violent oppression.



Gays and lesbians in France, for example, imported the strategy and collective identity of ACT UP! *despite* obvious discrepancies between the pluralist political culture in the United States and their own political culture of republican universalism.<sup>111</sup> To transcend this barrier, ACT UP!-Paris had to dislocate the latest version of “coming out” from its original setting and relocate it in an inhospitable setting by challenging French society as a whole:

...to fight against AIDS is necessarily to call into question the founding model of our society, and to stand as a common front of minorities against the shortsightedness and cynicism of the do-gooders.... From the point of view of the gay community, to survive, it is imperative to get out of the closet, to go out into the street asserting oneself as gay to fight against AIDS, not only because the virus is decimating its members but because AIDS threatens sexuality.<sup>112</sup>

In the Netherlands, in contrast, the social climate was more tolerant with regard to homosexuals and AIDS prevention, while the political system was more similar to the American one.<sup>113</sup> Instead of promoting transnational diffusion, however, these auspicious conditions led Dutch gays and lesbians to ignore the need for dislocation and relocation. ACT UP! in the Netherlands, consequently, failed to adapt the radical action forms of its American counterpart to the specific Dutch context.<sup>114</sup>

Outside of the West, moreover, Chinese homosexuals currently construct their ideas and practices from an amalgam of American, European, Asian, and Latin American as well as indigenous influences. Although they appreciate the original aspects of “coming out,” therefore, they modify it to fit their own particular (i.e., very different) circumstances and traditions. Lisa Rofel shows that the Chinese notion of “quality” [*suzhi*], for example, plays an essential role in discussions about homosexuality: according to this idea, urban gays qualify as proper citizens, while male prostitutes (who are assumed to come from the countryside) do not. Public disclosures by the former are acceptable; public disclosures by the latter are taboo.<sup>115</sup> Thus, transnational diffusion occurs to the extent that gays and lesbians in present-day China remove the diffusion item from foreign contexts, and adapt it to the specific characteristics of their own culture.

Similarly, Frances Negrón-Muntaner describes how gay Puerto Rican immigrants in the United States employed contemporary “coming out” tactics such as street marches to draw attention to AIDS in their home

country.<sup>116</sup> Instead of blindly copying these forms of action, though, they adapted their strengths to the culture of Puerto Rico and deliberately avoided some of their weaknesses (in particular, the creation of urban gay ghettos):

...the Puerto Rican-organized gay movement has long appropriated U.S. activism; its goal, however, has never been to re-create an exclusively queer district like the Castro or Northampton, for example, but to make the surrounding world queer. Homophobia is not acceptable, but neither is severing one's ties to family, childhood friends, or "straight" spaces as the neighborhood bar, church, and park.<sup>117</sup>

In other words, these homosexual activists recognized the innovative potential of originally American protest styles, but reinvented them to suit their own preferences and situation.

At the same time, the practices pioneered by ACT UP! have generally *failed* to disseminate to gay and lesbian groups on the African continent, because they are unable to surmount the hurdles of internal intolerance and hyper-difference.<sup>118</sup> Recently, in 1994, gays and lesbians in Zimbabwe drew worldwide media attention when President Mugabe banned the Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) from participating in an international book fair and declared that homosexuality was illegal. The GALZ (which was started by white activists) briefly benefited from international support, but as soon as it announced that it wanted to participate in the 1996 book fair, domestic journals and civic associations initiated a vicious propaganda campaign, proclaiming that homosexuality was a product of Western colonialism and a threat to Zimbabwean independence. In any case, Zimbabwe's social and political climate has thus far discouraged the GALZ and other gays and lesbians from transplanting the diffusion item into their own context.<sup>119</sup> In the wake of events in Zimbabwe, moreover, Namibian officials and opinion leaders also began a crusade against homosexuality, declaring that:

Most of the ardent supporters of these perverts are Europeans who imagine themselves to be the bulwark of civilization and enlightenment.... We made sacrifices for the liberation of this country and we are not going to allow individuals with alien practices such as homosexuality to destroy the social fabric of our society.<sup>120</sup>

Although homophobia is no longer as rampant as before, gay and lesbian groups in Namibia also do not perceive the "coming out" practice as amendable to their context.<sup>121</sup>

*Transnational diffusion mechanisms: Brokerage and collective appropriation*

*1. Gandhian networks in the United States*

If American critical communities could have freely dislocated and relocated the Gandhian repertoire, they would not have taken thirty-five years to advance from initial reception to full implementation. Transnational diffusion from India to the United States – i.e., from the periphery to the core and from the non-West to the West – was always an uncertain and painstaking process that relied, at least in part, on the cooperation of relational mechanisms. When brokerage and collective appropriation enabled creative reinvention, dissemination moved forward; when brokerage and collective appropriation inhibited creative reinvention, dissemination stalled or retreated.

During the 1940s, for example, critical community members were able to build on their predecessors' brokerage efforts. Following in the footsteps of Thurman and Mays, Howard University professor William Stuart Nelson traveled to India, where he revitalized transnational contacts with Gandhi and other *satyagrahis*. And inspired by Gregg, religious-pacifist Jay Holmes Smith lived in India for a few years, witnessing Gandhi's movement in action and developing a Christian version of satyagraha. Domestically, moreover, Farmer took advantage of his personal ties with Thurman and Mays; Houser and Rustin profited from their links with FOR executive A.J. Muste; while Randolph brought together old as well as new generations of American Gandhians. These favorable developments in the brokerage mechanism activated, and were further activated by, favorable developments in the collective appropriation mechanism. Nelson shared his insights on the diffusion item with African-American students and, by publishing books and giving lectures, brought Gandhi's message to a wider audience. Smith drew on his experiences in India to set up the Harlem ashram in New York, providing a meeting place for American activists eager to instigate nonviolent protest.<sup>122</sup> CORE created a new form of Gandhian resistance, the sit-ins, and (with Shridharani's book as guide) employed it to desegregate several public establishments in Chicago.<sup>123</sup> And finally, the MOWM organized small marches on city halls and councils, set up small "Negro mass parliaments," held mass meetings in major cities, and applied the sit-in method invented by CORE.<sup>124</sup>

In the wake of these promising events, however, the early Cold War years (roughly from 1948 to 1954) witnessed an unforeseen downturn

in both diffusion mechanisms. The rise of McCarthyism and hysterical anti-communism seriously hampered domestic brokerage and collective appropriation: with radical organizations and critical communities declining or even disappearing, activists became reluctant to engage in any form of direct action – no matter how nonviolent or conciliatory. Recognizing the futility of militant protest in the United States, several young Gandhians took the journey to India to prepare for more auspicious times at home, including white Howard University student Harris Wofford, Jr. and young FOR member James Lawson, an African-American admirer of Thurman, Rustin, and Muste. Moreover, Indian Ram Manohar Lohia, visited the United States and – unimpressed by American patriotism – criticized the liberal organizations for their unwillingness to consider nonviolent direct action on a mass scale.<sup>125</sup> Despite these rare instances of transnational brokerage, though, the period from 1948 to 1954 was generally a period of retreat in the American reception of the Gandhian repertoire. Most activists, organizations, and critical communities reverted back to traditional and relatively moderate methods: religious pacifists once again opted for individual witness instead of collective assertiveness, while African Americans put their faith in the NAACP's legal activities – which were particularly successful during these years.<sup>126</sup>

Unexpectedly, however, there was another disjuncture in the transnational diffusion process after 1955 – this time in a positive direction. After the unpredictable (and thus non-linear and non-teleological) retreat of the early Cold War years, the African-American community in Montgomery fully implemented the Gandhian repertoire during its bus boycott, establishing Martin Luther King's international fame and sparking the American civil rights movement. Once again, brokerage and collective appropriation were fundamental elements of this accomplishment. The African-American leader who decided to initiate the boycott was E. D. Nixon, a disciple of A. Philip Randolph; King himself learned about Gandhi from Thurman, Mays, and Howard University president Mordecai Johnson; and the FOR sent two of its Gandhian experts, Glenn Smiley and Bayard Rustin (who had recently returned from India), to assist King and the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) in maintaining group discipline. These brokerage efforts enabled, and were in turn stimulated by, collective appropriation in the form of the Montgomery bus boycott.<sup>127</sup>

Each of the subsequent nonviolent direct action events during the heyday of the civil rights movement (roughly from 1955 until 1965) similarly

relied on a dialectical mix of brokerage and collective appropriation. Let us give just a few examples to illustrate this point. In the first place, the African-American students who initiated the famous sit-ins of 1960 referred to Gandhi and especially James Lawson as their guides, while the organization emerging from the sit-ins, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), asked the same Lawson to draft its statement of purpose. One of SNCC's most influential leaders, moreover, was John Lewis – a student of Lawson and a committed Gandhian.<sup>128</sup> Secondly, it was CORE that organized the dramatic Freedom Ride of 1961, and James Farmer who led them. Throughout the event, CORE relied on the steps outlined by Shridharani in 1939 and the plan developed by Farmer in 1942.<sup>129</sup> And finally, the third organization involved in nonviolent direct action, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), was no less explicit about its adherence to Gandhi's ideas and practices.<sup>130</sup> The campaigns led by the SCLC, including the 1963 march to Birmingham, depended on the Gandhian repertoire's forms of action, organizational style, and discursive language. Thus, the involvement of Gandhian networks enabled Gandhian organizations and protest events, whereas Gandhian organizations and protest events in turn stimulated the expansion of Gandhian networks.

## 2. *Worldwide gay and lesbian networks*

Since the 1970s, brokerage and collective appropriation have facilitated the spread of gay and lesbian activism within as well as across national borders – initially inside the Western core, but more recently to the world system's periphery. Take, for instance, the crucial role of scholar-activist Dennis Altman in forging links between the American and Australian movements. In the summer after the Stonewall event, he crossed the Pacific Ocean to meet with American gay and lesbian activists and write his dissertation on homosexuality.<sup>131</sup> After the book appeared in 1971, it instantly became a classic in the United States as well as Australia, and helped turn gay and lesbian studies into a respectable area of research. Seven years later, Altman returned to teach at Sydney University and join local gay and lesbian groups.

Through his efforts as activist and scholar Altman not only brokered *transnational* ties between the American and Australian movements and contributed to the latter's *domestic* appropriation of the diffusion item, but also encouraged homosexuals outside of the West to initiate their own direct action campaigns. Most importantly, though, he stimulated worldwide cross-fertilization by underlining that Australian

(and other Western) activists need to draw on current experiences of Asian (and other non-Western) activists to discover “new possibilities for being ‘gay’ in an increasingly complex and globalized world.”<sup>132</sup>

Of course, people like Dennis Altman are the exception, not the rule.<sup>133</sup> Most of the time, brokerage and collective appropriation are problematic processes that rely on a complex mix of interpersonal and media channels, and undergo various ups and downs. In most cases, the development of diffusion mechanisms is dubious, contradictory, and non-linear rather than clear, progressive, and orderly. As Lisa Rofel persuasively illustrates, for example, contemporary dissemination of “coming out” to and within China is not a standard success story. On the positive side, gay businessmen, students, and NGO representatives from France, the Netherlands, England, the United States, Canada, Malaysia, the Philippines, Russia, Ethiopia, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico are visiting Beijing and coming in contact with Chinese homosexuals. Furthermore, the United Nations’ Fourth World Women’s Conference in 1995 for the first time brought hundreds of lesbians from all over the world to China’s capital. Some of these foreigners (as well as “overseas” Chinese) are deliberately trying to stimulate local gay and lesbian activism by handing out relevant videos, magazines, and books or by participating in discussion groups and meetings. Aided by such Western acquaintances, young Chinese gays and lesbians have initiated a national hotline, distributed information at cruising parks, and organized small-scale demonstrations.<sup>134</sup>

On the negative side, though, transnational and domestic brokerage has not necessarily led to more radical forms of collective appropriation. To begin with, most instances of “coming out” take place within the relatively safe confines of cafés and salons; the few who declare their homosexuality on the streets usually get arrested, lose their jobs, and face widespread disapproval. Even those who participate in discussion groups and meetings often prefer to socialize with other gays and lesbians instead of talking about political issues or considering collective action. Furthermore, the speakers who argue for “being gay the Chinese way” and seek to avoid conflict within their family tend to overwhelm the rare voices that support openness toward the family and confrontational protest methods like those in the West.<sup>135</sup> Clearly, therefore, China’s reception of the diffusion item has run into its share of obstacles and dead ends. As Rofel puts it: “What gay identity ends up looking like in one place of the world today [in this case, China] is not a foregone conclusion; certainly it is not a straightforward matter of joining the global human race.”<sup>136</sup>

## Conclusions

Although far from comprehensive, our case studies illustrate that transnational diffusion is neither an unimpeded flow, as globalization theorists often imply, nor merely a product of protest cycles and initiator movements, as contentious politics scholars commonly contend. Even more importantly, they should demonstrate that diffusion items do not necessarily originate within the Western core and only then (after becoming modular) spread to the non-Western periphery. We suggest that our theoretical approach allows for empirical analysis that more fully captures the multiplicity and dynamics of cross-border dissemination between social movements.

First of all, our discussion of the Gandhian repertoire and the “coming out” routine underscored that diffusion items might be fundamentally malleable and fluid rather than basically static and coherent. Through persistent emotional, intellectual, and pragmatic labor, Western receivers in the core may “translate” a non-Western protest method from the periphery to fit Western conditions, and vice versa.<sup>137</sup> Secondly, we highlighted that the key receiving actors were not mainstream opinion leaders or media, but critical communities and their members. Some (but not all) of these “critical” actors were able to overcome the hyper-difference and over-likeness stereotypes that generally accompany mainstream Western interpretations of non-Western contentious routines, and vice versa. Thirdly, we showed how Western critical communities managed to dislocate non-Western innovations from their original context, and relocate them into their own settings, and vice versa. Conquering the biases of essentialist diffusionism and implementing a foreign invention within a social movement requires much creative reinvention on the part of receivers (just as conquering essentialist diffusionism within the social sciences calls for creative reinvention on our part) – *even* in an era of globalization. And finally, we emphasized that dislocation and relocation of diffusion items can only prosper when brokerage and collective appropriation cooperate. Thus, receivers need to be prepared for the infrequent (yet far from non-existent) moments in history that underlying diffusion mechanisms stimulate the flow of non-Western ideas and practices to Western social movements, and vice versa.

Although we focus here on reconceptualizing transnational diffusion research within the field of contentious politics, our theoretical framework’s implications for globalization theory should be clear. In contrast to John Meyer and his collaborators, for instance, we reject the

assumption that current processes in the world exclusively derive from modern Western rationality and institutions.<sup>138</sup> We start with the proposition that all individuals, communities, and countries have an equal *potential for* invention and progress, and only then explore the historical reasons for how and why this potential does, or does not, come to fruition.<sup>139</sup> Thus, in this article, we not only discussed an innovative diffusion item that emerged in the world system's periphery and spread to a social movement in the world system's core (the Gandhian repertoire), but also suggested that a contentious practice originating inside the West may benefit from incorporating adaptations evolving outside of the West (the "coming out" routine).

Whereas world society scholars are particularly explicit about the Western sources of contemporary global culture, even anthropologists stressing the fluid, heterogeneous, and cosmopolitan nature of present-day transnational culture retain some of the elitist propositions characterizing modernization theory and essentialist diffusionism. Although Appadurai breaks new ground by focusing on the mass media's influence on "deterritorialized" groups such as exiles, tourists, guest workers, intellectuals, refugees, and immigrants, for example, he continues to treat ordinary people as passive receivers who are limited "by the possibilities that the media (either directly or indirectly) suggest are available."<sup>140</sup> Similarly, Hannerz acknowledges that modernization theory underestimates the complexity of diffusion streams, but continues to take for granted that ideas and things disseminate from core to periphery, and from cosmopolitans to locals.<sup>141</sup> Our case studies demonstrate, however, that transnational diffusion may involve bottom-up as well as top-down adoption processes, creative reinvention by "followers" as well as "opinion leaders," and centripetal as well as centrifugal directions of transmission.

Of course, two empirical applications are not enough to present an overarching theoretical framework; we need other scholars to strengthen, modify, and extend our preliminary outline. Nevertheless, we hope to have revealed that eradicating the centrifugal assumptions at the root of contemporary social science, globalization theory, and contentious politics research is both necessary and realistic. With Jim Blaut and unorthodox historians as guiding beacons, our definition, concepts, and case studies should at least point the way toward a non-essentialist perspective of transnational diffusion between social movements.



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## Notes

1. See David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989); Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (1992), and Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 1996).
2. As David Held puts it: “What is new about the modern global system is the chronic intensification of patterns of interconnectedness mediated by such phenomena as the modern communications industry and new information technology and the spread of globalization in and through new dimensions of interconnectedness: technological, organizational, administrative and legal, among others, each with their own logic and dynamic of change.” David Held, *Political Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press), 145.
3. See M. Kearney, “The Local and the Global: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24 (1995): 548–553; and Mauro F. Guillén, “Is Globalization Civilizing, Destructive or Feeble? A Critique of Five Key Debates in the Social Science Literature,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 27 (2001): 235–260.
4. Leslie Sklair, *Sociology of the Global System* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), and “Competing Conceptions of Globalization,” *Journal of World-Systems Research* V/2 (1999): 143–162. Other adherents of what Sklair calls the “Global Capitalism model” include: William Robinson, “Globalisation: nine theses on our epoch,” *Race and Class* 38/2 (1996): 13–31, R. Ross and K. Trachte, *Global Capitalism: The New Leviathan* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1990), and P. McMichael, *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective* (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1996).
5. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996): 4, 21. As Richard G. Fox puts it: “Often ... these approaches attribute the bumpy paths, the detours and twists, in global diffusion to structural inconsistencies and contradictions brought about by crosscurrent cultural flows.... But the nature of cultural flow itself remains unproblematic, because the assumption is that a steady and powerful diffusion stream ... floods the globe with new cultural patterns.... Still to come, however, are theoretical forays ... into the complex twists produced by a modern world that is saturated with transcultural knowledge and connection.” Richard G.

- Fox, "Passage from India," in Richard G. Fox and Orin Starn, editors, *Between Resistance and Revolution: Cultural Politics and Social Protest* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 66. For a view on global cultural flows that closely resembles Appadurai's, see Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992) and *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places* (London: Routledge Press, 1996).
6. John W. Meyer, John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez, 1997, "World society and the nation-state," *American Journal of Sociology* 103/1 (1997): 144–181, George Thomas, John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez, editors, *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society, and the Individual* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1987), and John W. Meyer and Michael T. Hannan, editors, *National Development and the World System: Educational, Economic, and Political Change, 1950–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).
  7. Hannerz, for example, leaves no doubt that: "To repeat, there *is* now one world culture; all the variously distributed structures of meaning and expression are becoming interrelated, somehow, somewhere." Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 111. Taking this assumption as starting point, he then follows Strang and Meyer in exploring how transnational diffusion brings increasing coherence to globalization. Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 50–51 and David Strang and John W. Meyer, "Institutional Conditions for Diffusion," *Theory and Society* 22 (1993): 487–511.
  8. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974), Roland Robertson, *Globalization*, and Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Random House, 1993).
  9. Which is not to say that these writers necessarily regard the Western sources of globalization (such as colonialism and imperialism) as progressive or admirable. See, for instance, Guillen, "Is Globalization Civilizing, Destructive or Feeble?" and David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt, and Jonathan Perraton, *Global Transformation: Politics, Economics and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).
  10. We use the term "essentialist diffusionism," instead of Blaut's "geographical diffusionism," to highlight that the biases of diffusionist theories are not only spatial, but also temporal and conceptual. J. Blaut, "Two views of diffusion," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 67 (1977): 343–349, and "Diffusionism: A uniformitarian critique," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77 (1987): 30–47, "The theory of cultural racism," *Antipode* 24/4 (1992): 289–299, and *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (New York: Guilford Press, 1993).
  11. Blaut, *Colonizer's Model*, 14–17; "Diffusionism," 32; and "The theory of cultural racism."
  12. Blaut calls this the "stop-or-go diffusion pattern" and argues that diffusionist scholars imply that: "If a trait is information-dependent, if it is patently useful, and if resources to adopt it are present, then it will diffuse nearly at the rate information spreads." Blaut, "Diffusionism," 36.
  13. As Blaut notes: "Rogers was one of the leaders in a movement to sort out peasant mentalities into those that are prodevelopment ('cosmopolitan') and those that are noninnovative and 'laggard.' The crucial notion was the idea of the diffusion of rationality into rural non-European communities. The key to development (with some qualification) was the transmittal of new ideas to innovative 'adopters.' The

- fact that most of the ideas were not, themselves, workable (thus were not rational), and that adoption of them would have required of peasants not more knowledge, but more power and landownership, was ignored." Blaut, *Colonizer's Model*, 100 and "Diffusionism," 36–37.
14. See, for example, Paul Lopes and Mary Durfee, "The Social Diffusion of Ideas and Things," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 566 (November 1999): 8–155 and David Strang and Sarah Soule, "Diffusion in Organizations and Social Movements: From Hybrid Corn to Poison Pills," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 265–290.
  15. Everett Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations* (New York: Free Press, 1995 [1962]).
  16. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 10.
  17. Hannerz employs the same distinction between "cosmopolitans" and "locals" as classical diffusion theorists, but applies it to contemporary transnational cultures rather than empirical studies concerning the diffusion of innovations. Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 102–111.
  18. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 19.
  19. In fact, classical diffusion theorists assume that the adoption rate always resembles an S-curve; only the slopes of these S-curves vary from case to case. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 11.
  20. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 285. See also, Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications* (New York: Free Press, 1955), and Elihu Katz, "The Two-Step Flow of Communication: An Up-to-Date Report on an Hypothesis," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 21 (1957): 61–78.
  21. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 23–26, 37. Classical scholars assume, moreover, that when the receiving environment is favorable, diffusion obeys the "stop-or-go" pattern identified by Blaut, "Diffusionism," 36.
  22. To clarify, classical diffusion theorists do *not* argue that all non-Western communities are receptive to Western innovations, but that Western innovations only diffuse to the limited number of non-Western communities that *are* receptive.
  23. Or, in Blaut's words: "... diffusionism is in a double sense elitist: the center is at all times more progressive than is the periphery, and it is at all times more advanced..." Classical diffusion theory applies this hierarchical (top-down) view to all geographical levels: local community, country, region, as well as world system. Blaut, "Diffusionism," 31.
  24. Kearney, "The Local and the Global," 554.
  25. Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty-first Century*, 46; Anthony Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 84; and Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 268–292.
  26. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1979), and *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), Jack Goldstone, "The Rise of the West—or Not? A Revision to Socio-economic History," World History Association conference (June 1999), Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland: State, Society, and Economy in Inland North China, 1853–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), and *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1988), and Andre Gunder Frank, *Reorient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

27. Although somewhat cryptic, the following definition by McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly captures what we mean by contentious politics: “episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants. Roughly translated, the definition refers to collective political struggle.” Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 5.
28. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 10.
29. Doug McAdam and Dieter Rucht, “The Cross-National Diffusion of Movement Ideas,” *The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science* 528 (July 1993): 59.
30. Our view on essentialism (or what he calls substantialism) is closest to Emirbayer: “[it] takes as its point of departure the notion that it is *substances* of various kinds (things, beings, essences) that constitute the fundamental units of all inquiry. Systematic analysis is to begin with these self-subsistent entities, which come ‘preformed’ and only then to consider the dynamic flows in which they subsequently involve themselves.” Mustafa Emirbayer, “Manifesto for a Relational Sociology,” *American Journal of Sociology* 103/2 (September 1997): 281–317, 282–283. In Emirbayer’s terms, the approach of McAdam and Rucht (and of classical diffusion theorists) is both substantialist and interactionist, because it regards self-subsistent structures or social systems as the main sources of action: “Proponents of these approaches ... all too often fall back upon the assumption that it is durable, coherent entities that constitute the legitimate starting points of all sociological inquiry. Such entities possess emergent properties not reducible to the discrete elements of which they consist. Not individual persons, but groups, nations, cultures, and other reified substances do all of the acting in social life and account for its dynamism.... Processes as well as structures thus appear as self-acting entities in many concrete instances of social inquiry.” Emirbayer, “Manifesto,” 285.
31. McAdam and Rucht, “Cross-National Diffusion,” 60, 66.
32. On this point, they follow neo-institutionalists Strang and Meyer, “Institutional Conditions,” who assume that the main ingredients of modern global culture are Western rationality and Western institutions. See also, Strang and Soule, “Diffusion in Organizations and Social Movements.”
33. They note, for example, that German students changed the slogan “Burn, baby, burn” into “Burn, warehouse, burn.” McAdam and Rucht, “Cross-National Diffusion,” 69. While they acknowledge the possibility of “emulative adaptation” at the edges of the diffusion item, therefore, they do not consider more fundamental “creative reinvention.” For more on “emulative adaptation,” see David Strang and Michael W. Macy, “In Search of Excellence: Fads, Success Stories, and Adaptive Emulation,” *American Journal of Sociology* 107/1 (2001). For more on “creative reinvention,” see Sean Chabot, “Transnational Diffusion and the African-American Reinvention of the Gandhian Repertoire,” *Mobilization: An International Journal* 5 (2000): 201–216.
34. See, for example, Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Marco Giugni, “The Other Side of the Coin: Explaining Cross-national Similarities Between Social Movements,” *Mobilization: An International Journal* 3/1 (1998): 107–126, Sarah A. Soule, “The Diffusion of An Unsuccessful Innovation,” *The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science* 566 (November

- 1999): 120–131, and Jeffrey M. Ayres, “From the Streets to the Internet: The Cyber-Diffusion of Contention,” *The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science* 566 (November 1999): 132–143.
35. Blaut, *Colonizer's Model*, 100–101.
  36. For the most part, the field of contentious politics favors relational and constructionist rather than essentialist approaches. Yet on the subject of diffusion, prominent scholars in the field remain nearly as essentialist as classical diffusion theorists.
  37. McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*. While Tilly and other historical sociologists (including Tarrow and McAdam) were among the earliest and fiercest critics of modernization theory (in Tilly's case, since the 1960s), they did not provide a theoretical alternative for its essentialist diffusionism. Instead of reconceptualizing transnational relations between core and periphery, and between Western and non-Western countries, they focused almost exclusively on core countries in Europe and the United States and/or compared developments in non-Western countries with developments in Western countries without specifically analyzing relations between them. See especially Margaret R. Somers, “What's Political or Cultural about Political Culture and the Public Sphere? Toward an Historical Sociology of Concept Formation,” *Sociological Theory* 13 (1995): 113–144.
  38. McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, 333–335.
  39. In subsequent paragraphs, we argue that brokerage is actually one of the key mechanisms of diffusion.
  40. Sidney Tarrow, “Cycles of Collective Action: Between Moments of Madness and the Repertoire of Contention,” in Mark Traugott, editor, *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 91–115, 92.
  41. Tarrow, “Cycles of Collective Action,” 92–94. Although McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly now acknowledge the limitations of the protest cycle concept (2001: 65–67), they still argue that the diffusion mechanism is “virtually coterminous with protest cycles.” McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, 65–68. See also Peter Hedström, Rickard Sandell, and Charlotta Stern, “Mesolevel Networks and the Diffusion of Social Movements: The Case of the Swedish Social Democratic Party,” *American Journal of Sociology* 106 (2000): 145–172, Daniel J. Myers, “The Diffusion of Collective Violence: Infectiousness, Susceptibility, and Mass Media Networks,” *American Journal of Sociology* 106 (2000): 173–208, Pamela E. Oliver and Daniel J. Myers, “How Events Enter the Public Sphere: Conflict, Location and Sponsorship in Local Newspaper Coverage of Public Events,” *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (1999): 38–87, and Strang and Meyer, “Institutional Conditions.” Note that Tarrow's conceptualization is not very different from that of globalization scholars like Leslie Sklair, Arjun Appadurai, Ulf Hannerz, and especially John Meyer.
  42. See also, Sean Scalmer, “Translating Contention: Culture, History, and the Circulation of Collective Action,” *Alternatives* 25 (2000): 491–514, and “The Labour of Diffusion: The Peace Pledge Union and the Translation of the Gandhian Repertoire,” unpublished manuscript, and Chabot, “Transnational Diffusion.”
  43. Doug McAdam, “Initiator and Spin-off Movements: Diffusion Processes in Protest Cycles,” in Mark Traugott, editor, *Repertoire and Cycles of Collective Action* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 217–239, 219.
  44. McAdam, “Initiator and Spinoff Movements,” 224.
  45. *Ibid.*, 229–233.
  46. *Ibid.*, 227.
  47. See also, Peter Hedström, “Contagious collectivities: On the spatial diffusion of

- Swedish trade unions, 1890–1940,” *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (1994): 1157–1179.
48. McAdam, “Initiator and Spinoff Movements,” 219, 232–233.
  49. A few years later, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (in Lichbach and Zuckerman 1997: 159, fn 17) referred to Western liberal democracies as “the heartland” of social movement theory, and promise to incorporate analysis of social movements in “nondemocratic” and “non-western countries” in future work. Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, “Toward an Integrated Perspective on Social Movements and Revolutions,” in Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan S. Zuckerman, editors, *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 142–173.
  50. Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy, 1965–1975* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), *Power in Movement*; “Cycles of Collective Action,” and Sarah A. Soule and Sidney Tarrow, “Acting Collectively: How the Repertoire of Collective Action Changed and Where It Happened,” annual conference of Social Science History Association (1991).
  51. McAdam, “Initiator and Spinoff Movement,” 219; Anthony Oberschall, “Opportunities and Framing in the Eastern European Revolts of 1989,” in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, editors, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 93–121; and McAdam and Rucht, “Cross-National Diffusion.”
  52. Ruud Koopmans, “The Dynamics of Protest Waves,” in Hanspeter Kriesi, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco G. Giugni, *New Social Movements in Western Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 111–142, Marco Giugni, “The Cross-National Diffusion of Protest,” in Hanspeter Kriesi, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco G. Giugni, *New Social Movements in Western Europe*, 181–206, and “The Other Side of the Coin,” Sarah A. Soule, “The Student Divestment Movement in the United States and the Shantytown: Diffusion of a Protest Tactic,” *Social Forces* 75 (March 1997): 855–883, and “Diffusion of an Unsuccessful Innovation.”
  53. Jeffrey M. Ayres, “From National to Popular Sovereignty? The Evolving Globalization of Protest Activity in Canada,” *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 16 (1997): 107–123, and “From the Streets to the Internet,” David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Alternative Types of Cross-national Diffusion in the Social Movement Arena,” in Donatella della Porta, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Dieter Rucht, editors, *Social Movements in a Globalizing World* (London: MacMillan, 1999), 23–39, and John A. Guidry, Michael D. Kennedy, and Mayer N. Zald, *Globalizations and Social Movements: Culture, Power, and the Transnational Public Sphere* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000). Although their approach is perhaps closest to ours, Guidry, Kennedy, and Zald still retain a hint of essentialist diffusionism by stressing that non-Western participation in the transnational public sphere (and, therefore, diffusion from core to periphery, or vice versa) is exceptional: “The transnational public sphere is thus an opportunity structure that is recognized most clearly in the core countries of the industrialized West, but it is appreciated *even* in relatively marginalized sites in the non-Western world as well.” Guidry, Kennedy, and Zald, *Globalizations and Social Movements*, 9 (emphasis ours).
  54. Of course, globalization scholars generally argue that diffusion spreads within one global system.
  55. Thomas Rochon, *Culture Moves: Ideas, Activism, and Changing Values* (Prince-

- ton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 22–25. (See also the comparable “subaltern counterpublics” concept in Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in Craig Calhoun, editor, *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1992), 109–142, 124. In addition to interpersonal networks, these critical communities often employ internal (or even mainstream) *media channels* to communicate viewpoints, (re)construct collective identities, develop strategies, and build organizations.
56. See, for instance, Mimi Sheller, “The Mechanisms of Mobility and Liquidity: Rethinking the Movement in Social Movements,” <http://www.comp.lancaster.ac.uk/sociology/soc076ms.html> (2001), and Sean Chabot, “Transnational Ties That Bind: The Gandhian Repertoire’s Passage from India to the American Civil Rights Movement,” *Amsterdam Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 29 (2002): 313–339.
  57. We suggest that there are two distinct fields of diffusion: the field of transmission and the field of reception. We stress the fluidity and permeability of these fields, not their internal order or external borders. In our case studies, moreover, we concentrate primarily on the field of reception rather than the field of transmission. For more on the field concept, see especially the interview with Pierre Bourdieu in Loïc J. D. Wacquant, “Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu,” *Sociological Theory* 7/1 (Spring 1989): 26–63, 38–41, and Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990). Our relational approach is closest to Mustafa Emirbayer, “Manifesto.”
  58. Blaut, “Diffusionism,” 34.
  59. Fox, “Passage from India,” 67.
  60. Although we once again borrow the terms dislocation and relocation from Fox (“Passage from India,” 75–79), our interpretation of the latter concept is slightly different. Whereas Fox highlights the role of individual intellectuals in achieving relocation, we put more emphasis on receivers’ collective and practical experimentations with the diffusion item in specific locations.
  61. Chabot, “Transnational Diffusion,” Scalmer, “Labour of Diffusion,” and Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische, “What is Agency?” *American Journal of Sociology* 103 (1998): 962–1023.
  62. In other words, these diffusion mechanisms are dual in the sense that they both enable and constrain transnational diffusion. Empirical and historical evidence needs to bear out whether the diffusion mechanisms as a whole facilitate or hinder the transnational diffusion process. For more on duality, see especially William H. Sewell, Jr., “A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Social Transformation,” *American Journal of Sociology* 98 (1992): 1–29.
  63. Although we borrow heavily from McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, we modify their definitions of brokerage and what they call “social appropriation” to suit the study of transnational diffusion between social movements. Furthermore, whereas they emphasize the social appropriation of *existing* institutions and collective identities, we argue that collective appropriation may also involve and lead to *new* groups. McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, 26, 102, 47–48.
  64. Chabot, “Transnational Ties That Bind.”
  65. We borrow the notion of “oppositional” from Stuart Hall, “The Television Discourse – Encoding and Decoding,” *Education and Culture* 5 (1974).
  66. Mohandas K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa* (Madras: Ganesan, 1928), chapter 12.
  67. Like Charles Tilly, we define repertoire as a set of routines that a protest group learns, shares, and applies in its interactions with opponents, potential followers,

- and bystanders. Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1978), and "Contentious Repertoires in Great Britain, 1758–1834," in Mark Traugott, editor, *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 15–42.
68. See, for instance, Joan Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971 [1958]), Bhikhu Parekh, *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989), and Dennis Dalton, *Mahatma Gandhi: Nonviolent Power in Action* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
  69. Ravinder Kumar, editor, *Essays on Gandhian Politics: The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).
  70. For more on forms of action, see Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* and "Contentious Repertoires in Great Britain." For more on organizational style, see Elisabeth Clemens, "Organizational Form as Frame: Collective Identity and Political Strategy in the American Labor Movement, 1880–1920," in McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, 205–226. And for more on discursive language, see Marc W. Steinberg, "Repertoires of Discourse: The Case of the Spitalfields Silk Weavers and the Moral Economy of Conflict," in Traugott, *Cycles and Repertoire of Collective Action*, 57–88, and "The Talk and Back Talk of Collective Action: A Dialogic Analysis of Repertoires of Discourse among Nineteenth-Century English Cotton Spinners," *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (1999): 736–380.
  71. For more on Gandhi's retreat between 1924 and 1929, see Horace Alexander, *Gandhi Through Western Eyes* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1969). For more on the significance of the Salt March, see Gene Sharp, *Gandhi Wields the Weapon of Moral Power: Three Case Histories* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1960), Dalton, *Nonviolent Power in Action*, and Thomas Weber, *On the Salt March: The Historiography of Gandhi's March to Dandi* (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 1997). For more on the decline during the 1940s, see Richard G. Fox, *Gandhian Utopia: Experiments with Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).
  72. See also, Chabot, "Transnational Diffusion."
  73. Dennis Altman, *Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation* (New York: Outerbridge and Dienstfrey, 1971), 2.
  74. The SHC had branches throughout Germany and one in the Netherlands. Jeffrey Weeks, *Coming Out: Homosexual Politics in Britain, from the Nineteenth Century to the Present* (London: Quartet Books, 1977), 6, 129.
  75. Weeks, *Coming Out*, 132–137.
  76. Only Der Kreis in neutral Switzerland was able to survive the war.
  77. Weeks, *Coming Out*, 154–155.
  78. Steven Epstein, "Gay and Lesbian Movements in the United States: Dilemmas of Identity, Diversity, and Political Strategy," in Barry D. Adam, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and André Krouwel, editors, *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics: National Imprints of a Worldwide Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 30–90, 35–36; John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); and Harry Hay, *Radically Gay: Gay Liberation in the Words of Its Founder* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).
  79. Weeks, *Coming Out*, 188–189.
  80. *Ibid.*, 192.
  81. *Ibid.*, 206. Steven Epstein similarly argues that although the gay and lesbian



- movement continued to grow in the early 1970s, the role of radical activists declined after 1971: "Gay liberation impelled a rapid proliferation of gay organizations: at the time of Stonewall, there were only about fifty lesbian or gay groups in the entire United States; by the end of 1973, there were more than a thousand.... But the groups with a radical and comprehensive political agenda soon faded from the scene. By 1971, New York's GLF had splintered into factions, and within a few years GLF ... chapters had disbanded around the country." Epstein, "Gay and Lesbian Movements in the United States," 41.
82. As Altman notes: "The creation of the 'person with AIDS' as a specific identity clearly drew on earlier gay models of 'coming out' ..." Dennis Altman, *Global Sex* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 74.
  83. Altman, *Global Sex*.
  84. Gay and lesbian activism in Africa has remained very limited, particularly due to high levels of state repression and social intolerance. The only possible exception is South Africa, but here homosexual protest groups such as the Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Action (OLGA) emerged as a result of their alignment with the ANC, not in response to the AIDS epidemic. Mai Palmberg, "Emerging Visibility of Gays and Lesbians in Southern Africa: Contrasting Contexts," in Adam, Duyvendak, Krouwel, *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, 266–292, 272. See also, Matthew Roberts, "Emergence of Gay Identity and Gay Social Movements in Developing Countries: The AIDS Crisis as Catalyst," *Alternatives* 20 (1995): 243–264, and Neville Hoad, "Between the White Man's Burden and the White Man's Disease: Tracking Lesbian and Gay Human Rights in Southern Africa," in Povinelli and Chauncey, *GLQ: Thinking Sexuality Transnationally*, 559–581.
  85. For more on this critical community, see especially Lawrence Wittner, *Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement, 1941–1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).
  86. For more on the correspondence between Holmes and Gandhi, see E. S. Reddy, editor, *Mahatma Gandhi: Letters to Americans* (New Delhi: Bhavan's Book University, 1998).
  87. In contrast to the religious-pacifist critical community, this critical community relied almost exclusively on Du Bois. See, for instance, Elliott W. Rudwick, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Propagandist of the Negro Protest* (New York: MacMillan, 1968), and George M. Fredrickson, *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). Other members had similar affiliations as Du Bois – particularly the African-American universities and bourgeois civic associations like the NAACP and the NUL – and also belonged to the African-American cultural elite that emerged with the Harlem Renaissance during the 1920s and 1930s. See especially, Nathan Huggins, *Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).
  88. Richard Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1934).
  89. Krishnalal Shridharani, *War Without Violence: A Study of Gandhi's Method and its Accomplishments* (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1939).
  90. Behind the scenes, Rustin (perhaps the most inventive Gandhian in the United States) was the architect of the SCLC. See, for instance, David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986).
  91. In drafting the statement of purpose, the students were led by African-American

- minister and FOR member James Lawson, a dedicated Gandhian. Lawson had lived in India at the beginning of the 1950s and learned about satyagraha from the Indian Gandhians who remained active after Gandhi's death in 1948. See especially, David Halberstam, *The Children* (New York: Random House, 1998).
92. Epstein, "Gay and Lesbian Movements in the United States," 53.
  93. *Ibid.*, 55–56.
  94. Olivier Fillieule and Jan Willem Duyvendak, "Gay and Lesbian Activism in France: Between Integration and Community-Oriented Movements," in Adam, Duyvendak, Krouwel, *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, 184–213.
  95. Quoted in Altman, *Global Sex*, 126.
  96. James N. Green, "More Love and More Desire: The Building of a Brazilian Movement," in Adam, Duyvendak, Krouwel, *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, 91–109, 102–106, and Sean Patrick Larvie, "Queerness and the Specter of Brazilian National Ruin," in Elizabeth A. Povinelli and George Chauncey, *GLQ: Thinking Sexuality Transnationally* 5/4 (1999): 527–558.
  97. Geoffrey Woolcock and Dennis Altman, "The Largest Street Party in the World: The Gay and Lesbian Movement in Australia," in Adam, Duyvendak, Krouwel, *The Global Emergence of Gay and Lesbian Politics*, 326–343, 337–338.
  98. Woolcock and Altman, "Largest Street Party," 341, and Dennis Altman, *Power and Community: Organizational and Cultural Responses to AIDS* (London: Falmer, 1994). We might add that these homosexual itinerants from Puerto Rico and Asia, in turn, could be important sources for new homosexual ideas and practices in the United States, Australia, and Europe. To make this potential for cross-fertilization come true, however, Western activists will need to adapt the non-Western innovations to their own environment.
  99. The *New York Times*, for instance, repeatedly stressed that satyagraha could only work in India. In 1921, it claimed that Gandhi was a traditional "ascetic . . . whose popularity among the Hindus appeared to have attained almost Messianistic proportions" (May 17: 2, 7). And in 1924, it argued that Gandhi's fasts for political purposes symbolized the "difference between East and West" (September 20: 14, 6). See also, Fox, "Passage from India," 71–72.
  100. Fox, "Passage from India," 72.
  101. *Ibid.*, 73.
  102. W. E. B. Du Bois, "As the Crow Flies," *New York Amsterdam News* (March 13, 1943).
  103. W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Immediate Program of the American Negro," *The Crisis* IX/6 (April 1915): 310–312.
  104. Howard Thurman, *With Head and Heart: The Autobiography of Howard Thurman* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1976).
  105. Benjamin Mays, "Gandhi and Non-Violence," *Norfolk Journal and Guide* (May 22, 1937): 8.
  106. James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: New American Library, 1985), 74.
  107. Farmer argued that since most African Americans were not pacifists his organization would have to accept nonpacifists as well. Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 356.
  108. Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 112. See also, August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942–1968* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).
  109. A. Philip Randolph, "Keynote Address to the Policy Conference of the March on Washington Movement," in *March on Washington Movement: Proceedings of Conference Held in Detroit, September 26–27, 1942* (1942): 4–11. See also, Francis

- L. Broderick and August Meier, editors, *Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), 206–207.
110. See Scalmer, “Translation” and Chabot, “Transnational Diffusion.”
111. See, for example, Jan Willem Duyvendak, *The Power of Politics: New Social Movements in France* (Boulder: Westview, 1995).
112. ACT UP!-Paris, *Le SIDA: Combien de devisions?* (Paris: Dagorno, 1994), 111–112, 209–210. See also, Fillieule and Duyvendak, “Gay and Lesbian Activism in France,” 199–200.
113. Like American political institutions, Dutch political institutions are *pluralist* in that they recognize demands made by minority groups, whereas French political institutions are *republican* in that they primarily respond to demands made by individual citizens acting in the name of French society as a whole. Fillieule and Duyvendak, “Gay and Lesbian Activism in France,” 186, 205.
114. As Duyvendak notes, rapid and easy successes for the Dutch ACT UP! in its negotiations with the government contributed to gay and lesbian activists’ apathy, cooptation, and lack of radicalization. Thus, homophobia in the United States and France inspired relatively militant AIDS protest, while lack of homophobia in the Netherlands helped prevent it. Jan Willem Duyvendak, “De Hollandse aanpak van een epidemie: Of waarom ACT UP! In Nederland niet kon doorbreken,” *Acta Politica* 30/2 (1995): 189–214, 200–201.
115. Lisa Rofel, “Qualities of Desire: Imagining Gay Identities in China,” in Povinelli and Chauncey, *GLQ: Thinking Sexuality Transnationally*, 451–474, 466–467.
116. Frances Negrón-Muntaner, “When I Was a Puerto Rican Lesbian: Meditations on *Bricando el charco: Portrait of a Puerto Rican*,” in Povinelli and Chauncey, *GLQ: Thinking Sexuality Transnationally*, 511–526. This is an obvious example of transnational diffusion from the core (the United States) to the periphery (Puerto Rico), and from the Western colonizer to the non-Western colonized.
117. Negrón-Muntaner, “When I Was a Puerto Rican Lesbian,” 523.
118. South Africa is a partial exception, although here gay and lesbian activist groups such as the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality primarily made progress by entering into an alliance with the ANC, not by adopting the most recent form of “coming out.” See Palmberg, “Gays and Lesbians in Southern Africa,” 274 and Hoad, “Between the White Man’s Burden and the White Man’s Disease.”
119. See Palmberg, “Gays and Lesbians in Southern Africa,” 275–282, and Hoad, “Between the White Man’s Burden and the White Man’s Disease.”
120. Quoted in Palmberg, “Gays and Lesbians in Southern Africa,” 284.
121. Unlike in the United States and France, therefore, homophobia in Zimbabwe and Namibia discourages experimentation with (or even consideration of) the diffusion item, despite the horrific number of AIDS victims in these and other African countries.
122. Jervis Anderson, *Bayard Rustin: Troubles I’ve Seen* (New York, HarperCollins, 1997), 71.
123. Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 94 and Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*.
124. Paula Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph: Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 58–60, and Herbert Garfinkel, *When Negroes March* (New York: Atheneum, 1959).
125. Lohia was one of the few activists who remained Gandhian after Gandhi’s death in 1948. See Fox, *Gandhian Utopia*.
126. Wittner, *Rebels Against War*. The NAACP’s most dramatic legal victory during

- these years was the Supreme Court's *Brown versus Board of Education* decision in 1954.
127. Stewart Burns, editor, *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).
  128. See, for example, Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), Halberstam, *The Children*, and John Lewis, *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1998).
  129. The majority of CORE members did not lose faith in nonviolence until the mid-1960s, when Black Power became the slogan (and method) of choice. See Meier and Rudwick, *CORE*, and Inge Powell Bell, *CORE and the Strategy of Nonviolence* (New York: Random House, 1968).
  130. In fact, the SCLC was Bayard Rustin's brainchild. He designed the SCLC as a vehicle for the leadership of King and other African-American ministers. See Garrow, *Bearing the Cross*.
  131. Altman, *Homosexual*.
  132. Woolcock and Altman, "Largest Street Party," 341, and Altman, *Global Sex*.
  133. If we look beyond Dennis Altman himself, moreover, we find that brokerage and collective appropriation among American and Australian homosexuals did not proceed smoothly or cumulatively.
  134. Rofel, "Qualities of Desire," 451–453, 467–471.
  135. *Ibid.*, 459–462.
  136. *Ibid.*, 470.
  137. Scalmer, "Translation" and "Labour of Diffusion."
  138. For a similar critique of John Meyer and the world society approach (or what they call world polity theory), see Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998): 33.
  139. Blaut refers to this assumption as uniformitarianism: "that all communities have equal potential for invention and innovation, regardless of whether for the landscape as a whole the overall propensity is low or high ... all human beings share the same basic psychological attributes and capabilities." Blaut, "Diffusionism," 34.
  140. Arjun Appadurai, "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology," in Richard G. Fox, editor, *Recapturing Anthropology* (Santa Fe: School for American Research Press, 1991), 191–210, 200.
  141. Hannerz expresses support for David Strang and John Meyer's view of world culture's influence on transnational diffusion, and writes that: "In modernity, the right things, at least, can get from anywhere to anywhere (although that tends to mean *from center to periphery*)." Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 51 (emphasis ours). He also accepts Robert Merton's distinction between locals and cosmopolitans, despite its elitist implications: "When locals were influential, Robert Merton ... found in his classic study, their influence rested not so much on what they knew as on whom they knew. Cosmopolitans, in contrast, based whatever influence they had on a knowledge less tied to particular others, or to the unique community setting. They came equipped with special knowledge, and they could leave and take it with them without devaluing it." Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 108. Of course, Merton's work was one of the main sources for classical diffusion theory (and Rogers's *Diffusion of Innovations*) in particular and modernization theory in general.