══ Introduction ══

S IGNS ABOUND that the world is witnessing a time of major transitions. Although great uncertainty persists about the direction in which change will go, conflict has mounted in recent years over the future trajectory of the world political and economic system. Transnational corporations, wealthy states, and other influential elites generally support the existing global capitalist order. These actors seek to defend the status quo, or to make only minor adjustments to sustain the privileges that have accrued to these groups in particular. They resist government regulation of capital and advocate for market-based responses to problems like climate change. And, as we show in this book, those in power have access to important resources that help them mobilize support for their vision of how the world should be organized, even among those who are not benefitting from global capitalism.[1]

But whereas some actors have promoted a vision of the world organized around capitalist markets, others have advanced different principles and priorities. Social movement actors have worked to shape the United Nations' (UN) agendas and advance understandings of global problems in ways that challenge market logics and contribute to alternative visions for organizing the world. Increasingly, these movements have converged around demands for a more democratic and equitable global order. Many of these movements are explicitly anticapitalist, or at least offer fundamental critiques of the dominant forms and practices of globalized capitalism. Many others are vague about their preferred economic model, but nevertheless quite clear in their demands that people have a greater voice in the decisions that affect their lives. We argue that the competition among these diverse visions for how the world might be organized has helped shape both global institutions and social movements.

History has shown that major social change only comes when those excluded from power and privilege rise to challenge the existing social order. Moreover, it is in times of crisis that elites are most vulnerable to pressures from social movements and more radical change becomes possible. Thus, to understand contemporary conflict over how the

world should be organized, it is important not only to look at the actions of elite groups or challengers, but also to consider this struggle within its particular historical context. In other words, it requires a world-level perspective attentive to the larger processes of conflict, accommodation, and reform taking place between challengers and authorities as well as to the particular issues or movements around which social forces organize. In addition, we must consider how the convergences of movement actors around demands for greater participation and equity affect the character of these movements.

Recent decades have brought a proliferation of transnational associations of all sorts, including rapid growth in the numbers of transnational organizations advocating for social change. We also have seen, over the 1980s and 1990s especially, an expansion in the levels of participation by people from the global South in transnational organizations.[2] Over the 1990s, the networks among transnationally organized social movements have become denser and more vibrant, in part as a result of new technologies that facilitated transnational communication and interaction, but also in response to mobilizing opportunities created by UN global conferences and other developments in interstate institutions.

In 2001, movement activists came together to launch the World Social Forum process. This dynamic process operates autonomously from the interstate system and has become the leading focal point for transnational mobilization and interchange among movements. It has fostered more deliberate work to build transnational and cross-sectoral movement alliances and encourages ongoing efforts to link local struggles with a critique of the global neoliberal economic order (Fisher and Ponniah 2003; Sen et al. 2003; Smith et al. 2011; Smith, Karides et al. 2007; Juris 2008b). This move to emphasize more autonomous movement spaces is not unique, because movements have always sought to escape the limitations of the interstate system as they modeled and advanced alternatives to the dominant social order. However, the World Social Forum is unprecedented in its size and its global scale.[3] Significantly, the process is highly reflexive, building on lessons of past movements as it works deliberately to foster transnational and cross-sectoral alliances in response to contemporary political opportunities and challenges.

We argue in this book that we need to understand these changes in light of both the shifting institutional and organizational setting in which social movements operate and in terms of the much larger world-systemic context. The timing of the changes in these movements is not a mere coincidence. Social movements were becoming more

transnational and building capacities for collaboration across differ-ence at the same time as the larger interstate system and world eco-nomic order were experiencing a "long crisis" brought about by the beginning of the end of the United State's hegemony in the world-system. The U.S. decline is seen to begin with the end of the U.S.-backed gold standard in the international monetary system and with the U.S. military failure in Vietnam (Wallerstein 2004b). Elites responded to the financial and energy crises of the 1970s with a set of economic policies that have come to be known as neoliberalism. Neoliberalism was de-signed to restore profitability to the capitalist system by expanding op-portunities for investment and trade (Harvey 2005). But, as was true in earlier periods of hegemonic decline, responses to crises have tended to exacerbate underlying tensions in the system, and thus provide only short-term fixes (Silver 2003; Arrighi and Silver 1999).

The escalation of global crises in more recent years can be expected to bring new openings for groups hoping to challenge the dominant order and advance alternatives to the existing world economic system (Wallerstein 2004a, 37). Of course, although crisis expands opportuni-ties for democratic movements, it also invites challenges from exclu-sive, xenophobic movements (Barber 1995; Moghadam 2008). The pros-pects for any type of mobilization are shaped by movement interactions with other actors and institutions of the world political and economic order. In this book, therefore, we draw from theories of social move-ments, world culture or polity, and world-systems to uncover the ways institutions mediate between political actors and world-systemic dy-namics to define the opportunities and constraints social movements face. We show how in this process social movements introduce ideas and models of action that help transform both the actors in this system as well as the system itself.

Our research leads us to make three basic claims, which we develop and support in the pages that follow. First, the decline of U.S. hege-mony and related global crises has strengthened opportunities for movements to come together to challenge the basic logics and struc-tures of the world economic and political system. The crises the world now faces require basic restructuring of the economic and political or-der to avert ecological disaster and political and social instability. The United States lacks the economic and military dominance it once en-joyed, and it increasingly must compete with counter-hegemonic chal-lengers, including multistate alliances, such as the European Union and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and with nonstate actors (for example, al Qaeda).

Second, the capacities of transnational movements—including pro-

gressive challengers as well as exclusionary and fundamentalist ones—to mobilize antisystemic challenges has increased over recent decades. This is in part due to greater global communication and other technological innovations, but also to the accumulation of lessons, ideas, and organizing infrastructures from earlier civil society engagement with interstate processes such as the UN global conferences (see chapter 4). Earlier mobilizations around interstate conferences and political processes have helped fuel the growth of transnational organizations, alliances, and networks. Such networks have become increasingly autonomous from the interstate polity as transnational organizations have become stronger and more cohesive in their analyses and frames (Pianta and Silva 2003; Alger 2002). The ideological orientations of these transnational alliances range from explicit antisystemic claims to reformist and service-oriented concerns. These diverse groups are increasingly able to come together—in alliances of various degrees of commitment and intensity—around shared analyses and goals. As they have engaged in struggle, activists have deepened their analyses of global problems and learned new ways of acting together. This has contributed to the antisystemic potential of contemporary social movements.

Third, over time, the bases of power, authority, influence, and legitimacy have shifted from territorial sovereignty claims, based on coercive abilities and assertions, to normative ones, based on actors' conformity to international law. This shift expands the "discursive opportunities" for transnational challengers (Braun and Koopmans 2008; Ferree 2003; Giugni et al. 2005). It stems partly from states' recognition of limits to violence as a means of advancing security (that is, from nuclear attacks or terrorist threats). The gradual strengthening of norms and institutions of international law, especially in the aftermath of World War II, has contributed to shifting the cost-benefit calculus behind the use of coercion in international affairs. The organizations we examine in this book and the larger movements of which they are part have been essential to advancing international norms in global politics (see, for example, Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink 1999; Kaldor 2003). This normative trend is reinforced by the fact that military competition among states has become prohibitively expensive, forcing states to divert essential resources away from basic social welfare and productive infrastructure of their societies (Kennedy 1989; Reifer 2005). This shift, moreover, should be understood as a long-term historical trend rather than a dualistic category. Although particular incidents or conflicts may suggest that coercive power generally prevails, the larger pattern of interstate interactions suggests that states' ability to effectively use coercive power to achieve domestic and international goals has been reduced over time.[4]

Systemic Crisis and Movement Opportunities

Few would argue that we are now witnessing a time of great crisis. The collapse of global financial markets and increased uncertainty in the financial sector, the growing evidence of large-scale climate disruption and species extinctions, unstable and rising energy and food costs, and large-scale inequality are coupled with growing scarcity of water and arable land and rising threats from international terrorism (see, for example, Davis 2001, 2006; Klare 2001). These multiple and interrelated crises all can be seen to signal the physical and social limits of the existing world capitalist order. Some analysts would argue that we are observing a world-system in the late stages of systemic crisis—a crisis that has been developing since the 1970s and that results from basic contradictions within the world economic system.

For Immanuel Wallerstein, a crisis is "a situation in which the restitutive mechanisms of the system are no longer functioning well and therefore the system will either be transformed fundamentally or disintegrate" (1984, 23). The logic driving the contemporary world economy is one of endless accumulation. In other words, to survive, it requires constant economic growth. Capitalism is thus an ever-expanding mode of economic organization and therefore necessarily global in reach. But the system's need for constantly expanding markets and economic growth contends with the hard reality that we live on a single planet that is not growing, and that, although the productivity of workers can often be increased, there are physical limits to how much surplus value (profit) can be extracted from the planet and its people.

Whether we interpret the enormous problems of our day as evidence of a systemic crisis or not, there is little doubt that they will require dramatic changes in the way our societies are organized. As the signs of ecological and financial crisis become ever more apparent, additional threats to the existing order are also present in the form of large-scale mass protests in many countries and multiple costly and sustained U.S. military interventions, widening cracks in the foundation of the system's organizing logic (Arrighi and Silver 1999).

First, we see challenges to the legitimacy of existing institutions, reflected in increased protests against national governments around the world and in increased military spending and intervention. The leading cause of this crisis is the inability of the system to continue providing benefits to key groups—such as workers and the middle class in the core states. In the past, this bargain between elites and workers in the north has served to mask fundamental contradictions between actual

practices and the liberal ideology that justifies and rationalizes the world-system (Silver 2003). The legitimacy crisis is reflected in declining rates of confidence in major political institutions in countries around the world (see, for example, Weber 2011; WorldPublicOpinion.org 2008; Gallup 2008).

The large and growing U.S. military budget and prison population should be seen as indicators that this regime has come to rely more and more upon coercion over consent as a basis for its authority. As U.S. industrial strategies have met with greater international competition, they have become less profitable and less able to generate those benefits for workers that were key to securing both labor's cooperation and the domestic peace needed to ensure global hegemonic leadership. U.S. economic success was also essential to securing international cooperation with the interstate order it favored, and so as the U.S. economy declines relative to others, new international challenges to U.S. hegemony have emerged (see, for example, Reifer 2005; Harvey 2009). This rise in coercion has taken place over several decades. For instance, Pamela Oliver shows how the U.S. government–enacted policies that led to the mass incarceration of blacks stem the demands for equity by civil rights and Black Power activism (2008). Donatella della Porta and her colleagues have also documented a shift in core countries' policing strategies away from more permissive practices that protected citizens' rights to speech and toward more restrictive and coercive forms of policing. This emphasis on security became even more pervasive after the attacks on the U.S. Pentagon and World Trade Center in 2001 (della Porta and Reiter 2006; della Porta, Peterson, and Reiter 2006; Ericson and Doyle 1999; Howell et al. 2008; O'Neill 2004, 243; Gillham and Marx 2000). Peter Evans warns that this shift in state emphasis from providing welfare to coercive enforcement of property rights threatens the long-term viability of the state and the larger neoliberal order it supports (1997).

The threat to the system's legitimacy is, moreover, likely to increase as many—if not most—states of the core confront escalating costs of security and new spending constraints that make "austerity the order of the day not only in Haiti and in Argentina, but in France" (Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein 1989, 92). At the time of writing, massive strikes and protests have become more frequent and effective at paralyzing European countries such as Greece, Spain, and France as well as countries across the Middle East. Although these protests focus largely on national government targets, the ultimate cause of their grievances lies in the policies of global and regional financial institutions, and thus in the long term the protests are likely to strengthen movements for changes in the larger world-system. In some parts of the global South,

for instance, long-simmering popular resistance to the policies of the global financial institutions has been translated into electoral influence, and—aided by global crises—leaders from those countries are becoming more forceful and unified in their demands for new rules for the global economy. Thus, in 2006, Argentina and Brazil repaid their debt to the International Monetary Fund ahead of schedule, putting the institution in a financial dilemma (Bretton Woods Project 2006).[5] Also, the Group of Eight (G8) leading industrial countries has been forced to expand its ranks to become the G20. And recent World Bank–International Monetary Fund meetings have expanded the influence of poor countries in the governance of those institutions. The "development project" (McMichael 2006) launched in the wake of World War II did not produce all the benefits it promised, and a wider range of people and countries are now demanding alternatives.

Second, just as the system is being challenged because of its inability to meet expectations of relatively privileged groups, new groups of people who have been largely excluded from the benefits of global economic growth are also mobilizing transnationally to advance claims challenging the hegemony of globalized capitalism (Sassen 1998; Hall and Fenelon 2009). The rise of global human rights discourse and increasingly broad, formally structured movements of people to support human rights claims thus generates yet another threat to the system's persistence (Sassen 1998, 2007). This threat has become more potent because rising food insecurity and water shortages highlight the incompatibilities between values of human rights and globalized markets. Also, human rights movements have more consistently and clearly come to repudiate the Cold War's separation of civil and political from economic rights (Skogly 1993). Financial and ecological limits illuminate the gaps between the human rights ideals that have justified the existing regime and the actual experiences of growing numbers of people around the world, fueling both nonviolent challenges as well as international terrorism (see, for example, Bergesen and Lizardo 2005; Friedman and Chase-Dunn 2005; Uvin 2003; Moghadam 2008).

Finally, the rise of anti-Westernism outside the core through nationalist and terrorist groups as well as the much larger segment of progressive, pro-democracy groups helps frame the current period as one of civilizational conflict—that is, a conflict over the basic organization and logic of our social and economic systems. As the Western development project (see McMichael 2006)—which has provided the key organizing logic behind the U.S.-led accumulation regime—proves unable to meet the needs of larger numbers of people not only in the global South but also in the core countries of the world economy, more and more people are questioning U.S. leadership and the world-system as a

whole. More significantly, as it becomes clear that the basic premises of that system are undermining the livelihoods of poor communities and threatening future generations, more people will find the alternatives offered by antisystemic challengers increasingly appealing (Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein 1989; Wallerstein 2004a, 37; Amin 2006).[6]

Giovanni Arrighi and his collaborators have shown that this sort of hegemonic decline we are seeing today is part of the cyclical dynamics that have occurred throughout the more-than-500 year history of the modern world-system. These scholars have demonstrated recurrent patterns that marked earlier *accumulation cycles*, one dominated by the United Provinces (sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries) and another by the United Kingdom (eighteenth through the twentieth centuries). U.S. hegemony began to emerge in the late nineteenth century and reached its peak in the early post–World War II decades (Arrighi 2010; Arrighi and Silver 1999, 2001). In the two earlier cycles, hegemonic powers dominated the system through their competitive advantage in accumulating capital and were able to consolidate their influence over the world-system for a time. But, once established, hegemonic powers invited challenges from other actors, and this competitive dynamic fueled both the expansion of the system and innovation and emulation by other actors that gradually undermined the hegemon's competitive edge. These processes contributed to hegemonic crisis, defined by interstate rivalries and competition among business entities, growing social conflicts, and the emergence of new configurations of power—a breakdown that paved the way for the emergence of a new accumulation regime.

This world-historic perspective sheds important light on the current context and can aid our attempts to understand the potential trajectories and prospects for change. If we view the current environmental and financial situation not as a mere setback in the overall forward march of economic globalization—able to be addressed with technological breakthroughs or market corrections—but rather as part of this long crisis of the twentieth and twenty-first century, we might better understand the long-term changes in the organization of social movements that have resisted—in one way or another—the globalized capitalism that is the modern world-system. In many ways, the crises of today are a more potent threat to humanity's future than any others in human history. Yet it is unclear what sort of transformation of the existing system is possible, and whether such a transformation can indeed occur before challenges to the system of governance lead to its unraveling. Will we see the rise of a new global hegemon, or a world-empire based on coercion, increasing chaos and violence, or the rise of a non-capitalist world economy based not on coercion but on more coopera-

tive and mutually respectful relations (see, for example, Arrighi 2010, 377–80)?

It is not our purpose here to speculate on the various potential outcomes of this conflict. Instead, we argue that this context shapes the opportunities that contemporary movements face in organizing across national borders and around visions of fundamentally different world orders. We believe that movements working to transform the world economic and political order into a more democratic and equitable one have greater potential for affecting global change at the current historical moment than they have had at earlier points in history. Thus, we examine changes in the population of transnational social movement organizations within this world-historic context, integrating different bodies of research on social movements and political institutions as we try to explain patterns of transnational social movement organizing during the time of this long crisis of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Trends in Movement Capacities and Arenas

Scholarship in the world-systems tradition has led to an expectation that the contemporary era will see an increase in the number of larger and more transnationally organized social movements advocating for large-scale global change. Evidence that their predictions are indeed unfolding is strong, and it is worth considering how these theories of world-systemic change might add to our theorizing about social movements, much of which has remained within state-centric frameworks. Our analysis supports the argument that the capacities and strength of social movements have expanded over time, and in fact we see a shift in the arenas of contention so that movement energies are now more focused on spaces defined by movements and largely autonomous from interstate politics and agendas. This contrasts with earlier periods, in which transnational activism focused largely on defining interstate norms and institutions and mobilized within arenas defined by states. This is significant to the extent that it liberates activist discourses and imaginations from the constraints of the existing interstate order. Activists' and organizations' relationships with other movement actors thus become more salient than claims of political feasibility and expediency in shaping movement strategies.

In their analysis of successive hegemonic cycles of rise and decline, Arrighi and Beverly Silver show that

> [pressure from below] has widened and deepened from [one hegemonic transition to another], leading to enlarged social blocs with each new hegemony. Thus, we can expect social contradictions to play a far more de-

cisive role than ever before in shaping both the unfolding transition and whatever new world order eventually emerges out of the impending systemic chaos. But whether the movements will largely follow and be shaped by the escalation of violence (as in past transitions) or precede and effectively work toward containing the systemic chaos is a question that is open. Its answer is ultimately in the hands of the movements. (1999, 289)

In other words, as globalized capitalism has extended its geographic and social reach—that is, as it has increased demands upon more of the world's workers through, for example, outsourcing and the casualization of labor, and as it commodifies goods once freely accessible, such as water and public services—we would expect a growing tendency for social movements to develop and to focus attention on cross-sector organizing and transnational alliance-building. This is exactly what has developed considerably over the last few decades, and the deepening networks of transnational association have led to the emergence of the World Social Forum process in 2001, reflecting some of the changes Arrighi and Silver predicted. But these movements are resource-poor and constantly threatened by internal division as well as external repression. Counterposed to this more hopeful scenario is the possibility of a continued escalation of violence developing out of the current U.S. wars, rising instances of terrorism, and expanding nationalist, xenophobic, and racist right-wing mobilizations.

World-systems analysts have understood social movements as acting in response to the underlying structures of the world economy. This frame of reference sheds light on some of the large-scale and long-term developments among and across social movements, including their relations to the larger world-system. "Antisystemic movements" include a diverse "family of movements" working to advance greater democracy and equality (Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein 1989). According to Wallerstein, "to be antisystemic is to argue that neither liberty nor equality is possible under the existing system and that both are possible only in a transformed world" (1990, 36).

World-systems analysts recognize that many actors and organizations within social movements do not frame their struggles as antisystemic, nor necessarily see their diverse issues and struggles as connected (see, for example, Hall and Fenelon 2009, 120–23). Nevertheless, they argue that these various and sometimes loosely linked struggles have served to shape and transform both the opportunities for antisystemic movement and the world-system itself (Amin et al. 1990, 10–11; Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000). At times they do so by helping challenge the dominance of particular hegemonic powers by advancing nationalist

claims, as the anticolonialist movements did in the middle part of the twentieth century. At times their challenges may be more direct in naming the system of globalized capitalism as the target, such as with international socialist movements of the nineteenth century and beyond. At times their challenges may serve to chip away at the dominant order by calling into question the gaps between the legitimating ideologies of the system—that is, equality, human rights, or even free markets—and its actual practice. This has been a strategy of many movements throughout history, from the early antislavery struggles to today's campaigns for worker rights, climate justice, and food sovereignty. Elites often respond to movement challenges by reforming political institutions in ways that create openings or formal means of access for movements to further their struggles within existing institutions.

Terry Boswell and Christopher Chase-Dunn have described this process as part of a "spiral of capitalism and socialism" whereby structures shape movements and their possibilities for challenging the social order, and the interactions of movements with states and interstate actors then transform the larger set of structures that form the stage on which social conflicts are expressed (2000, 18). They observe that "from the elimination of slavery to the end of colonialism, a rough and tumbling spiral between socialist progress and capitalist reaction has resulted in higher living standards and greater freedom for working people" (2000, 11). Their spiral model of global change suggests that revolutionary movements don't simply emerge in a discontinuous way, but instead build on past successes to parry the next move of those defending the existing world-system.

In short, a world-historic framework can help shed light on long-term trends and patterns in the capacities and forms of transnational social movement organizing over the past few decades. At the same time, we have learned much from other literatures that focus on international institutions and more localized structures and processes, such as those operating within national and interstate institutions and social movement organizations. The chapters that follow offer an analysis of the changing population of transnational social movement organizations that embeds our thinking about the operations of movements and their organizations within theories of global institutions and culture, which is in turn embedded within the context of the constantly evolving world-system.

A key part of our argument is that conflicts over how the world should be organized are articulated within and shaped by interstate institutions. We must therefore consider how institutions have changed alongside the longer-term cycles of economic expansion and contraction as well as the rise and decline of hegemonic powers. We thus con-

sider the geographic makeup of transnational organizations, their articulation of issues, their connections with interstate institutions and other nongovernmental actors, and their organizing structures and how these have changed since the founding of the United Nations. Our analysis demonstrates that antisystemic movements have been inextricably linked to global institutional processes, not marginal to them. Moreover, movements both shape and are shaped by their interactions with states and other global actors. In the course of their interactions, they may adopt reformist, counter-hegemonic, or antisystemic strategies, and their choice of strategies is shaped by the larger global context. Our observations of organizing patterns over recent decades suggests that the interactions between movement actors and global institutions have enhanced the capacities for transnational organizing and strengthened the antisystemic potential of movements. They have done so by creating global focal points and incentives for geographic expansion and by facilitating ongoing communication and exchange among diverse movements and groups.

Shifting Bases of Power

When we embrace this relational and dynamic approach, the usual conceptual boundaries that academic disciplines establish—for instance, between states and civil society, between social movements and other civil society groups, between core and peripheral regions of the world, between reformist and revolutionary paths toward change, and so on—become blurred. Thus we devote some attention to thinking about boundaries and how structures and actors reproduce particular divisions and ways of thinking as well as how they give way to new ideas and modes of organization. If we consider contemporary struggles as questioning the fundamentals of the world-system, the very nature of existing states and institutions is therefore subject to contestation and reformulation. In other words, systemic transformation would require basic reorganization of institutions now largely taken for granted.

One inherent dilemma and source of crisis in the modern world-system is the contradiction between the norms and values used to rationalize or justify the system and the practices essential to the endless accumulation of profits this system requires. We argue that as systemic crises have made dominant actors more vulnerable to challenges and as capacities of counter-hegemonic and antisystemic forces have grown, the bases of power and authority are shifting. In particular, conventional justifications of state authority were based on the ability of a state to control activities within particular geographic boundaries and

to defend those boundaries with force, if necessary. But recent years have seen important challenges to these assumptions, as nuclear weapons and terrorist networks can threaten the security of even the most well-armed states. Moreover, the interstate system has developed an increasingly expansive set of norms allowing intervention into a state's formerly sovereign territory to advance human rights claims. At the same time, states' abilities to use coercion against their own citizens as well as others have been constrained by the expanding global human rights regime. Christopher Hill, a former U.S. secretary of state for East Asia and ambassador to Iraq, observed that "the notion that a dictator can claim the sovereign right to abuse his people has become unacceptable" (quoted in Fisk 2011).[7]

The expansion and greater institutionalization of international human rights norms, as well as the articulation of enhanced understandings of the global environment as a commons whose survival depends on global cooperation, have undermined traditional bases of state authority. This strengthens opportunities for nonstate actors whose power stems from normative rather than coercive advantages (see, for example, Friedman et al. 2005; Finnemore 1996; Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink 1999). This shift further strengthens the possibilities for antisystemic mobilization, especially as stronger transnational networks have helped shape new discourses and consolidate energies around a few important and potentially transformative frames.

One area where this shift is apparent is in the critical discourses emerging from transnational movements and their broader civil society alliances in response to contemporary global problems. For instance, although governments have responded to the increased volatility in food prices with calls for greater "food security," activists in transnational movements are increasingly united in calls for "food sovereignty." The former reinforces states' roles in regulating food markets, the latter decentralizes authority and control over food production and distribution to farmers and consumers. Similarly, although states speak in terms of addressing climate change, activists have responded with the slogan "system change, not climate change." They advance claims for "climate justice," and more recently many groups have converged around calls for the "universal rights of Mother Earth." Such discourses challenge state-led efforts to use market mechanisms to address climate change and other environmental problems, and these discourses gain momentum as states fail to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Another significant form of movement discourse confronts the lingering effects of colonialism through calls for repayment of the global North's "ecological debt" to the global South and for reparations for slavery.

Although subtle, the shifting discourses in both interstate institutions and the growing chorus of movement voices for fundamentally new approaches to international cooperation reflect important changes in the operation of power in the contemporary world-system. States of course remain dominant forces in world politics, but their supremacy is complicated by the emergence of new actors with fundamentally different claims to authority. As globalization challenges states' capacities to both control activities within their borders and to provide for the well-being of citizens, this power shift is likely to become increasingly relevant to explaining global social change.

Chapter Outline

The major theme of the book is that global institutions—including states and international organizations—are best seen as the products of contestation among a diverse array of global actors (including social movements) competing in an arena that is defined by these same institutions and the norms and cultural practices they generate. Global social change results from competition among global actors operating within this institutional context; contestation helps transform identities of global actors and their forms of struggle. Over time, the opportunities and capacities for transnational antisystemic mobilization have, we argue, increased significantly. In addition, the primary bases of power and authority have shifted from coercion and territorial sovereignty to normative claims based on universal rights.

Our study draws heavily from both quantitative and qualitative data in our analysis of the changing patterns of transnational social movement organizing. The primary quantitative data source is the *Yearbook of International Organizations*, and we describe our data collection methods in greater detail in chapter 2. The advantage of this data source is that it provides measures of the general characteristics of the subset of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) organized to advocate for some form of social change. Our dataset includes organizational founding dates, issue focus, and geographic scope of membership over several decades. Our database begins in the 1950s and extends into the early 2000s. But we find that this macro-level organizational data, though helpful for discerning general patterns, leaves much room for interpretation. To aid us with this interpretation, we draw heavily on additional primary and secondary research on transnational activism and activist organizations (see chapter 2 for more details).

Chapter 1 reviews the major literatures on which our study draws, including world-systems, world polity, and social movement theories.

We discuss the various contributions each approach makes to our understanding of social movements and explain how our integration of these three theoretical traditions can enhance understandings of transnational social movement activism and global change.

Chapter 2 situates our study of the population of transnational social movement organizations within the context of the historical period following World War II, when decolonization and the rise of national independence movements and the creation of the United Nations and other international organizations altered the institutional and normative context in which states and other global actors competed. We then provide an overview of the general patterns of transnational social movement organizing, summarizing overall trends in the organizational population over the last half century.

Since the 1990s, forms of regional interstate cooperation and integration have taken on a new character in response to declining U.S. hegemony and the end of the Cold War. The superpower rivalry had a significant impact on the ways in which regional bodies such as the European Union and the Organization of African Unity developed into the late twentieth century. But the end of the Cold War and the destabilization of U.S. hegemony opened the door for new forms of cooperation and regional unity that help states assert and protect their interests as they seek more favorable terms of participation in the global economy. Regionalism is thus a counter-hegemonic force in the world-system.

In chapter 3, we analyze the impact of changes in regionalism on transnational social movement organizations. As regional institutions have enlarged their mandates to encompass a wider variety of policy domains, such as human rights, environmental protection, and women's rights, and have adopted mechanisms allowing the formal participation of civil society actors in regional policy processes, they have altered the field of contestation and created new possibilities for movements to engage in transnational forms of struggle. Social movements have thus increasingly mobilized within regions to influence the direction and scope of regional governance. We examine the development of both interstate regional polities and regional transnational social movement sectors over the course of the Cold War and into the post–Cold War period.

Chapter 4 examines relationships between social movement organizing and the United Nations. As the global institution designed to help consolidate and maintain U.S. hegemony in the postwar order, the UN and its various bodies reflect and help reproduce the accumulation logic of the larger world-system. At the same time, it helps advance norms of human rights and environmental protection that are essential

to the legitimacy and stability of the system. We focus on the United Nations' global conference processes as particularly important sites of contention over competing values and interests, sites where social movement actors have been particularly active, especially since the end of the Cold War.[8] By creating spaces where activists can come together around a shared agenda and set of targets or goals, we argue that the UN global conferences provided focal points that encouraged transnational organizing on a diverse array of issues. Moreover, because global conferences reinforce particular sets of organizing principles and practices among groups that are developing around the times these conferences are held, the effects of conference-derived norms and practices are likely to affect even those groups not directly engaged in the global conferences. UN conferences thus generate norms and models of action that diffuse through the widespread dissemination of accounts of the conferences by those who participate. Diffusion also occurs through networking among organizations, which is facilitated and encouraged both before and following global conferences, and through movement discourses and practices that relate to global conference processes (Riles 2001).

Although global conferences encouraged movements to engage with global-level political processes, and provided in many cases opportunities for movements to challenge the practices of governments that violated international norms such as human rights and environmental sustainability, they also demonstrated the limits of interstate politics for addressing some of the world's most pressing problems. Institutions are designed to provide stability and predictability in interstate affairs, and therefore constrain prospects for movements seeking structural change. They also contain contradictory norms and logics that both enable powerful actors to elude sanctions for violating global norms and provide leverage for challengers mobilizing against such hypocrisies (Ball 2000; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005). Global institutions thus create both possibilities for movements to gain political leverage (through what is known as a boomerang strategy) and "iron cages" that constrain movements. Chapter 5 explores these paradoxes of the global institutional context.

The contradictions embedded in world polity norms and practices as well as the fundamental contradictions of the world-economy have generated important contemporary challenges to the world polity. Chapter 6, the final one of this volume, presents a model for thinking about the interactions between social movements and global institutions over time, and the implications of these interactions for large-scale structural change. Building from the analyses in earlier chapters, we show how movements are affected by their relationships with

global institutions and other actors and how the interactions among various actors shape ongoing processes of institutional and world-systemic transformation, including the development of antisystemic movements.

Many have emphasized the extent to which civil society engagement with institutions can lead to co-optation, but we argue that a more complex dynamic is at work, and that global institutions are also shaping the antisystemic potential of transnational movement networks. Drawing from experiences in global conferences, activists in contemporary movements have expressed increasing skepticism about the prospects for achieving social change through institutions. This has fueled a process of critical, transnational movement-building that may be heralding large-scale, and perhaps systemic, social change. As the world faces profound financial and ecological crises, and as U.S. dominance in the world political economy is increasingly challenged, it is especially urgent that scholars, policy analysts, and citizens gain a better understanding of the ways social institutions shape social behavior and the distribution of power in the world-system. We hope this book will help illuminate the contentious and complex processes that constitute the global political order and contribute in some small way to helping identify paths toward a more equitable, sustainable, and democratic world.