The Role of Values in Transnational Social Movements

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A central concern of this paper is the role of values as a target and as key symbolic element of movements strategies.

Values are a factor not only in transnational movements, but also in the domestic environment of movements, this section focuses on an aspect of values that is rarely conceptualised in depth, or considered important in academic and practical terms in relation to social movements and grassroots constituencies.

M.E. Keck and K. Sikkink, talking about the rationality or significance of activist networks, stress that scholars have been slow to recognize the '...motivation by values rather than by material concerns or professional norms' (1998: 2). The authors find that the role of values is consistent with some arguments within the New Social Movement Theory (1998: 31).

Many researchers associate the notion of values and solidarity with TSMs. Some of them consider that Transnational Social Movement Organizations serve as vehicles for the diffusion of values, an action strategy (Smith, Pagnucco and Chatfield, 1997: 72). Others speak of the early presence of a 'solidarity movement', whose origin is intimately related with Christian charity and with political liberalism; in this sense, Solidarity Movements represent '...a real step forward toward the creation of an active global consciousness' (Baglioni, 2001: 220).

Passy, regards actions of the solidarity movement as characterized as political altruism, since they have 'a clear political aim', and are 'pursued to the benefit of other people' (2001: 7). Sydney Tarrow considers solidarity, as one of the distinctions and strengths of contentious forms of collective action; he includes its meaning within particular groups, situations and political cultures (1994: 3). For J.D. McCarthy participation in extra-border experiences of social movements results in the formation of a self-conception in terms of transnational identity or a greater appreciation of transnational solidarity (1997: 248).

L. Kriesberg highlights the processes of diffusion of values and norms, and the increasing tendency of sharing them by multidirectional flows of 'ethnic and religious particularisms' that challenge western cultural hegemony (1997: 9).

Others look more critically at the idea of social movements as solidaristic. Charles Tilly, argues that a movement is more than the activist stories about it and the existing groups within; '[s]ocial movements ...consist tof bounded, contingent, interactive performances by multiple and changing actors', and to consider SMs as '...solidaristic, coherent groups, rather than clusters of performances' can be at best misleading.

P. Waterman develops a more elaborated framework for the analysis of the formation of Global Solidarity, suggesting that along with the appearance of economic and political globalisation processes, emerged global solidarity:

the new global solidarity projects descend from, selectively rearticulate, allow for, but go beyond, religious, liberal and socialist universalisms; proposing neither a return to an unchanging golden past nor a leap into a perfect future -here or hereafter- they allow for and require a dialogue of civilizations and ages, a solidarity with both past and future (1998: 231).

Two challenges confront both these types of integration. The first, is the risk of reproducing universalism in the same fashion as the 'grand narratives' of Judaism, Christianity, the European enlightenment, liberalism, and socialism, which offered '...universal statements of reality, value and obligation, based on initial assumptions or arguments about the universe, nature, man, society, etc.', in a dynamic of truth imposition, the second is the danger of 'producing or reproducing a sentimental humanist universalism' (1998: 231). Waterman's proposal is a concept based in the complexity of solidarity. It associates the notions of equality, liberty, peace, tolerance, and emancipatory/life-protective ideals. It is, although mediated by other institutions, a relationship between people, and an 'active process of negotiating differences, or creating identity, rather than assuming it like as the orthodox notions of 'community' (1998: 235).

Waterman develops a framework of such definitions, reproduced here.

Table 2. The meanings of international solidarity (In Waterman, 1998: 236).

	Definition	General or historical example	Problem, danger or exclusion
Identity	Solidarity of common interest and identity	"Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win'	Universalistic; exclusion of the non-identical; limitation to the 'politically-conscious'?
Substitution	Standing in for those incapable of standing up for themselves	Charity development co-operation	Substitutionism; one-way solidarity, with in-built patron client relation?
Complementarity	Exchange of different needed/desired goods/quali—	Exchange of different emancipatory experiences, ideas, cultural products	Decisions on needs, desires; value of qualities, goods exchanges

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Reciprocity	Exchange over time of identical goods/qualities	Mutual support between London and Australian dockers, late nineteenth century	Allows for instrumental rationality, empty of emotion/ethics
Affinity	Shared cross-border values, feelings, ideas, identities	Solidarity of pacifists, socialists, ecologists, indigenes (sic)	Inevitably particularistic; friendship?
Restitution	Acceptance of responsibility for historical wrong	Swiss compensation for victims of complicity with Nazis	Buying off guilt? Reproduction of guilt/resentment?

Three of the definitions are particularly relevant for the arguments of this document.

The notion of substitution is about the '...standing up, or in, for a weaker or poorer other', in a dynamic reminiscent of dependence schemes; complementarity refers to an exchange of different missing and desired qualities, that are '...equally valued by participants in the transaction'; and affinity 'suggests mutual appreciation or attraction, and therefore a relationship of mutual respect and support based in values, feelings and friendship'. Waterman concludes that such complex manifestations challenge binary notions or one-way solidarities, being a useful 'research instrument' for examining participants' point of view of solidarity (1998: 237-238).

I. Eterovic and J. Smith observes that a new form of political action and identity may be emerging, consisting of a transition from altruistic forms of collective politics to a different mutual solidarity process. Altruism, in its attempts to assist and support southern groups in a one-way relation of dependency, due to planetary economic and political integration processes after the cold war, is giving place to another relation of inter-group exchange of political solidarity, a more reciprocal North-South interaction (2001:198). This view is contrasts with Passy's interchangeable concepts of Altruism and Solidarity (2001: 7). Eterovic and Smith submerge the question of how political altruism has '...affected global structural changes that have transformed nation-states?'. The question remains to what extent today forms of transnational association are still products of the patron-client type of political altruism, or form part of a changing trend towards more collaborative, interdependent relationships? (2001: 198).

These problems lie at the core of reactions to the global processes of economic liberalization, or market-oriented international policies, from movements within both economically privileged sectors and economically disadvantaged countries. There seems to be a considerable gap between

northern transnational social movements advocating on behalf of third world people, and social movements emerging from these economically and socially excluded sectors.

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