

## WHEN DO LEADERS MATTER? HYPOTHESES ON LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS\*

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*Leaders are central to social movements, yet scholars have devoted relatively little attention to understanding the concept of leadership or its effects on movements. In this article, we explore leadership's influence on movement dynamics by examining Nigeria's Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Catholic Left-inspired Plowshares movement, the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, and the liberation movement in El Salvador. Building on Bourdieu, Putnam, and the existing literature on social movement leadership, we argue that these movements' leaders possessed "leadership capital" having cultural, social, and symbolic components. We then turn our attention to the conditions under which leadership capital affects three key processes in movement development: mobilization of aggrieved parties, activation of third-party supporters, and responses to repression. We conclude by calling for more comprehensive, systematic, and comparative investigation of factors influencing leadership in domestic and transnational movements.*

Leaders play a critical role in collective action, shaping movements in numerous ways. They define goals and advance strategies. They mobilize followers, galvanize indigenous organizations, and forge coalitions. They influence responses to external repression, and their action, rhetoric, and style affect conflict outcomes. Yet, despite leadership's significance, it remains an understudied topic among collective action researchers. There are several likely reasons for this scholarly blind spot. First, most social scientists reject so-called "great man" theories of history since they imply that complex, large-scale protest movements reflect merely the whim of a disgruntled agitator. Second, sociologists have opted to counterbalance journalists' and historians' fascination with leaders by focusing on deeper, longer-term processes and on understudied mass behavior. Third, many of the major movements through which scholars have inductively developed theory advocate democracy and egalitarianism, deemphasizing leadership while underscoring consensus-based decision-making processes and the critical role of rank-and-file activists (Barker, Johnson, and Lavalette 2001). Finally, dominant models of collective action—including both structurally and culturally based approaches—downplay agency. Mobilizing processes, protest events, and rhetorical frames often appear in abstract, disembodied form, without reference to the leaders who invent or improvise these critical strategies (Aminzade, Goldstone, and Perry 2002; Benford 1997).

Whatever the reasons for scholars' relative neglect of the subject, we believe that leadership merits greater attention. In this, we contribute to an incipient trend among analysts of social movements (Aminzade, Goldstone and Perry 2002; Barker, Johnson, and Lavalette 2001; Klandermans 1989; Morris and Staggenborg 2004) and other political phenomena

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(Samuels 2003; Byman and Pollack 2001). Although some of these new studies define leaders as those who perform key tasks—such as recruitment, mobilization of resources, formation of movement organizations (McCarthy and Zald 1977) or tactical innovation (McAdam 1983)—we maintain that movements make leaders as much as they are made by them. Thus, we define leaders in relational terms, as individuals and teams of individuals who exercise authority within a movement (Ganz 2000).

Using this definition, we have three goals in this article. First, we propose *a unified concept of leadership characteristics*. Employing diverse terminology and approaches, scholars have so far identified a number of traits that movement leaders share. We synthesize these views under the concept of “leadership capital.” Second, we seek to *integrate our findings with today’s dominant collective action theories* by focusing on leadership’s effects on several common and crucial issues: (a) mobilization of aggrieved parties; (b) activation of third parties whose resources and support are often crucial to movement development; and (c) repression by states and other opponents. Finally, we *suggest various topics and questions that other researchers can pursue* to further our knowledge of leadership dynamics within movements.

As we emphasize the need to explore this topic, we do not wish to exaggerate the role of leaders. Social movements are the product of complex historical processes. They develop and decline in response to opportunities in the political and social environment. And they are composed of numerous individuals who make countless decisions affecting the course of movement development. Moreover, the designation and acknowledgment of leaders within a movement occurs through dialectical interaction with a mass base. Similarly, in the public sphere, interactions with the media, third party supporters, and opponents can change the identity and actions of a movement’s leadership (Koopmans 2004; Gitlin 1980). In this sense, we agree that leadership is fundamentally a relational status, hinging as much on the personal characteristics of particular individuals as on the outside world’s attribution of this status (Diani and McAdam 2003). It is therefore difficult to separate leadership from the larger aspects of a movement. Nonetheless, we believe it is possible to tease out the roles that leaders play. To draw out hypotheses with the broadest possible range, it is important to select movements in which leaders appear to have played a central part—cases in which it is difficult to conceive of the movement or certain aspects of the movement without its leader. Such cases are admittedly outliers, but that status means that the role of leaders will stand out sharply, allowing us to propose hypotheses for further testing in other cases. We believe such a method can have a significant payoff for social movement theory. As Aminzade, Goldstone, and Perry (2002: 152) have written, “Assuming . . . ‘minimal’ structural conditions for a protest or a revolutionary movement . . . then the role of leadership becomes crucial at several points in actualizing the potential for protest and social change.”

Applying this precept, we believe that comparative methods offer the best basis for hypothesizing about leadership’s role in movements. Accordingly, we use a variety of comparisons involving four diverse movement sets: the movement for political and economic transformation in El Salvador in the 1970s-1980s; the ethnic movements of Nigeria’s Niger River Delta in the 1990s, focusing on the Ogoni people; the Catholic Left-inspired Plowshares movement in the United States, Sweden, and Australia; and the revolutionary peasant movements of Mexico’s southern states in the 1990s, particularly the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN). In the Mexico and Nigeria cases, we compare two or more analogous groups, i.e., movements seeking similar goals at the same time in the same countries under equivalent structural conditions. In such cases, the role of agency stands out sharply, distinguishing those leaders who were able—or unable—to take advantage of these conditions. In the Plowshares case, we compare separate national “branches” of a single transnational movement operating at about the same time in several advanced industrial states. Such a comparison allows us to identify reasons that different movement branches, using ideology and tactics derived from a single movement “trunk,” were or were not able to organ-

ize and propel the movement. Finally, in the Salvadoran liberation movement, we engage in diachronic comparison of a single movement before and after the state-sponsored murder of a key leader. This methodology, which we also use in the Ogoni case, allows us to pinpoint the effects of a leader and his death on a movement.

In addition to these methodological strengths, we maintain that there are several theoretical advantages to studying these four cases. First, by focusing on movements in the U.S., Latin America, Europe, and Africa, we minimize the tendency to construct theories that primarily reflect the developed world. Second, the targets of these movements include multinational corporations, religious institutions, and domestic and international governing bodies. Scholars are beginning to recognize that our theories ought to reflect a variety of movements, not just those that challenge states (Myers and Cress 2004; Snow 2004). Finally, these cases include both national and transnational organizing. Today, activists frequently reach across state borders as globalization expands and information technology becomes more accessible and efficient (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Smith, Chatfield and Pagnucco 1997; Smith and Johnston 2002). This trend is likely to continue and expand (Tarrow 1998, ch. 11; Tarrow 2005). By selecting cases from various geographic locations with distinct targets, our theoretical assertions about leadership will be more generalizable.

Before turning to these movements, we begin by discussing some analytic concepts—derived from the existing literature’s insights on leadership characteristics—that guide our examination. Then, after brief descriptions of the four cases, we use the foregoing comparative methodologies to make “probability probes” (Eckstein 1975) aimed at establishing that our hypotheses have a valid empirical basis. While this method cannot “prove” the hypotheses, it is particularly useful in advancing a research area that is rife with causal factors but is relatively undeveloped in terms of explaining the scope conditions under which these factors matter (Van Evera 1997; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994).

### **“LEADERSHIP CAPITAL”: A SYNTHETIC APPROACH TO THE LITERATURE**

The early literature on movement leadership offers descriptive categorizations based on Weber’s forms of authority. Weber (196) asserted that leaders derive legitimacy through tradition, personal charisma, or a position within a bureaucratic structure. Several studies suggest that movement leaders primarily draw from the latter sources of power, falling into two general categories: (1) charismatic individuals who articulate the vision and beliefs of the movement, inspiring others to join; or (2) task-oriented administrators who work out the practical details and implement plans to achieve these goals. Thus Roche and Sachs (1969) described movement leaders as enthusiasts or bureaucrats, while Wilson (1973) used the terms ideological and pragmatic leaders, and Turner and Killian (1987) wrote about symbolic versus decision-making leaders. Smelser (1962) distinguished those responsible for developing group beliefs from those concerned with the mechanisms of mobilization. In most cases, different individuals fill these roles since it is rare to find all these skills and abilities in one person (Zurcher and Curtis 1973).

Some scholars also focused on the leadership changes that occur during a movement’s life span. Blumer (1969) posited that leaders must shift roles, acting as prophets during the first stages of protest, then as official representatives during the formalization of the movement, and finally as administrators as institutionalization occurs. Rothman (1974) argued that different types of leaders may become prominent at various phases of protest. For instance, militant leaders will be dominant during initial protests while accommodationist leaders come to the forefront as the movement negotiates with its opponents. Finally, Michels (1959) addressed the leadership problems that arise after movements obtain their goals, noting that leaders often become oligarchs whose primary concern is maintaining their own personal power.

These classic studies provide an overview of leadership types and trajectories, but they do not tell us much about the factors that make people compelling and capable organizers. We believe that much of the literature shows, whether implicitly or explicitly, that leadership is shaped by several forms of “capital.” As Bourdieu (1991) posits, individuals possess varying amounts of economic capital (material wealth), symbolic capital (prestige, honor, and social distinction), and cultural capital (knowledge, skills, technical and educational qualifications), all of which profoundly affect their lives and life chances. We use Bourdieu’s idea as a basis for integrating the social movement literature’s diverse views about leadership characteristics. In our view, those who lead movements are likely to possess significant amounts of “leadership capital,” a broad term that has cultural, social, and symbolic aspects. While leaders may also be wealthy, our cases suggest that leadership capital may overcome a *lack* of simple economic capital.

With regard to the cultural arena, leaders need knowledge of local idioms, values, and practices to connect with a mass base (Barker, Johnson, and Lavalette 2001; Veltmeyer and Petras 2002). In large-scale movements, of course, leaders cannot know everything about a particular community’s grievances. Nonetheless, to galvanize aggrieved populations, leaders need deep understanding of their community’s circumstances and experiences, a factor which we call “localized cultural capital.” In addition, leaders need “universalistic cultural capital”—knowledge of the values, sympathies, cultural principles and political trends within the broader public they seek to engage. Moreover, they need media skills, persuasive rhetorical abilities and strategic savvy to identify opportunities and overcome obstacles in the political arenas where they operate. Finally, leaders need “transcultural skills,” the ability to operate effectively in multiple milieus among widely differing audiences. For those heading transnational movements, this may mean language abilities both in the movement constituency’s native tongue and in a world language accessible to outside supporters. More generally, transcultural skills refer to a leader’s ability to convey unfamiliar issues to distant audiences in terms that are comprehensible, sympathetic, and motivating. These skills are most effective if they work in two directions, not only informing conscience constituents of local grievances but also enlightening movement constituents about outside backers. The latter multiplies the effects of third party support, strengthening the resolve of constituents who might otherwise be unaware that their movement has won allies. Individuals who possess these skills are relatively rare and typically are distinguished by their extensive experience in both the “worlds” they bridge (Bob 2005; Ganz 2000).

Another factor shaping movement leadership is social capital, “social networks and . . . norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam 2001: 19). Two types may be identified. First, frequent face-to-face interactions, a history of personal or social relations, common meeting places, and points of reference—all create “strong ties” that make it easier for a group to mobilize and minimize free riding (Olson 1965; Lichbach 1998; Ganz 2000). Of course, there is a limit to the number of strong ties that any one leader can have and this concept may be most applicable in cases of relatively small movements. In larger movements, what may be most important is the leader’s ties to sub-leaders or third parties who themselves have strong ties to lower-level constituencies. A second form of social capital, suggested by Granovetter’s concept of “weak ties” (1973), is also important to leadership. Weak ties reflect more distant connections to broader networks (Diani and McAdam 2003). Access to the media, internet websites, and other communication methods constitute another version of weak tie social capital. These networks are critical because they can create or solidify bonds with a far larger audience than direct social interactions could reach. As such, they help leaders disseminate information, recruit followers, and appeal for support.

Symbolic capital—referring to prestige, honor, and social recognition—constitutes another valuable leadership asset. This type of capital can be derived from various sources. In the American civil rights movement, for instance, ministers’ occupational status granted them substantial moral authority and honor and thus their directives carried considerable weight

(Robnett 1997). Symbolic capital may also emerge from biographical experiences or unique personal traits. For example, South Africa's Nelson Mandela and Burma's Aung Saan Suu Kyi gained symbolic capital when they were incarcerated as political prisoners. Despite harsh repression, these leaders continued to embody the ideals for which they struggled, encouraging others to remain faithful to a difficult and dangerous cause. Individuals with this type of status and respect readily command a following. In its most intense form, symbolic capital can transform leaders into charismatic figures capable of firing constituents with the fervor and discipline necessary to hazard time, liberty, and even life against powerful, sometimes ruthless foes. Like other aspects of leadership, charisma is a relational concept, nurtured and augmented from the trust that adherents lodge in their leaders (Madsen and Snow 1991). Indeed, without followers' recognition of their leader's special "gift," charisma does not exist (Weber 1946). Whether in charismatic or lesser form, symbolic capital is useful not only in building a constituency but also in establishing a wellspring of trust leaders may tap in reshaping a movement, negotiating with hated enemies, compromising on maximalist goals, and explaining such imperatives to committed activists (Bailey 1988).

To summarize, we believe that effective movement leaders typically possess: (1) cultural capital in the form of knowledge, skills and abilities that are useful both in the aggrieved community and among external audiences; (2) social capital embodied in strong ties to activist communities and weak ties to broader mobilizing networks; and (3) symbolic capital, including charisma, that reflects respect, social prestige, and moral authority. We make no claim that all leaders must possess all of these characteristics. Nor do we argue that these traits are exclusively those of individuals who are seen as leaders. Given leadership's relational quality, there is no doubt that many of these characteristics "arise" through interaction with a movement's mass base, third parties, and the media. Nonetheless, we believe the concept of "leadership capital" is analytically useful as we explore the dynamics of social movement development. In the rest of this article, we examine the circumstances under which these forms of "leadership capital" affect three critical and recurrent processes.

## THE EMPIRICAL CASES

### *El Salvador's Liberation Movement*

As in other Central American nations, El Salvador's colonial history created a twentieth century legacy of extreme inequality, with a small elite owning most of the land and controlling the country's political institutions. In response to this concentration of power and wealth, numerous popular organizations emerged in the 1970s, demanding social change. This "liberation movement" received significant support from a segment of the Salvadoran Catholic church. As a result of the Vatican II Council (1962-65), the Salvadoran church had begun experimenting with new forms of worship and forming base Christian communities—small groups of lay people who meet regularly to read the Bible, pray, and discuss the social implications of their faith (Berryman 1987). Numerous priests and nuns also espoused a theology of liberation that called all Christians to side with the poor for land reform, fair labor practices, and democratization (Smith 1991). In response, Salvadoran elites used repression and human rights abuses as a means of social control. State-sponsored violence—including kidnapping, torture, and assassination—intensified during the late 1970s when the army killed between 500-800 civilians each month (Nepstad 2004a). Many of these repressive tactics were directed at members of the popular church, since they were perceived as responsible for empowering the poor (Peterson 1997; Prendes 1983). One of the most notorious state-sponsored acts of violence was the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Although Romero was careful not to affiliate himself with any particular political organization, he was the sym-

bolic head and prophetic voice of the liberation struggle. An eloquent and outspoken advocate for the oppressed, the archbishop courageously challenged the armed forces and the wealthy elites while inspiring greater acts of resistance among the poor. Ultimately, the military decided that his influence was too strong and had him assassinated while celebrating Mass. Although designed to stop this uprising of the masses, Romero's murder instead inflamed and expanded it (Nepstad 2001; Smith 1996).

#### *Ethnic Minority Movements in Nigeria's Niger River Delta*

Nigeria's Niger River delta, home to dozens of minority ethnic groups within a country dominated by three much larger groups, has for decades experienced unrest involving a wide variety of contentious politics. Much of the conflict is rooted in long standing, ethnically based grievances over inadequate representation in the Nigerian political system and extreme poverty among the region's indigenous minorities. Even before the country's independence in 1960, many of these ethnic groups formed movements, lobbying organizations, and political parties aimed at alleviating their problems, but with little success. Beginning in 1990, however, one minority, the Ogoni people, began to mobilize both domestic constituents and third-party supporters in distant countries and formed the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, or MOSOP (MSOP 1993; 1992). The Ogoni, roughly 300,000-500,000 people in a country of over 100 million, were by no means the largest, most powerful, or most unified of the Delta's ethnic groups. Indeed, the group itself was loosely formed of six linguistically distinct "kingdoms" (Saro-Wiwa 1995; Saro-Wiwa 1993). Despite these apparent disadvantages, MOSOP galvanized tens of thousands of Ogoni for peaceful mass mobilizations over several years—some of the largest protest actions seen to date in this part of Nigeria. Just as impressively, this small and previously unknown ethnic group became an international *cause célèbre* during the mid-1990s, though not without great difficulty.

A major reason that the Ogoni, and not the other similarly aggrieved Niger Delta ethnic groups mobilized effectively was the leadership of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Author, businessman, and television producer, Saro-Wiwa conceived the idea of MOSOP, forged ties between rival factions within the Ogoni community, mobilized both elite and mass support, and wrote key documents including the group's manifesto, the *Ogoni Bill of Rights*. Acting with a few trusted confidantes, he initiated and planned MOSOP's most important mobilizations including the pivotal Ogoni Day March in January 1993. He was also critical both to planning and implementing MOSOP's turn to the international community and its reframing of the Ogoni cause to interest distant audiences (Bob 2002b).

#### *The U.S. and Overseas Plowshares Movement*

The leaders of the Plowshares movement, Phil and Dan Berrigan, gained international attention in 1968 when they instigated a new form of resistance to the Vietnam War. As Roman Catholic priests, they led raids on two draft board offices in Maryland, destroying conscription files by dousing them with blood and burning them with homemade napalm. After serving prison time for these actions, the Berrigans made headlines again in 1980 when they and six others invaded a General Electric (GE) plant outside of Philadelphia where Mark 12-A nuclear missiles were being assembled. Evading security checkpoints, the group hammered on the missiles, poured blood on security documents, and shredded blueprints, enacting the vision of the prophet Isaiah, who spoke of a day when "nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks." (Isaiah 4:2). They were eventually convicted of burglary, conspiracy, and criminal mischief and given sentences that ranged from five to ten years (Berrigan 1996; Laffin and Montgomery 1987).

Despite these long sentences, others soon followed the Berrigans' example. To date, nearly 80 Plowshares actions have occurred. Additionally, the movement spread to Great

Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the Irish Republic, and Australia. Although the British Plowshares movement has successfully established itself, these other international spin-off groups have not fared as well. Some, like those in Germany, the Netherlands, and Australia, have never managed to mobilize more than a handful of people who sporadically carried out actions. And the Swedish Plowshares group struggled for years before their movement ultimately collapsed. Although several factors explain these divergent trajectories, one key component is leadership (Nepstad 2006).

### *Revolutionary Peasant Movements in Southern Mexico*

Southern Mexico has long been one of the country's poorest regions, with large populations of peasants and Indians in rural areas standing at the bottom of a rigid and repressive social hierarchy. For decades, the region has been a hotbed of activism including peasant unions, indigenous movements, and at times guerrilla insurgencies all fueled by the dire economic and political conditions. In the 1990s, two new movements arose. On January 1, 1994, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) burst on the Mexican political scene, seizing the major city of San Cristóbal and several smaller towns in the state of Chiapas. Demanding democracy, work, food, health care, and a panoply of other goals, the 2,000-3,000 Zapatista fighters vowed to march on Mexico City. Although forced to retreat within days, the Zapatistas nevertheless won tremendous domestic and international support, compelling the Mexican government to open high-level negotiations. While the Zapatistas' core demand, enhanced rights for the country's 10 million Indians, remains unmet, the Zapatistas have continued to mobilize in their home territory, in other parts of Mexico including the capital, and internationally, with their supporters using the internet to organize and communicate (Bob 2000; Olesen 2004). By contrast, the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), another peasant guerrilla movement in nearby Guerrero state, failed in parallel efforts to mobilize a mass base and foreign support. While initially seeking goals similar to the Zapatistas' and using peaceful means at the outset of their movement, EPR leaders never galvanized more than a few hundred people. In addition, the EPR's later turn to violent attacks on government installations also failed to attract the support of international audiences.

A variety of factors contributed to these contrasting outcomes, but leadership played a key role. Central to the Zapatista movement is their non-Indian leader Marcos, who entered the Lacandón jungle only in the early 1980s. While maintaining that he is merely a "sub-comandante" beholden to a shadowy group of indigenous leaders, Marcos is much more. A former university communications professor, he is the primary military, media, and movement strategist and negotiator with the government. His prolific writings and larger persona have inspired a wide international following, one that Marcos and the Zapatistas have cultivated for the benefit of the movement. By contrast, for a variety of reasons, the EPR leadership, also largely urban-based and initially unfamiliar with the realities of peasant life in Guerrero, failed both to mobilize local populations and to galvanize third parties into support.

## **LEADERSHIP AND THE DYNAMICS OF PROTEST**

Although these four movements had distinct goals, tactics, and targets, all of their leaders had major impacts on the movements and achieved a significant degree of recognition both internally and externally. This enables us to make exploratory probes, to assess how and why the various forms of leadership capital affected the dynamics of mobilization, third-party activation, and repression.

*Initial Mobilization*

Regarding movement emergence, the political process model has emphasized the importance of three factors: historical change that establishes political opportunities; preexisting (“indigenous”) organizations that facilitate mobilization because they provide ready-made human and material resources; and “cognitive liberation” among the aggrieved, which can move them from apathy to action through newfound belief that an unjust situation must and can be changed (McAdam 1982). With regard to the latter factor, long-term structural changes as well as more immediate political opportunities certainly affect the perceptions of aggrieved groups. But structural theorists have long overlooked another element, the role of leaders who persuade indigenous organizations and their members to lend support at moments that may at first appear opportune only to the leader. In this process, leaders “read” and respond to structural conditions and momentary opportunities, including the readiness of the mass base. But they also exercise independent judgment, decision making, and activism aimed at instigating this critical shift in consciousness among the oppressed. Even scholars working from a cultural perspective have tended to ignore the elements that make leaders effective at these critical tasks. In examining our cases, we assert the following. *Hypothesis 1: Leaders will be more likely to successfully mobilize pre-existing organizations at opportune political moments if they possess symbolic capital, localized cultural capital, and strong-tie and weak-tie versions of social capital.*

The varying levels of successful mobilization in the U.S. and international Plowshares movements illustrate this hypothesis. When the movement first emerged in the United States, it stirred significant controversy—especially among American Catholics. The tactical choice of property destruction forced Phil and Dan Berrigan to justify their actions. To persuade their fellow Catholics, they articulated a theology of resistance that provided religious legitimation to the movement. In other words, they drew upon their localized cultural capital to frame this radical brand of activism as part of the Biblical tradition. Specifically, they argued that nuclear weapons had become “gods of metal” in which the American population placed their faith. The Berrigans and their supporters argue that the Bible gives examples of how the faithful should respond to such idolatry. One activist commented, “There are examples in the Bible of people turning over idols. . . . One example is when the Israelites made a golden calf and Moses came and destroyed it, turned it into fine flakes. . . . Most Christians today don’t think that what Moses did was a terrible deed. It’s the same idea” (Boertje-Obed 2000). Additionally, the Berrigans framed their actions as consistent with the provocative and confrontational example that Christ set when he entered the temple in Jerusalem, overturned the tables of the moneylenders, and disrupted business as usual (Nepstad 2004c).

Although leaders need localized cultural capital to develop these types of resonant frames, their ability to draw people into action is partly conditioned by the type of social capital the organizers possess—that is, the mobilizing networks to which they have access. Phil and Dan Berrigan’s connections to Catholic institutions proved invaluable, as these weak ties helped disseminate their views to an extended audience. While awaiting their trials and after their release from prison, both men activated their weak ties, gaining invitations to speak at Catholic colleges, local parishes, and religious organizations in the U.S. and abroad. In addition, articles about the Berrigans appeared in widely distributed Catholic periodicals such as *National Catholic Reporter*, *Commonweal*, the Jesuit magazine *America*, and *Catholic Worker* newsletter. In fact, the founders of the British, Dutch, Irish, and Australian Plowshares movements all heard about the Berrigans through such reports (Nepstad 2006).

While these weak ties were critical in spreading word of the movement’s goals and actions, it is the strong tie version of social capital that draws potential recruits into participation. These strong ties are found in Catholic Left communities such as Catholic Worker houses and Jonah House, where Phil Berrigan lived for nearly thirty years. In fact, a significant proportion of Plowshares activists indicate that they decided to participate in the move-

ment after spending time with the Berrigans in these communities or during the “Faith and Resistance” retreats that gather Catholic-Left activists together several times a year. Through these face-to-face encounters, bonds of solidarity and trust were forged and recruits began to feel a moral obligation to act on their convictions. Furthermore, these networks provided emotional and material support to help recruits carry out these high-risk actions (Nepstad 2004b).

Additionally, Phil and Dan Berrigan’s ability to recruit was strengthened by the significant symbolic capital they possessed. This was derived from multiple sources. Much of it came from their extensive history of activism, including participation in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements. By the time the first Plowshares action occurred at General Electric, they were seasoned resisters with nearly twenty years of experience. More significant was the distinction they acquired from long prison sentences. Just as Nelson Mandela and Vaclav Havel’s reputes increased from years of incarceration, the Berrigans also gained honor in the eyes of their supporters as they suffered for their cause. When the costs of activism are high, those who are willing to endure, without flinching or being deterred, develop symbolic capital. This same type of admiration is evident in a letter that one Plowshares activist wrote to Phil Berrigan: “You’re probably a little sick of people writing and telling how wonderful you are and how your witness is so inspiring. So I won’t go on about that (although of course you are and it is—there, I sneaked it in!)” (Cole 1998). Finally, another aspect of the Berrigan’s symbolic capital arose from their status as priests. They were perceived as legitimate moral authorities, especially by the many Catholic participants in the movement, enhancing their ability to command a following.

Hypothesis 1 is further supported when we compare the development of the Plowshares movement in Sweden, which was only able to mobilize to a limited extent. The Swedish movement was instigated by Per Hengren, who had participated in a 1984 Plowshares action in the U.S., and Stellan Vinthagen who was involved in a 1986 action in West Germany. After serving time in prison and returning home, the two men began the process of mobilizing a Plowshares movement in Sweden. Similar to the Berrigans, Hengren and Vinthagen’s leadership was strengthened by their weak-tie social capital, as they recruited people through their links to pre-existing groups such as the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, a national women’s peace organization, and peace camps. They also had strong-tie capital that developed through extensive personal interactions that occurred at weekend retreats that many Swedish activists attended. Moreover, the two men had localized cultural capital, which made them keenly aware of the need to alter the strongly Catholic practices of the U.S. Plowshares movement to better match Sweden’s more secular context. For example, while they emulated the practices of their American counterparts—including the weekend gatherings known in the U.S. as Faith and Resistance retreats—they also made changes to help draw in more recruits. According to Vinthagen,

One of the things we came to quickly was that *faith* and resistance is not our base. Some people were Gandhians or pagans and some were Christians, or like myself. . . some were atheists or at least agnostics. So we felt that [calling it] *hope* and resistance was more appropriate. (Author interview with Stellan Vinthagen 2003)

To further adapt their movement to the local context and the culture of the recruits, the leaders also dropped many of the religious practices of the U.S. movement and instead adopted feminist decision-making processes and group interaction guidelines (Nepstad 2006).

Despite the fact that Swedish leaders were operating in an environment with greater political openness and less repression, their nascent Plowshares movement quickly began to flounder. This was due to several factors—namely, a more contentious and heterogeneous group of activists as well as an unstable movement infrastructure (Nepstad 2006). Some leaders might have been able to successfully resolve these issues but Hengren and Vinthagen

failed to do so, even though both possessed significant social and cultural capital. What they lacked was symbolic capital and thus many new recruits did not defer to them. Unlike Phil and Dan Berrigan, who were seen as wise guides and venerated mentors to less experienced activists, the Swedish leaders did not have social distinction or prestige in the eyes of other activists. Although each man had participated in a Plowshares action, their level of experience and the sanctions they suffered were not comparable to the Berrigans. While Phil Berrigan spent roughly thirteen years behind bars, Hengren spent only thirteen months in a U.S. prison before being deported. Vinthagen served only two months for his participation in a German action. Additionally, their occupational status did not grant them greater moral authority than other Swedish activists. While the strong Catholic identity in the U.S. movement means that activists respect the ecclesiastic vocation and prophetic role of the Berrigans, the feminist-anarchist identity of many Swedish activists led them to question these male leaders. In a author interview, Vinthagen confirmed, “We didn’t have any kind of real profession. . . . We were in the beginning just students and we are men. That didn’t really work when you are meeting up with young anarchists (Vinthagen 2003).” Although the leaders’ lack of symbolic capital was not the only factor that undermined the Swedish movement, it contributed to the group’s demise since no one had the authority or influence to resolve the movement’s internal problems.

The Australian branch of the international Plowshares movement offers additional support for hypothesis 1 since it never mobilized more than a handful of people. This was partly due to the fact that Australian organizers, such as Ciaron O’Reilly, had insufficient symbolic capital and localized cultural capital. O’Reilly was strongly influenced by the American Plowshares movement. As a committed Catholic, he tried using the Berrigans’ collective action frames to mobilize various religious organizations in Australia. He failed, however, because his lack of localized cultural capital meant that he was unaware that such frames would not resonate with the much more moderate type of Catholicism that existed in his country. When he tried to persuade progressive political organizations to lend support, he did not immediately recognize that their values and beliefs were too discordant with the religious nature of the Plowshares movement. Even though he had both strong ties and weak ties to various groups, O’Reilly was insufficiently attuned to the values and cultural principles of the groups he sought to mobilize. Consequently, his attempt to launch an Australian Plowshares movement was largely unsuccessful. O’Reilly reflected:

There was nothing really in Australia. . . . There’s not a radical tradition [that this resonated with]. . . . America is the only part of the First World that is at all church-going. . . . And the Left isn’t as hostile to faith-based activists, whereas in Australia, a lot of the Left are angry at Catholics. So if you get up and say you’re Catholic, you’re too hip for the straight, too straight for the hips, too Christian for the anarchists, too anarchist for the Christians. (Author interview with Ciaron O’Reilly 2003)

Our two Mexican cases offer further support for the hypothesis that localized cultural capital helps leaders mobilize aggrieved populations. In both cases, leaders heading parallel organizations with broadly similar goals operated almost simultaneously in neighboring regions of the same country. In both cases as well, the leaders were initially “outsiders,” revolutionary activists from urban Mexico. Yet only the Zapatistas succeeded in mobilizing a broad constituency—although it took many years. The EZLN began operations in the 1970s as the armed wing of the Forces of National Liberation (FLN), a clandestine revolutionary movement formed in 1969 and inspired by Mao Tse Tung, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, and Fidel Castro. Seeking violent overthrow of the capitalist system, the FLN’s primary activity in the 1970s and 1980s involved secret organizing in major Mexican cities (Womack 1999: 35-36). In 1983, the FLN decided to supplement its urban revolutionary strategy by detailing a handful of EZLN commanders to Chiapas’s Lacandón forest. Lacking ties to the community and unfamiliar with the cultural, social, and economic realities of rural life among the indig-

enous groups in the Lacandón, the EZLN's goals, tactics, and ideology initially fell flat among existing peasant and indigenous organizations. In despair at mobilizing this population, some of the EZLN commanders returned to Mexico City. Marcos and a handful of others, however, remained in the jungle for over a decade during which the EZLN's ideology, goals, and strategies gradually shifted. Finding their original class-based worldview unsuited to the region's Indian populations, they spent years learning about local needs, indigenous culture, and ethnically based discrimination. Marcos has documented this lengthy process in a series of writings about his informal training in indigenous ways by an Indian elder, "old Antonio." With the collapse of Europe's communist regimes, the group had further reason to seek new ideas.

By the early 1990s, the EZLN had developed a broad and loose ideology mixing its socialist roots with community concerns and indigenous customs. Marcos became the primary exponent of these views both within the core of remaining FLN activists and among the indigenous populations he eventually attracted. These shifts, which at Marcos's insistence, led the EZLN to break from the FLN in late 1993, also manifested themselves in organizational changes. Most notably, leaders of the diverse Indian groups that had entered the Zapatista fold, among them Chol, Tzotzil, Tzetzal, and Tojolabal communities, formed the Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee—General Command (CCRI-CG), the EZLN's top decision-making organ. Subcomandante Marcos claims to take orders from this command, although his role appears far more central. With Chiapas's charged atmosphere and acute poverty, EZLN numbers slowly grew in the early 1990s, the movement's advocacy of force both to protect constituents from local landowners and to bring broad social change attracting thousands in the Lacandón.

Mobilization of the EZLN's mass base for its high risk 1994 attacks clearly had several "structural" sources, including the ongoing local and national threats affecting indigenous communities, the political opportunity presented by NAFTA's well-publicized 1994 implementation, and the ethnically based organizations already existing among the Lacandón's Indian populations. In addition, however, Marcos's accumulation of localized cultural capital through prolonged and intense interactions with the community played a critical role. Despite his initial status as an outsider (in his own view, a bumbling and ignorant outsider), this capital helped him to motivate both the leaders of pre-existing organizations and their peasant and indigenous constituents.

The EPR's failure to mobilize a large mass base in nearby Guerrero has multiple causes, including the group's more vanguardist ideology and strategy. Nevertheless, based on its early documents and press interviews, it seems clear that the EPR initially sought mass support (EPR 1996; Correa and López 1996). One important factor preventing this plan from succeeding was the leadership's failure to develop localized cultural capital. The EPR first made itself known at a march commemorating the 1995 massacre of seventeen peasants by local power-holders. More typically, however, the urban-based EPR leaders appeared blind to the need to adjust their deep-rooted Marxist ideology to mobilize a constituency in rural Guerrero in the post-Cold War era. Less adaptable than Marcos, the EPR leadership long persisted in its calls for class-based revolution, its flaunting of Marxist terminology, and its use of violence—despite repeated failures to attract more than a few hundred members willing to act for the movement. In short, EPR leaders never developed the localized cultural capital so important to Marcos's success in galvanizing peasant and indigenous populations in Chiapas.

### *Third-Party Support*

In addition to activating an aggrieved population, successful movements typically gain the backing of powerful third parties who provide resources for continuing mobilization, exert additional pressure on movement opponents, and thereby improve a movement's chances for

success. Yet in both resource mobilization and political process approaches to social movement analysis, there has been little systematic analysis of movement leaders' critical role in attracting outside support. In the following section, we focus particularly on leaders' pursuit of transnational third-party backing. To gain it, leaders must be knowledgeable about the interests, norms, and trends of other groups—and especially today, of the international NGO community. More important, they must be flexible enough to adapt themselves to the preferences and predilections of powerful potential supporters in cultural settings very different from their own. This leads to hypothesis 2a: *Leaders will be more likely to attract third-party support if they possess social and cultural capital permitting them to “read” their political environment and adapt, where necessary, to the preferences and predilections of potential supporters.* As a related point, a leader who comes to symbolize not only a movement but also broader social currents, concepts, or ideas important in the contemporary political environment can become a lightning rod for external assistance. Thus we propose hypothesis 2b: *Leaders will be more likely to attract third-party support if they possess symbolic capital.* While it is sometimes difficult to identify how this symbolic capital arises in a particular person, a relational process is clearly at work. A leader's acts, ideas, or persona may form the basis for symbolic capital, but only with their *recognition* by third parties can it grow. Once established, such capital can create a self-reinforcing basis for outside support.

With respect to hypothesis 2b, Marcos has played a key role in reshaping the movement for distant audiences. Marcos's urban, middle-class, Ladino origins gave him the cultural capital to succeed at this. Yet the EPR, which also had articulate ladino leaders, failed to electrify domestic or foreign audiences. What explains these different outcomes? Within days after the New Year's Day attacks, Marcos and the Zapatista rebels began changing their tactics, goals, and rhetoric to meet the interests and concerns of distant audiences. With respect to tactics, under pressure from Mexican and international civil society, they ceased the military operations that they had long planned and that had brought them to immediate world attention on January 1. While this choice hinged in part on the Zapatistas' meager weaponry, there is little question that they could have turned themselves into a guerrilla movement. Marcos, their chief military strategist, chose not to do this, responding to the many voices in Mexican and international civil society urging peaceful negotiation. Referring to the period shortly after the revolt, Marcos stated,

We became aware that the whole plan we'd developed was no longer possible. We encountered this other force that had appeared—the people, not the government—that was asking us to talk. . . . This completely broke our plans and ended by defining Zapatismo, neo-Zapatismo. (Le Bot 1996: 209-210)

Neo-Zapatismo eschewed further offensive use of arms (although the Zapatista leaders continued to carry weapons for symbolic and occasional defensive purposes). More importantly in showing the role of Marcos's cultural capital in this transformation, neo-Zapatismo also exalted “civil society” as a counter to state and corporate power—and as a crucible for transformation of Mexican and global politics. At the start of the revolt, the Zapatistas had seen themselves as directing revolutionary change in Mexico. However, they rapidly downplayed their independent role, as epitomized by the slogan they quickly adopted, *mandar obedeciendo* (“leading by obeying” civil society). Such a dramatic change in tactics was only plausible because of Marcos's knowledge of civil society theory and his ability to apply it to the Zapatistas' role in Mexico. As early as May 1994, for instance, Marcos articulated the civil society approach as follows: “If there is a neoliberal proposal for the country, we shouldn't try to eliminate it, but confront it. . . . We are talking about a democratic space where the political parties, or groups that aren't parties, can air and discuss their social proposals” (Aguilera et al. 1994). While the Lacandón's Indian communities may long have exemplified some of civil society's virtues, few among the indigenous would have been able to articulate

these for international audiences. Rather, it was primarily Marcos, with his ability to understand the interests and needs of key audiences, who helped the Zapatistas catch (and boost) the civil society “wave.”

A second area of adaptability hinging on Marcos social and cultural capital is also worth noting. Through Marcos’s interaction with domestic and foreign supporters, the Zapatistas shifted their goals. At the start of the rebellion, the group issued a set of “revolutionary laws” similar to those of other socialist-inspired revolutionary movements from recent Latin American history (EZLN 1994). These included laws on radical land reform, nationalization of private property, restrictions on trade and exports—but nothing on indigenous rights. Nor did the Zapatistas’ widely disseminated Declaration of War include any mention of indigenous peoples. As Marcos has stated, the Zapatistas initially downplayed their indigenous characteristics to broaden their domestic and international appeal:

The danger that the comrades saw was that we would be perceived as an indigenous war, when . . . it had to be resolved at the national level. . . . They said, “If you go too much toward the indigenous, it would isolate us. You have to open us up.” If you grasp the indigenous, grasp the universal too. Include everyone. (Le Bot 1996: 176-177)

Yet within months, Indian rights became the group’s central demand, and class-based concerns receded. This rapid change (or reversion) responded to national and international fascination with the indigenous aspects of the movement.

Similarly, the Zapatistas’ anti-globalization, anti-NAFTA, and anti-neoliberal stances, so prominent in the late 1990s, came late to the movement, and stemmed in part from the group’s openness to the international *Zeitgeist*. Although the Zapatistas’ uprising occurred on NAFTA’s implementation date, their primary reasons were military strategy (taking advantage of the expected drunkenness of police and soldiers on New Year’s Eve 1993) and publicity. They had no expectation of halting NAFTA and, although Marcos made a passing reference to NAFTA on January 1, this was only one of numerous statements he made that day. (If halting NAFTA had in fact been a central goal, attacking months earlier, on the day the treaty was signed, would have made more sense.) Yet again Marcos responded to media and civil society fascination with the NAFTA and anti-globalization themes—and, well-versed in these subjects, steered the Zapatistas in this direction. On this basis, the Zapatistas both pioneered and piggybacked on the emerging global justice/anti-globalization movement, organizing the large-scale International Encounter for Humanity and against Neo-Liberalism in the Lacandón jungle in 1996, an important model for today’s World Social Forums.

Marcos’s symbolic capital also played a major role in attracting third-party support. Generated in part by his courage in publicly leading a weak movement against a powerful state, in part by his powerful rhetoric and adept use of the media, and in part by the mystery surrounding his identity, Marcos’s persona became a central part of the Zapatista movement. Yet as Marcos himself has recognized, this symbolic capital was also conferred upon him by third parties themselves. As he has stated, the Marcos “image” fulfills his audience’s needs, their “romantic, idealistic expectations, namely the white man in the indigenous world, akin to references in the collective unconscious, Robin Hood” (Scherer García 2001). While the movement sometimes sought to reduce public fascination with Marcos and publicly abjured a cult of personality around him, it clearly saw value in the symbolic capital he had amassed. As Marcos has stated about his celebrity, “I don’t gain anything personally. It is the movement that benefits, because this way more people pay attention to the issue” (Benjamin 1995: 69).

By contrast, EPR leaders never won such symbolic capital and were deaf to the preferences of potential supporters—most likely because they lacked the universalistic cultural capital that Zapatista leaders had. In August 1996, the EPR attacked government installations in Guerrero and other states. When this provocation elicited army retaliation that threatened

civilian populations, the EPR could have held its fire. Despite the Zapatista precedent, however, the EPR continued sporadic assaults for years. More strikingly, the group began advertising its linkages to several violent 1970s guerrilla movements in Mexico. As a result, even in the face of major government onslaughts against rebel territories causing numerous casualties including many civilians, the EPR won little sympathy at home or abroad. Nor did the EPR leadership shift to a civil society strategy or adapt Zapatista-like goals. Demonstrating an obstinate allegiance to conventional Marxist ideology and a willful disregard of post-Cold War realities, the EPR leadership stayed true to its initial self-conception as a Leninist vanguard leading the masses in an old-style revolution. EPR leaders denounced Marcos as a mere “poet,” but they had little success attracting third party support. By contrast, the “poet’s” facility with the global vernacular, his self-deprecating humor, his easy allusions to international cultural symbols, and his prolific communiqués, fables, and appeals, caught the imagination of a significant worldwide audience. From the standpoint of our hypotheses, these contrasts suggest that the Zapatista leader possessed far more of the universalistic cultural capital and symbolic capital useful for motivating third parties in the late 1990s. While it is true that EPR leaders had significant education, their failure to alter conventional Marxist goals in the face of an unfriendly political environment suggests relative deficiency of such capital. Deeply imbued with Marxism but not with broad cultural capital, they were far less adept than the EZLN at reading the contemporary political scene or deploying appropriate cultural idioms. As a result, too, they failed to generate symbolic capital.

Turning to another of our focus movements, there is further confirmation of hypotheses 2a and 2b. Why did the Ogoni, but not other Niger Delta minorities (who had similar goals at the same time) become an international *cause célèbre* in the mid-1990s? Unlike the leaders of these other minority groups, Ken Saro-Wiwa, the leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), possessed a strong combination of cultural and social capital. Saro-Wiwa’s fluency in English, knowledge of the international cultural and political scene, and insights into the workings of the media contributed strongly to his access to international journalists. As he explained in 1995,

I realized quite early the value of publicity to the protest march, and, indeed to the entire Ogoni movement. I had . . . learnt quite a bit about how to promote an idea or a product during my television production days. . . . Now as I tried to promote Ogoni, all the foregoing came together and made my work not only easy but also inexpensive. (Saro-Wiwa 1995: 139-141)

In the early 1990s, he also won unusual access to major environmental and human rights NGOs. This stemmed in part from the foregoing cultural capital but also from strong-tie social capital unique to Saro-Wiwa. For much of the 1980s, Saro-Wiwa worked as a writer of fiction and nonfiction works, ultimately becoming president of the Association of Nigerian Authors. His prominence reached outside Nigeria as well, and he won several fellowships to study, lecture, and tour Europe, the U.S., and the Soviet Union for long periods of time in the late 1980s. During these trips, he developed a network of friendships and acquaintances with numerous academics, writers, and journalists worldwide. After he began promoting the Ogoni cause in the early 1990s, these contacts proved critical. For example, as early as 1991, Saro-Wiwa turned to his friend the well-known English novelist William Boyd for advice about transnational environmental and human rights NGOs that might help promote the Ogoni cause: “It was to William that I turned whenever I hit a brick wall in my solicitation on behalf of the Ogoni” (Saro-Wiwa 1995: 88). While other leaders of Niger Delta minority groups undoubtedly possessed some aspects of Saro-Wiwa’s cultural and social capital, no others were so richly endowed. Just as important, Saro-Wiwa drew on this capital extensively, devoting the last years of his life to the Ogoni cause in a way that no other Niger Delta minority leader did.

It is notable, however that although Saro-Wiwa’s social and cultural capital opened doors to potential supporters, it initially proved insufficient to solidify their support. As in the case

of Marcos, Saro-Wiwa only won backing after he translated and reframed MOSOP's cause for foreign audiences. When Saro-Wiwa first approached Greenpeace International, Friends of the Earth International, and other environmental NGOs in 1990-1991, his unfamiliarity with their particular interests and concerns led him to frame the Ogoni cause in terms similar to those long voiced at home: the Nigerian state's neglect of Ogoni ethnic rights, its failure to allocate sufficient oil revenues to the community, its employment of non-indigenes in the oil fields, and environmental concerns. In response, the two NGOs rejected his appeals, believing that the Ogoni's demands were too entangled with complex and poorly understood Nigerian social issues and insufficiently tied to the NGOs' core environmental concerns (Saro-Wiwa 1995; Bob 2005).

With these initial rejections in mind, Saro-Wiwa reframed the Ogoni cause to downplay his group's ethnopolitical demands and emphasize their environmental dimensions, in particular the group's exploitation by Royal Dutch Petroleum/Shell Oil. With this change in framing and with other actions Saro-Wiwa took to increase international media attention, the two environmental NGOs began supporting MOSOP about a year after their initial rejections (Bob 2002a). Other factors played a role as well (Bob 2005), but Saro-Wiwa's universalistic cultural capital—combined with his localized knowledge of both his own community and these international advocacy networks—enabled him to translate and transform the issues to win support from powerful outside entities. Saro-Wiwa was not happy about the need to reframe in this way, as it diverted MOSOP from its fundamental ethnic goals. As he railed in 1993, "The West worries about elephants. They stop the export of rhino horns and things like that. And then they cannot worry about human beings dying" (McGreal 1993). Nonetheless, Saro-Wiwa made this move, and his store of cultural capital facilitated his doing so.

In addition, there is support for hypothesis 2b in this case. The Ogoni won their broadest international support in the last years of Saro-Wiwa's life and after his killing. Saro-Wiwa's symbolic capital grew slowly as MOSOP first mobilized against a highly repressive state; it strengthened during the many months of his detention and kangaroo trial in 1994-95; and it mushroomed in the years immediately following his shocking and unjust execution. While generated in part by his courageous actions, this symbolic capital was also conferred by the reactions of others. In death, Saro-Wiwa became a martyr for the international environmental and anti-globalization movements, attracting unprecedented attention and support to the Ogoni conflict and the broader problems of the Niger Delta.

### *Repression*

Once protest groups emerge and gain some degree of support, opposing forces often try to stop them. Marx (1979) states that there are numerous techniques for undermining burgeoning movements: inhibiting the flow of resources to organizers, raising the costs of participation, sabotaging campaigns, tarnishing the movement's public image, generating internal conflict, and damaging morale. In these attempts at social control, governments and other movement opponents frequently target leaders. Yet, although repression often damages movements, it is also true that under certain conditions it can backfire (Francisco 2004). Sharp (1990) calls this dynamic "political jujitsu," noting that repression can sometimes turn the tables on a government, exposing its brutality and undermining its legitimacy while generating public sympathy for protestors. What are the circumstances in which social control of leaders strengthens rather than weakens a movement? *Hypothesis 3: Repression of leaders can strengthen a movement if leaders possess symbolic capital and have sufficient social capital that news of the repressive acts is readily disseminated.*

This idea of political jujitsu is evident in the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. As head of the Salvadoran church, Romero had moral clout, social status, and respect. During his three-year term as archbishop, his symbolic capital increased among the poor Salvadorans

as he spoke out on their behalf. For a period of time, his high profile provided a degree of protection, yet as his calls for change grew bolder, the military regime decided to permanently silence him. Romero's assassination was designed to stop the popular uprising in El Salvador, but it actually incited greater opposition. Furthermore, the murder moved audiences in the U.S., who began to question why their government was supporting a regime that committed such crimes. Ultimately, Romero's story was critical in mobilizing the U.S. solidarity movement that pressed for a change in American foreign policy toward the region (Nepstad 2001). Yet Romero was not the first religious figure killed in El Salvador. Several other priests had been assassinated and thousands of lay people killed by state-sponsored security forces (Montgomery 1982), but these murders did not evoke the same degree of outrage and resistance. This is primarily due to Romero's symbolic capital, which granted him high visibility and moral credibility. His social status was not only a reflection of his position as the head of the Salvadoran church but also the respect he gained by confronting a brutal dictatorship, motivated by nothing other than a commitment to the poor and oppressed. Also, Romero's social capital—rooted in the Catholic Church—meant that the story of his murder spread rapidly. Romero had ties to religious leaders and many foreign missionaries whom he invited to El Salvador to work with the popular church during this period of repression. Romero's strong ties to church workers, who had weak ties to religious organizations throughout the U.S., meant that the news of his assassination was quickly disseminated (Nepstad 2001; Smith 1996).

Repression directed against the Berrigan brothers also backfired. After their draft board raids during the Vietnam War era, both men were convicted of three felonies: interference with the Selective Service Act of 1967, destruction of Selective Service records, and destruction of government property. Since they were contesting the verdict, the two were released from prison, pending their appeal. When the time came to turn themselves into the authorities, they decided to go underground instead. Within a short period, Phil Berrigan was arrested. Dan Berrigan, however, made plans to surrender after appearing at an anti-war event at Cornell University, where he served as a chaplain. FBI agents were in the crowd, waiting for the moment to seize him. Yet much to Father Berrigan's surprise, he was whisked away after his speech, hidden under a giant puppet that had been used in a theatrical performance (Berrigan 1987). He then became a hero of the anti-Vietnam War movement, successfully outwitting and dodging the FBI for a few more months, making periodic public appearances to denounce the war before slipping underground again (Nepstad 2006).

Angered and humiliated by this, J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the FBI, tried to ensure that the Berrigan brothers would serve long sentences. He hoped that imprisonment would remove these leaders from the public eye, damage their credibility, and undercut their influence. Thus while the Berrigans served their prison terms, Hoover pressed additional charges against them and several others for conspiring to destroy the heating systems in government buildings and plotting to kidnap presidential advisor Henry Kissinger. Reporters revealed that there was no evidence to support the indictment except for a letter discussing the possibility of making a citizens' arrest of Kissinger for war crimes, along with the testimony of a paid informer who had a long criminal history (Polner and O'Grady 1997). When the jury acquitted the defendants of all charges, these repressive acts had the opposite effect of what Hoover intended. Instead of tarnishing the Berrigans' image, they undermined the FBI's credibility (Meconis 1979). This reversed outcome was partly due to the fact that the Berrigans possessed symbolic capital as clergy. Their appeals to end the Vietnam War had greater moral authority than the actions of leftist student groups, who could be more readily dismissed as young, rebellious idealists. Additionally, both Berrigans had social capital since they had ties to religious leaders as well as Catholic organizations, colleges, and periodicals. Repression, therefore, increased news coverage and interest in the Berrigans' cause.

The Ogoni case provides a contrast where repression did have its intended effect. Saro-Wiwa's detention, trial, and execution in the context of a broad policy of harsh repression

directed against the entire movement, led to MOSOP's decline (although not extinction) after 1995. From its inception in 1990, MOSOP had been a fragile umbrella organization spanning contending Ogoni elites. On one side were a group of "conservative" Ogoni chiefs, many long active in Nigeria's party politics. On the other side was a set of educated, mostly younger Ogoni frustrated by lack of economic opportunity and the group's continuing marginalization in Nigerian politics. Saro-Wiwa, as the best known Ogoni man in all of Nigeria, temporarily bridged those groups. But as the movement developed in 1993, the conservative faction bridled at Saro-Wiwa's escalation of protest activities against the Nigerian state and Shell. They grudgingly participated in the peaceful Ogoni Day march in January 1993. But in June, four of the conservative chiefs left the movement when Saro-Wiwa insisted on the Ogoni's boycotting the country's first national election in ten years because it presupposed the existing ethnic distribution of power (which marginalized small minorities like the Ogoni). Despite this schism and Saro-Wiwa's thirty-day detention in June and July, his support both among the Ogoni masses and overseas supporters increased at this time. On May 21, 1994, four Ogoni leaders opposed to MOSOP were murdered by a mob of militant Ogoni, perhaps egged on by government provocateurs. In response, the Rivers State Internal Security Task Forces arrested Saro-Wiwa and other MOSOP leaders, accusing them of inciting the murders.

Eighteen months later, the execution of Saro-Wiwa and eight other MOSOP leaders crippled the movement inside Nigeria—despite the fact that Saro-Wiwa had significant levels of symbolic capital and despite the fact that there was no lack of information about his trial and execution. There appear to be several reasons for this. First, his final detention, trial, and execution corresponded with a period in which Nigeria's military dictators also harshly repressed the demographically minute, geographically concentrated, and politically isolated Ogoni people. In 1994-1999, hundreds were killed in raids by army and paramilitary organizations, many others were jailed and tortured, and most of MOSOP's leadership fled, some to neighboring African countries, others to Europe and North America. Second, lines of leadership succession were unclear in the movement. Saro-Wiwa's designated second in command, Ledum Mitee, was detained and tried with him in 1994 and 1995, along with eight others, who together comprised much of MOSOP's leadership. Mitee escaped execution unexpectedly in November 1995, leading to suspicions among other Ogoni that he had cut a deal with the dictatorship (There appears to be no basis for these suspicions, and Mitee continued to be a strong advocate for Ogoni rights after his release, exile, and return to Nigeria after the Abacha regime ended.) During the time of the detentions, however, Saro-Wiwa's brother Owens Wiwa assumed a leadership role in MOSOP in Nigeria, while Saro-Wiwa's son Ken Wiwa helped lead the overseas effort to avert the executions. In the aftermath, MOSOP's top echelons (including Owens Wiwa and Ledum Mitee) were newly exiled to various countries around the world, and there were two possible lines of succession to Saro Wiwa. This suggests hypothesis 3a: *In a movement with a leader who has significant symbolic and social capital, that leader's death is likely to lead to movement factionalism and decline unless clear lines of succession are in place.*

The differing outcomes of repression in these cases also lead us to some additional hypotheses. For instance, it is important to recognize that these individuals held different leadership roles. Archbishop Romero was primarily a symbolic figure who played the prophetic role of denouncing injustices and speaking on behalf of the oppressed. Although he supported many of the goals of popular organizations and the revolutionary movements, he was careful to not have a direct affiliation with them. Therefore, when he was assassinated, the strategic guidance and administrative infrastructure for these groups was not decimated as it was in the Ogoni case. Consequently, we propose hypothesis 3b: *The assassination of leaders who primarily play a symbolic role will have a greater chance of increasing resistance, while the repression of administratively oriented leaders will have a greater chance of weakening a movement.*

Additionally, we believe that the degree of heterogeneity within a movement influences the effects of repression. Although all movements have some internal tensions over goals and strategies, the extent of these differences matter. A strong leader with a great deal of symbolic capital can keep intra-group disputes in check as recruits defer to his or her decisions out of respect, yet these tensions can rise to the surface and divide a movement once that leader is gone. This leads to hypothesis 3c: *The greater the diversity of opinions and goals within a movement, the greater the likelihood that the assassination of a leader will contribute to the movement's demise.* This can be seen in the Salvadoran liberation movement, where participants shared a fairly strong set of common goals and principles. Activists sought democracy, economic transformation, and an end to the military abuses in the region. These goals did not change after Romero was killed. Similarly, within the U.S. Catholic Left, activists are quite homogeneous in terms of their religious values, beliefs, and tactical choices (Nepstad 2004b). Removing their leaders through incarceration, therefore, did not lead to a crisis in direction. By contrast, the larger and more diverse Ogoni movement, one riven by internal conflicts from early in its history, was hurt severely by the loss of Saro-Wiwa.

## CONCLUSION

In this article, we have developed the concept of leadership capital based on a synthesis of the diverse literature on social movement leadership. In addition, we have proposed hypotheses regarding the conditions under which specific types of leadership capital are important to three key aspects of movement development. Our intent is not to provide a comprehensive overview of the numerous ways that leaders influence movement dynamics. Nor is it to claim that a focus on leadership should displace more structural analyses. Rather, by providing a conceptual framework of leadership and demonstrating its utility in generating plausible hypotheses, we hope to inspire others to test and explore these ideas more broadly—all in the context of existing theory.

Those theories, with their structural orientation, tend to avoid consideration of how individual leaders sometimes play key roles in movement development. In this view, leaders may appear to be epiphenomena of larger structures and forces, little more than surfers riding irrepressible social waves. As we try to show in this article, however, this analogy is incorrect. At crucial moments, individuals endowed with leadership capital can play key roles in animating those waves, augmenting their popular support, and changing their structure and direction. Of course, as we emphasized, leadership is relational and leaders do not succeed at this by themselves. They are helped and hindered, their stature and influence raised or lowered, through their interactions with followers, opponents and third parties. Nonetheless, we do argue that leaders sometimes play autonomous roles. Leadership capital can allow movements to compensate for a lack of traditional material resources (as in the Zapatista, Plowshares, and Salvadoran cases), for a dearth of political opportunities (as in the Ogoni case), and for a deficit in organizational structures (as in the U.S. Plowshares case). In studying movement development, scholars should attend to these possibilities, carefully examining how leaders exploit political opportunities, work with indigenous organizational structures, and frame movement activities. Of course conditions of extreme deprivation or repression place limits on all these possibilities. But, as we have shown, there is also broader scope for leadership capital than the literature typically assumes. If social movements sometimes make it possible for the weak to change social and political structures, leadership plays an important role in this. (It is also worth noting that leaders sometimes err. In advocating certain strategies, in urging mobilization at particular times, or in projecting particular frames, their decisions can have deleterious effects on movements.)

Notwithstanding these contributions to the study of movements, we recognize that we have left various questions about leadership's role unresolved. First, researchers might seek to

differentiate various types or roles of leaders. We hinted at such variations—and their possible impacts—in the last section’s distinction between symbolic and administrative leadership; other scholars have developed analogous categorizations (Aminzade, Perry, and Goldstone 2001). Future research might seek to sharpen these categories and identify others. More importantly, scholars should consider the varying effect of these leadership types or roles on the key issues of movement dynamics discussed here. In a related vein, analyzing power relations and role variations between a paramount leader and her entourage would greatly expand our knowledge of internal movement dynamics (Weber 1946; Bailey 1988).

A second important research topic would consider possible variations in leadership’s impacts depending on a movement’s cultural context. Because our cases come from a variety of world regions, there is strong reason to believe that leadership plays an important role in movement development across many cultures. Through comparative analysis, other researchers might seek to determine whether movement leadership looms significantly larger in some cultures than in others. Additionally, several related questions come to mind: Are there times in a movement’s development—or are there types of movements—in which leadership plays a particularly crucial role, no matter the cultural context? Does the importance of leadership vary with the type of opponent or opponent tactics that a movement faces? Do some cultures place greater importance on certain types of leadership capital than others? All of these topics merit further empirical investigation.

Finally, although we believe our identification of leadership capital represents an advance for the field, there is room for considering how it develops in particular individuals. As we have argued, such capital is clearly relational in origin: social, cultural, and symbolic capital all develop at least in part and sometimes to a significant degree through a leader’s ongoing interactions with followers, opponents, and bystanders. This question of origins has not been at the center of our inquiry, however, and precisely how leadership capital develops remains an important question. Clearly there is a need for further research on leadership. In this, we hope that the comparative approaches we used here will serve as models for other scholars. Such comparisons create a more systematic basis for drawing conclusions than is available through single case studies. For researchers seeking to understand the influence of leaders on movements, it is particularly helpful to choose a comparative method in which conditions and political opportunities are held relatively constant. Of course, social movement scholars do not work in laboratories and cannot therefore suppress all confounding variables. Nonetheless, there are a variety of research designs available that go far in controlling key variables, thereby allowing leadership characteristics to stand out. We used these methods to examine initial movement mobilization, galvanization of third-party support, and responses to repression, but others should test our hypotheses and identify additional ways that leaders shape strategies, outcomes, and movement culture.

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