

## Unintended Consequences of State-led Development

### *A Theory of Collective Opposition to Neoliberalism*

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**ABSTRACT** The mass mobilizations against neoliberal reforms are rooted in the weakening of the state-led development model and the erosion of social citizenship rights. At the same time, infrastructures created by the developmental state provide the organizational capacity to resist market-driven globalization. The study develops a conceptual framework for understanding the major arenas of state-led development in the twentieth century in relation to the infrastructures and organizations that mobilize social movement campaigns against neoliberalism in the twenty-first century. Special attention is given to public education, health care, public utilities, state subsidies, and transportation networks as laying the foundation for civil society's ability to collectively defend social protections granted in the preglobalization era in the global South.

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### INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary neoliberal period characterized by hyper-individualism, the intensification of the culture of consumerism, and the substantial downsizing of state commitments to social welfare, social movement activities based on social solidarity continue to be sustained around the globe. Given this unfavorable political and economic context, such upsurges in collective action would seem difficult to explain. Moreover, in the global South, after social conflict driven by religious/ethnic/sectarian cleavages and political repression, neoliberal economic development strategies draw some of the largest popular mobilizations. This article develops a conceptual framework for explaining the variation in scale and location of collective action campaigns resisting neoliberalism in the global South in the twenty-first century.<sup>1</sup> The theoretical perspective is based on a historically rooted understanding of the contributions of the prior period of state-led development in shaping collective mobilization.

The period of state-led development from the 1930s to the 1980s is unprecedented in world history for the rapid rates of infrastructural development that occurred in the developing world. This newly formed state infrastructure would provide the organizational bases for the collective opposition to neoliberalism in the following decades. More specifically, I formulate a theoretical perspective that contends that the state expansion of health/medical care, mass schooling, transportation, and economic activities in the mid-twentieth century has conditioned the level of resistance to new forms of economic liberalization in

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the twenty-first century. Even though these state-development institutions were not established to promote mass mobilization, one of their unintended consequences has been to serve as a major repository for opposition to collective action in the neoliberal period.

#### **DEFINING NEOLIBERALISM AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

Neoliberalism is both an ideology and a set of economic development practices whereby state intervention in the economy is scaled back to basic functions of social order, governance, defense, the protection of property rights, and the attraction of private investments (Bockman 2011). Under neoliberal development, economic activities are relatively less regulated, and production and service operations tend to be coordinated by market mechanisms with fewer state controls, including basic infrastructure needs of water, electricity, ports, and railroads.

Since the 1980s, neoliberal strategies of economic development have predominated in the global South, replacing the interventionist strategy of state-led development. The initial transition to neoliberal development began with the Third World debt crisis, whereby international financial institutions conditioned debt reduction and new lines of credit on liberalizing national economies (Babb 2013). In the 1990s and 2000s, neoliberalism also advanced through its institutionalization in world society (Montecinos, Markoff, and Alvarez 2010; Weyland 2007) and via the active lobbying by domestic capitalists and powerful countries in the global North with a proneoliberal agenda (Chorev 2007; Spalding 2014). The downsizing of the state sector and vital social services under neoliberalism has produced major outbreaks of civil society opposition throughout the developing world. This study offers a conceptual model to explain the sources of the opposition and the likely scale of collective mobilization against neoliberal development—the dominant form of organizing society in the early twenty-first century. Hence, this work combines elements from the sociology of development literature with the field of social movements in order to demonstrate how major transformations in economic development strategies (i.e., from state-led development to neoliberalism) provide the conditions for mass mobilization.

#### **THREAT, SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP, AND ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURES IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY**

Social movement theory is increasingly giving more attention to the negative conditions and grievances driving popular collective action (Almeida 2014). Following critiques of relative deprivation theories of mobilization, scholars downplayed the role of these adverse conditions or threats on catalyzing social mobilization in the late twentieth century. The overly psychological focus of the various strains of relative deprivation theory on individual states of frustration and aggression left students of social movements dissatisfied with its core causal explanations (Gurr 2015). Over the past two decades analysts of social movements have increasingly examined threats as a *social* process that affect large groups of people in a similar fashion (Dixon and Martin 2012; Simmons 2014; Snow and Owens 2014).

Two particular threats that have drawn large numbers of groups into social movement type mobilization in the global South are (1) state-attributed economic problems and (2) the erosion of rights (Almeida 2003).<sup>2</sup> State-attributed economic problems involve economic

shifts that are blamed on the state, such as loss of land, consumer inflation, subsidy cuts to basic goods and services, and widespread unemployment (Wolford 2010). Erosion of rights involves the loss of fundamental rights (such as suffrage, due process, freedom of association) that were previously established via constitutional means or more informally through social compromise. With the ascendancy of neoliberal regimes around the globe, the two threats of state-attributed economic problems and the erosion of rights have combined into the threat of weakening *social citizenship rights*. Social citizenship rights incorporate state protections from the market as well as the provision of social benefits through an implicit social contract between the state and civil society (Meyer and Evans 2014; Rubin 2012). Beyond religious and ethnic conflicts, as well as struggles against authoritarian states, the deterioration in social citizenship rights drives some of the largest mobilizations and protest campaigns in the current era of globalization—from Spain, Greece, and Portugal in southern Europe to the wider global South—the focus of attention of the present study.<sup>3</sup>

Another challenge for scholarship that seeks to demonstrate the mobilizing role of threats to social citizenship centers on specifying the organizational conditions under which negative economic environments of declining social benefits activate collective action. Preexisting social networks and organizations are critical for determining if threats to social citizenship will convert into large-scale movement campaigns as well as the pace of mobilization (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Smith and Wiest 2012). Because of the ubiquitous nature of threats and the lack of mobilization in most times and places (McAdam and Boudet 2012), the types of organizational contexts promoting threat-induced mobilization need to be clearly established (Edwards and Kane 2014). In this case, we are primarily interested in the organizational mechanisms leading to mobilization from the threat of eroding social citizenship rights with the advance of the neoliberal development model. Past cross-national and national research on resistance to neoliberalism in the global South has highlighted the roles of labor unions, levels of industrialization/GNP, urbanization, and public sector employment as providing the resources and organizations for collective resistance (Abouharb and Cingranelli 2007; Anner 2011; Beissinger and Sasse 2014; Ortiz and Béjar 2013; Walton and Ragin 1990; Walton and Shefner 1994). Other studies emphasize the part played by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), oppositional political parties, public universities, state administrative offices, and highways in sustaining opposition to contracting social citizenship rights (Almeida 2012, 2014; Roberts and Portes 2006; Walton and Seddon 1994). Below, basic expansions of the state social and economic infrastructure in the global South are conceptually linked to the key organizational foundations and motivations for resistance to neoliberalism and the loss of social citizen rights over the past four decades.

## **SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AS A RESPONSE TO STATE BUILDING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Charles Tilly (1984) first demonstrated the coevolution of the national social movement with the expansion of states and national markets in nineteenth-century Europe. Centralizing states with bounded territories and governed by parliaments channeled popular mobilization onto a national scale as grievances and demands implicated citizens beyond solely

locally based issues (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). The state at the national level became the final arbiter of policy affecting the citizenry. Related processes of the spread of mass literacy and the printing press made possible the awareness of common interests across wide geographical spaces (Tarrow 2011).

Capitalist development in the nineteenth century also facilitated the rise of trade unions and political parties in cities that would extend to other regions (Tilly and Wood 2012). Development of large-scale manufacturing along with the centralization of the working class made possible the capacity to sustain social movement–type mobilization for improved working and housing conditions along with other economic, political, and social rights that European states increasingly granted (Oxhorn 2003). Hence, social movements arose in Europe during the initial phases of the emergence of industrial capitalist development. A somewhat similar process would unfold in the twentieth century in the developing world.

#### **DEVELOPMENT STATE BREAKTHROUGH IN THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY**

The post–World War II period in the global South is known as “state-led development” and provided a comprehensive plan for developing economies to achieve rapid industrialization and modernization in a relatively short time frame (Kohli 2004). This preglobalization state-led development era (also referred to as Fordist-Keynesianism) runs roughly from the 1930s to the early 1980s (Robinson 2014). The development strategy centered on a massive expansion of the state infrastructure and the reinvestment of primary agricultural and resource extraction industry surpluses into manufacturing to reach a stage of self-propelled economic growth (Rostow 1960) via import substitution industrialization (Kay 1989). To back this process up, governments in the developing world, with the aid of international economic assistance and expertise, expanded both the social and economic infrastructure of education, public administration, transportation, health care, banking, telecommunications, and electrical power.

Segura-Ubiergo (2007) defines the welfare state in the developing world as “a repertoire of state-led policies aimed at securing a minimum of welfare to its citizens” (p. 1), including public investments in health and mass education. The expansion of the state infrastructure coincided with the creation of a new belief system within civil society and a set of expectations consistent with the definition of social citizenship described above in relation to mobilizing threats. Social citizenship has also been described as “the rights and duties associated with the provision of benefits and services designed to meet social needs and enhance capabilities, and also guarantee the resources necessary to finance them” (Taylor-Gooby 2011:4). While social citizenship rights first extended in Europe in the nineteenth century with the legalization of labor unions, associations, and access to vital social services, these benefits were greatly expanded in the aftermath of the Great Depression and World War II with the advent of modern welfare states across the advanced capitalist world, followed by attempts at emulation throughout the global South.

This extension of social citizenship to populations in the developing world during state-led development occurred under a variety of regimes including military-controlled governments, authoritarian and corporatist states, populist rule, and democracies (Oxhorn 2011). The new

social programs and subsidies of the developmental state became ingrained as the “moral economy” of the period and as an implicit “bargain” between the popular classes and the state—an exchange of political loyalty for social and material support (Walton and Seddon 1994:46-48). As Orloff (1993) has noted for the global North, it is also important to acknowledge in the developing world that not all social sectors benefited equally from the extension of social citizenship: indigenous peoples, women, ethnic minorities, and rural and informal sector workers received less access to education, health care, and social services (Agarwala 2013). Nonetheless, even subaltern groups were relatively better off with the expansion of social citizenship and economic infrastructures in terms of life chances and mobilization potential than in prior decades.<sup>4</sup>

### Public Health

The modern welfare state systems of the advanced capitalist nations were imitated throughout the developing world from the 1930s through the 1980s. While basic public health systems were established early in the twentieth century, in the post-World War II period there was rapid growth in the building of public hospitals and clinics in the global South. This growth in health care access also corresponded with the establishment of social security systems for the urban working and middle classes in the same time period that often combined a retirement package with health and medical care coverage (Mesa-Lago 2008). In the current period of market-driven globalization (1980s-2010s) there has been a reversal in state commitments to social insurance and health care coverage (Mesa-Lago 2007; Sen 2003).

### Mass Education

In addition to public health, systems were greatly expanded in mass education in the state-led development era. Developing countries invested heavily in constructing primary and secondary schools as well as universities. Beginning in 1940, primary school enrollments reached a logarithmic rate of growth around the world that drove up high school and university enrollments in the following decades (D. Baker 2014). By the 1970s, most municipalities in Latin America (even in remote rural regions) had at least a primary school. Schofer and Meyer (2005) have documented the global increases in university enrollments, with an especially accelerated rise in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s. While the largest increases in university enrollments occurred in the central public universities in the capital cities of the developing world, governments also established branch and regional campuses of the public university system, extending access to higher education to more distant provinces.

### State Subsidies

At the same time as states extended health and educational opportunities across their national territories, developmental regimes subsidized consumption via price controls on basic grains, transportation, medicine and even agricultural inputs for the rural sector. The trend was similar for Africa, Asia, Latin America, and eastern Europe. Government policies of price controls and subsidies for basic goods served as an integral part of the social citizenship compact between the state and civil society.

## Economic Infrastructure

Outside of health, education, subsidies, and social services, the development state invested substantially in basic economic infrastructure to propel economic growth. This included the construction of hydroelectric power and nationally integrated energy grids, national highway networks, and water and sewage systems. Taken together, all of these development efforts in the public and economic spheres sought to support the partial industrialization of the Third World and largely succeeded in the semiperipheral world (Chase-Dunn et al. 2015). These state investments in economic development appeared to pay off as developing countries slowly began to increase their share of global industrial output and proportion of exports in manufacturing between 1960 and 1980 (Dicken 1986). By the late 1970s, state-owned enterprises accounted for 25 to 30 percent of total domestic investment in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (A. Baker 2014). This unprecedented expansion of the state social and economic infrastructure eventuated in a major unintended outcome beyond the high rates of urbanization, economic growth, industrial output and upward mobility; it also changed the nature of collective action throughout the developing world.

### STATE-LED DEVELOPMENT AS ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY FOR MOBILIZATION

The process of state-directed development created a sizable shift in scale in the potential for popular collective action across a broad geographic space. The newly industrialized countries of South Korea, South Africa, India, Egypt, Turkey, Nigeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Mexico grouped large numbers of manufacturing workers in similar circumstances. In an even broader group of peripheral states the expansion of public administration, schools, health systems, and transportation networks raised the mobilization capacity for the population in general and specific social sectors (Klandermans 1997).

By the 1960s and 1970s, state and economic infrastructures reached such a degree of development that mass movements of teachers, industrial workers, students, peasants, civil servants, and squatters could sustain protest campaigns to push for an even greater extension of social citizenship rights via higher wages, social welfare benefits, and basic protections of livelihood. These struggles often evolved into campaigns over *political* citizenship rights in contexts of authoritarian and semiauthoritarian rule (Markoff and White 2009).

The process of constructing national highway networks for increased trade and economic integration during the state-led development era made it possible for aggrieved groups to travel to provincial and national capitals to present their claims to state and elected officials, once again increasing the scale of collective action from the local level to the regional and national levels. The building of schools and investment in mass education resulted in national associations of school teachers often serving as the largest labor-based organization in many developing countries (Cook 1996). As high school and university enrollments accelerated in the 1960s and 1970s, an increase in student-based movements also could be observed throughout the global South.

Most importantly for our purposes here, the rapid and extensive expansion of social and economic infrastructure in multiple spheres in the mid-twentieth century not only raised the scale of mobilization in the state-led development period but also deposited organizational assets that would be the most important basis for launching collective action campaigns

TABLE 1. State Infrastructure and Collective Action against Neoliberalism

| State Infrastructure                             | Propositions  |
|--|---|
| Public health infrastructure                     | Proposition #1: The more extensive the public health infrastructure (hospitals, clinics, social security institutes), the greater the scale of mobilization against neoliberalism.  |
| Mass education                                   | Proposition #2: The more extensive the public education infrastructure (primary/secondary schools and universities), the greater the scale of mobilization against neoliberalism.   |
| State subsidies                                  | Proposition #3: The greater the level of prior state-sponsored subsidies of food, vital necessities, and agricultural inputs, the greater the scale of mobilization against neoliberalism.  |
| State transportation and economic infrastructure | Proposition #4: Regions with large concentrations of the state's transportation (highways) and economic infrastructure (water/aqueducts, electrical power, telecommunications, ports) will experience more collective action against neoliberal development policies. |

against market-driven globalization in the twenty-first century. A set of bureaucratic practices and structures were put in place to administer the expanded infrastructure that persisted into the neoliberal era (Evans and Rauch 1999).<sup>5</sup> Once established, these infrastructures provided a fungible resource to be used by collective actors for a variety of purposes. The collective opposition to the erosion of social citizenship rights has been one of the primary uses of the development state infrastructure. The largest mobilizations against neoliberalism in eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America are led by state sector organizations or sectors that greatly benefited from the expansion of social welfare in previous decades. For example, in one empirical study of 281 antineoliberal protest campaigns in Latin America between 1995 and 2001, public employees, students, and school teachers were among the specific social sectors with the highest rates of participation (Almeida 2007). Table 1 summarizes the influence of state social and economic infrastructures established during state-led development on popular mobilization against neoliberalism.

#### **THREATS TO SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP AS A CATALYST OF THE OPPOSITION TO NEOLIBERALISM**

It is largely the erosion in social citizenship rights that provides the threat incentives for collective mobilization over the past four decades. The crucial turning point begins with the Third World debt crisis of the early 1980s. The inability of indebted states in the global South to make payments on foreign debt to banks and governments in the global North led

to the intervention of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The World Bank and the IMF renegotiated foreign debt with Third World states in exchange for structural adjustment agreements that forced governments to enact austerity policies, labor flexibility laws, and privatization and to open their economies to greater foreign investment (Babb 2013). Even in Africa, structural adjustment policies ended the “postcolonial social contract” (Carmody 2002:53 cited in Barchiesi 2011:17). Structural adjustment policies persisted through the 1990s across the developing world, eventuating in the degradation of already feeble social welfare commitments. By the 2000s, neoliberalism deepened through the active lobbying efforts of domestic business associations in the global South and powerful proneoliberal regimes in the global North (Spalding 2014). The sum total of these economic policies marked the transition to a neoliberal development model.

Figure 1 illustrates the scope of structural adjustment in the global South. The map shows the number of years individual countries were under an IMF or World Bank structural adjustment agreement between 1981 and 2004. As the map depicts, the regions of Africa, Latin America, and central-eastern Europe were under structural adjustment programs for over ten years during the global transition to the neoliberal development model. It is precisely these world regions that reported the highest outbreaks of antineoliberal protest in the earlier years of the debt crisis through early 1992, with Latin America alone accounting for 62 percent of all events (91 out of 146) documented in the global South (Walton and Seddon 1994:39–40). The graphic in figure 1 also assists in explaining the “simultaneity” and “synchronicity” of the opposition to the erosion in social citizenship in the developing world (Walton and Seddon 1994:7) as dozens of countries found themselves under similar circumstances of austerity, privatization, and social welfare retrenchment.

Figure 2 conceptually summarizes the framework presented above. The growth of the development state infrastructure and its policies of redistribution created both the organizational capacity for widespread popular mobilization on a national scale and a compact of

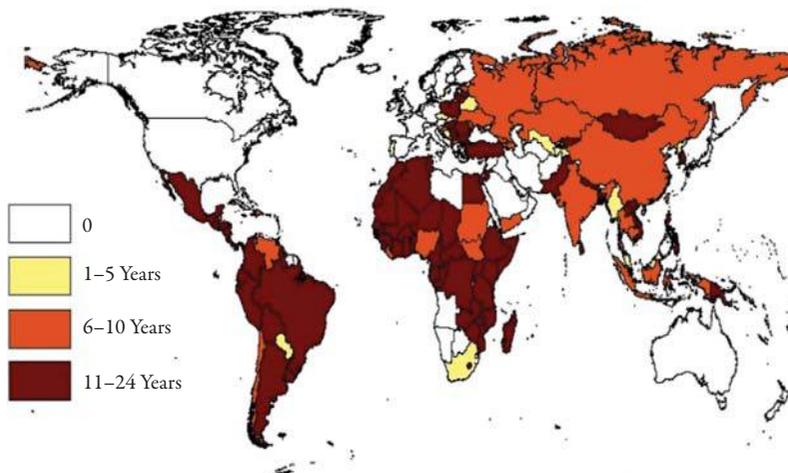


FIGURE 1. Number of Years under IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment between 1981 and 2004.

Source: Map constructed from country-level data in Abourbarb and Cingranelli (2007:89–90).

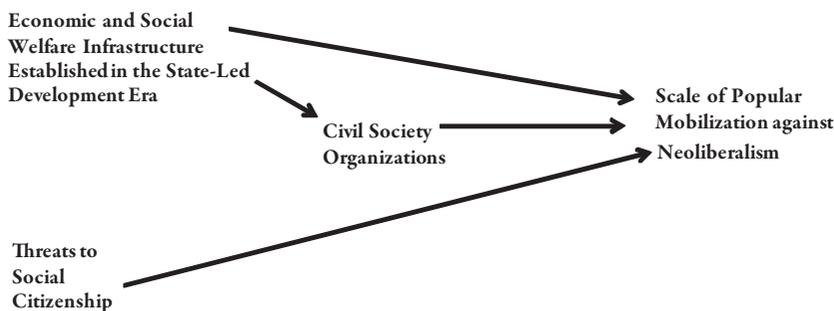


FIGURE 2. Opposition to Neoliberal Forms of Development.

social citizenship between civil society and the state. The massive and unprecedented expansion of health care, education, public administration, and economic and transportation infrastructures placed large numbers of people in similar circumstances and provided them fungible assets to collectively launch social movement campaigns to expand social welfare beyond the initial desires of economic elites and populist power holders. Indeed, these state-development institutions were not explicitly established to promote social movement action (they were more likely formed to co-opt it). When regimes in the global South transitioned to a full-scale neoliberal development trajectory by the 1990s and 2000s, the social citizenship gains of the previous four decades came under threat, acting as a central catalyst for mass mobilization (Spronk and Terhorst 2012).

As indicated in table 1 and figure 2, the more extensive the state infrastructure created during the state-led development era, the greater the capacity for a society to mount sustained campaigns of protest in the neoliberal period by using both the social institutions and the economic infrastructure established during state-led development but also the civic associations embedded in the infrastructure (e.g., associations of state employees, health care staff, teachers, and students). We would be likely to observe greater resistance to neoliberal reforms in societies with larger state infrastructures. In addition, we can take a “fractal” approach and detect these same processes at lower levels of social organization (Goldstone 1991:36). Hence, at the subnational level, by extension, localities in the developing world with greater levels of state infrastructure should experience higher levels of popular resistance to neoliberal reforms than communities that lack the relative presence of state infrastructural properties and social institutions (Almeida 2012, 2014). In summary, there is variation across countries and within countries in the predicted levels of collective opposition to market-driven globalization based on both infrastructure and perceived threats to social citizenship rights.

### THE STRUCTURE OF MASS MOBILIZATION AGAINST THE NEOLIBERAL MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT

In this section I highlight the general trends in the opposition to neoliberalism based on the theoretical framework presented above, with a focus on (1) the loss of social citizenship rights and (2) the appropriation of the structures of the development state and their corresponding civic organizations to mount social movement campaigns to protect society from

the erosion of these social rights. I draw on documentary evidence from around the global South. The cases include the major types of antineoliberal struggles, including food price hikes, economic austerity, privatization, and free trade. I also explore the perspective presented here down to local-level variations in resistance.

The expansion of administrative, welfare, and economic infrastructures under state-led development deposited a persistent set of social and physical structures that could be appropriated for collective action, even decades after they were first established. In particular, universities, public schools, the health care sector, the public sector in general, economic infrastructure, and the national transportation network have played critical roles in generating and sustaining mass opposition to the neoliberal development model. Below, these patterns are observed in several regions of the global South.

### Latin America

Just the scale of Costa Rica's "tropical welfare state" (Edelman 1999) has made it the site of multiple mass campaigns against neoliberalism. This case is especially noteworthy given the history of revolution in the surrounding Central American countries, while the relatively tranquil and politically stable country of Costa Rica has witnessed many of the largest campaigns against neoliberal reforms in the current period. The case fits our model, with the country benefiting from arguably some of the most extensive social citizenship rights granted in the developing world after World War II, including near-universal health care coverage and affordable access to public utilities (e.g., electricity and telecommunications).

Costa Rica also was one of the first developing countries to default on its foreign debt in the early 1980s. Between 1980 and 2007 several mass movements surfaced to confront the transition to the neoliberal development model. In 1983, a multisectoral movement arose to defend the public from an IMF-imposed price hike on consumer electricity. The campaign was clearly marked by state-led development infrastructures. The anti-IMF price mobilizations were based at the community level by DINADECO (National Directorate for Community Development) organizations created by the developmental state in the late 1960s to support local economic development projects (Alvarenga Venutulo 2005). The key tactic of the movement was to blockade national highways (which were constructed between the 1950s and the 1970s to integrate the country for national economic development). In the end, the mobilization succeeded in turning back the price hike and protecting consumers. The other major mass movement in the 1980s in Costa Rica involved small farmers that lost access to agricultural subsidies after two major structural adjustment agreements. The farmers also used the blockades of national highways to try and defend their access to state resources to sustain their rural economic livelihoods (Edelman 1999).

This trend continued of using the state-led development infrastructure to protect civil society from market reforms in Costa Rica in the 1990s and 2000s. In 1995 a protest campaign erupted over a third major structural adjustment agreement between the Costa Rican government and the IMF and World Bank (Spalding 2014). This structural adjustment loan focused on eroding the pension system for public educators and staff as well as a series of privatizations in the public sector and price increases on basic consumption items. These neoliberal reforms mobilized the largest demonstrations in decades, reaching up to 100,000

participants. The backbone of the movement was the teachers' associations, numbering up to 40,000 members, and they coordinated about two-thirds of all protest events in the campaign (Almeida 2008). Public universities (staff and students) and public sector labor unions also participated in large numbers in the mobilizations.

In 2000 an even larger protest campaign erupted in Costa Rica over the threat of privatizing electricity and telecommunications in a single piece of legislation. With some of the most extensive and low-cost utility access in Latin America, Costa Rican civil society viewed these state institutions as an integral part of the "national patrimony" and a vital component of the social citizenship compact. A solid coalition of state sector workers and high school and public university students held dozens of roadblocks and mass marches to turn back the privatization. The territorial variation of the campaign followed a pattern of the distribution of the state infrastructure, with protest events more likely occurring in localities with public universities and transected by one of the country's main national highways (Almeida 2012). Just a few years later the largest demonstrations broke out in modern Costa Rican history against the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) (between 2004 and 2007), with health care workers, university staff and students, public sector workers, and school teachers leading over 600 marches and strikes, some actions reaching up to 150,000 participants at a time (Almeida 2014). The opposition to CAFTA centered on the concern that the free trade treaty would greatly erode social citizenship rights if implemented, including the outsourcing of medical care, utilities, and insurance.

In Argentina, Auyero (2002) contends that the explosion of social unrest in the late 1990s and early 2000s against neoliberal development is rooted in the privatization of state firms and the decentralization of public health care and public education. In a brief 10-year period between 1989 and 1999, employment in the largest state infrastructure entities (water/aqueducts, petroleum, electricity, and telecommunications) dropped from 500,000 to 75,000 workers (Auyero 2002:29). Dismissed state employees formed the core of the emerging unemployed workers' movement—one of the largest social movements in Latin America in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Svampa and Pereyra 2009). The central tactic used by the unemployed workers (called *piqueteros*), blockading the national highway infrastructure, surpassed the number of labor strikes. Mass strikes and protests in health care by hospital staff and school teachers in public education were based on devolving these social citizenship services and rights from the federal level to the provinces, where local government resources proved inadequate to maintain investment in critical social institutions. The public school teachers' labor confederation (Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina, CTERA) formed the first national protest movement in neoliberal Argentina by erecting a massive tent city in the capital in 1997.<sup>6</sup> The teachers, health workers, and other state employees (ATE) would combine to form the most powerful labor confederation in Argentina in the 1990s and 2000s (and arguably the most combative in Latin America), the Congress of Argentine Workers (CTA), capable of holding the largest mobilizations and general strikes (Silva 2009). Elsewhere in South America, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, the national highway network has been appropriated by civil society organizations to block free trade agreements and privatization throughout the 2000s and 2010s.

Across Central America in the 1990s and 2000s, as the region transitioned to a neoliberal model of development, the largest battles over any grievance involved privatization and free trade (Haglund 2010; Spalding 2014). In Panama and El Salvador, thousands of doctors and health care staff joined in coalition with university students, teachers, and workers to prevent the privatization of the health and social security systems between 1999 and 2005. Mobilizations against health care privatization in both countries occurred in communities with state administrative offices, highways, universities, and health clinics and hospitals (Almeida 2014). Besides Costa Rica, major mobilizations against CAFTA occurred in Guatemala and El Salvador, with school teachers playing a decisive role in mobilizing throughout the national territory in Guatemala. School teacher and health care labor associations have also led antineoliberal campaigns in Honduras and Nicaragua, coordinating the vanguard multisectoral organizations such as the *Coordinador Nacional de Resistencia Popular* (CNRP) in Honduras and the *Coordinadora Social* in Nicaragua. Indeed, in one analysis of the antineoliberal protest wave against structural adjustment in Honduras between 2001 and 2005, Sosa (2013) found that public health workers and school teachers participated in protest events more than any other social sector by a wide margin (out of a list of fourteen protesting sectors/groups) (p. 152). In 2014 and 2015, massive nationwide protests continued on the highways of Guatemala against electricity privatization, led in part by the *Frente Nacional de Lucha* (FNL) headquartered in the offices of the national health care workers' union.

### Africa and the Middle East

In sub-Saharan Africa similar patterns emerge. After decades of price controls and subsidies to basic consumer goods in the immediate postcolonial era, African states came under structural adjustment pressure to loosen price controls in the 1980s and 1990s. These state actions broke implicit social contracts with the urban popular classes, leading to one of the central grievances of African protest in the late 1980s and 1990s (Bratton and van de Walle 1997). The core coalitions in the antineoliberal protests included public sector unions, school teachers, and university students. In the early 2000s, a new wave of popular mobilizations occurred in sub-Saharan Africa over increasing pressures for privatization from a new round of structural adjustment agreements between the IMF, the World Bank, and heavily indebted African states. Collective action campaigns took place in Malawi over water privatization, led by the state workers' union. In Zambia multiple mass mobilizations and wildcat strikes were launched against the privatization of state banks and the country's highly valued copper mines (Dwyer and Zeilig 2012). These trends continue through the 2010s. For example, a major protest action over fuel and basic price increases led to a large revolt in several towns by public university students in Sudan in 2012 (BBC Monitoring 2012).

Across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and West Africa, Bush (2010) examined the wave of food price riots and its key protagonists in the late 2000s. In western Africa, protests occurred in Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Senegal against rising food prices in 2007 and 2008. The protest coalitions included public sector unions, teachers, students, and farmers. They used roadblocks and other disruptive tactics. The demonstrators also incorporated other social citizenship demands of increasing subsidies on basic consumer goods

and utilities after decades of adjustment and market deregulation. Similar protests occurred in the MENA countries of Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen (Bush 2010). In an analysis of the global wave of food price hike demonstrations in 2007–8 in some thirty developing countries, Patel and McMichael (2009) find the origins of the mobilizations in both structural adjustment and a world food trade regime governed by neoliberalism as well as the declining commitments of states to the most fundamental material sign of the “social contract”—the provision of the basic food supply (p. 23).

## Asia

In south Asia, Uba (2008) has examined dozens of antiprivatization protest events in India between 1991 and 2003. She analyzes antiprivatization mobilizations down to the subnational provincial level and found that the protest campaigns were stronger where public sector unions sided with students and environmentalists in their coalitions. In a separate study of 108 privatization policy battles in India in the same time period, strike actions by public sector labor unions on average generated two million participants as they filled vital roles in the government’s economic infrastructure (Uba 2005). In Southeast Asia, Anner and Liu (forthcoming) find in Vietnam’s neoliberal transition to export-processing zones that strike actions are more likely in worksites with labor unions affiliated with the socialist state.

## Central and Eastern Europe

In another world region undergoing economic liberalization, Beissinger and Sasse (2014) systematically examined protest events in eighteen postcommunist countries in central and eastern Europe between 2007 and 2010. In this period economic protests mobilized civil society more than any other issue along multiple dimensions, including the absolute number of protest events, the number of people mobilized, and the protests’ duration. In their multivariate count regression models of protests against economic cutbacks, the authors found that the strongest predictors of protest were percentage of labor force in the state sector, government under an IMF standby loan, and the level of economic reform. These findings are consistent with the framework presented throughout this paper, with economic reform and IMF standby loans representing threats to social citizenship via austerity and privatization and state employment as a proxy for mobilization capacity via the state infrastructure.

## CONCLUSION

This study provides a conceptual model of social movements and development with a focus on the basis of antineoliberal opposition and how that opposition varies across nation states and localities within countries. A historically grounded interpretation of contemporary events highlights both the motivations and the capacity to sustain collective action campaigns against neoliberal forms of economic development. The prior period of state-led development is not just a past form of economic strategy. The era of state-led development fostered an unprecedented expansion of the core infrastructure of nation-states in the developing world, accompanied by an extension of social services and subsidies. Between the 1930s and the 1980s, the project of the developmental state brought millions of people

around the globe into mass education institutions and provided access to basic social services and health care. The redistributive component of the developmental state extended social citizenship rights. At the same time, it raised the mobilization potential of civil society to launch collective action campaigns to extend social and political rights even further by creating a fungible infrastructure to coordinate and sustain social movement-type activity, including the incubation of labor, professional, and student associations in civil society.

With the transition to neoliberalism and the debt crisis of the 1980s, the social citizenship gains of state-led development increasingly came under threat via structural adjustment, austerity, labor flexibility, privatization, and the loosening of price controls. These social citizenship threats provided the catalyst for struggles to protect civil society from the new harms associated with the deterioration in social welfare commitments. The actual physical and organizational structures persisting from state-led development into the neoliberal period have provided an array of resources to sustain oppositional campaigns to orthodox market reforms.

From this broad framework, a more refined research agenda can be undertaken to more precisely understand the pace of neoliberalization and its alternatives by examining the infrastructural histories of nation-states and local regions. Analogous to path-dependent studies on how initial economic structures become institutionalized and shape future development trajectories (Mahoney 2010), different types of state-led development in the mid-twentieth century are likely to continue to condition the forms of resistance to neoliberalism in the twenty-first century. In terms of scale, we are likely to observe greater levels of neoliberal opposition when states with recently expanded infrastructures and state-directed economies begin to reverse social citizenship rights. This same proposition should be investigated across localities within nation-states, as the state infrastructure is unevenly distributed across territorial districts (Lobao, Hooks, and Tickmayer 2007). The types of state development political regimes are also likely to condition the social actors and sectors leading the opposition to neoliberalism decades later.

A more explicitly comparative analysis by world region (Africa, Asia, Latin America, eastern Europe) that traces state-led development in each continent would add to our understanding of the variation in sectors of opposition and the scale of mobilization. Future scholarship should also explore the differing mobilization outcomes under neoliberalism by comparing prior periods of state development occurring under populist, authoritarian and democratic regimes. Finally, state infrastructures could be investigated for their contributions to mobilizations in other types of social conflict that are not strictly driven by neoliberal reforms, such as mobilizations over the environment, autocratic rule, ethnic strife, and institutionalized racism. ■

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#### NOTES

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1. The ideas developed here could also be used to partially explain other types of rebellion, but the focus of this study is to explain the organizational basis of mass mobilization against neoliberalism in the global South.
2. The extension of rights has also played a major role in mass mobilization, especially in nondemocracies (Almeida 2008; Schock 2005). Nonetheless, opposition to neoliberalism is largely driven by threats to economic livelihoods and social citizenship rights.
3. I acknowledge that state-attributed economic problems and loss of rights may also promote mobilization not related to neoliberalism.
4. One obvious exception to these claims would be indigenous and rural peoples that were displaced from their ancestral lands for megadevelopment and infrastructural projects (Scott 1998).
5. There is a great level of variation in the bureaucratization of national governments and economies in the developing world, and this variation does condition the degree of collective action. Even with the high level of bureaucratic variation between countries in the global South, all or almost all nations have more formal procedures and organizations that run along bureaucratic lines than before the period of state-led development.
6. CTERA formed in 1973 at the height of state-led development (its organizational antecedents can be traced back to Peronist teachers' organizations of the 1950s). It is the largest teachers' organization, with affiliates throughout every province of Argentina (Perazza and Legarralde 2008).