Introduction

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Perspectives and Motivations

In today's globalized public sphere, protest is a ubiquitous phenomenon. Expressions of protest are no longer only articulated by social movements or political groups (like NGOs or trade unions), but also by youth movements, grassroots initiatives, individual citizens, intellectuals, or artists. Also institutionalized branches of social movements have become serious political players both on the domestic and international level.[1] Furthermore, protest actions have become performances in the public sphere, showcasing dissent and advocating for a change of the rules, habits, or values of society. Thereby protesting groups today tend to create more fluid and temporary networks based on digital online media.[2] This goes along with a broader dissemination of protest forms and practices especially in Western societies.

This book is an attempt to offer both a theoretical and methodological introduction into the scholarly analysis of protest cultures. It offers a survey of relevant concepts and perspectives of research dealing with cultural aspects of protest communication and actions. While research on protest is still dominated by sociological approaches, we favor a cultural studies approach that considers protest on a general basis as a form of contesting communication by the use of different media and strategies and in the broad context of different social and cultural institutions and actors. Hence "protest cultures" are considered as a multilayered phenomenon that emerges in the interplay from different social, communicative, and historical actors, processes, and semiotic forms. Accordingly protest cultures are understood as not only internal effects (e.g. ideologies and collective identities) but also external effects (e.g. influence on cultural values) of protest performed by specific social movements. While research on the cultural impacts of protest[3] still mostly focuses on social movements as key actors, we believe that it is time to recognize that the structure of social movements not only generally shifted toward rather "lose connections"[4] in globalized public spheres, but that protest cultures today have become a relevant part of mainstream culture in Western societies.

The interest in such a broader cultural perspective on protest came about as a result of the three editors' shared interest in a particular set of protest movements during the 1960s and 1970s. Coming together more than ten years ago, as young scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds, we soon realized the need for a broader interdisciplinary dialogue on social movements and phenomena of dissent, and the benefit it could yield on our own work. Exactly this dialogue was held in an institutional framework first as part of a Interdisciplinary Research Forum on Protest Movements (2002–5), then as part of a Marie Curie Conference and Workshop Series, "European Protest Movements since the Cold War: The Rise of a (Trans-) national Civil Society and the Transformation of the Public Sphere after 1945" from 2006–10 funded by the European Union. Designed as an interdisciplinary training series for young scholars, this initiative soon established itself as an international, transdisciplinary research network with more than 250 affiliated researchers from over 35 countries.

Utilizing approaches from sociology, political science, and media studies, its events analyzed the aesthetics and lifestyles of peace and protest cultures as well as the institutional and social impact of protest. The initiative also explored the impact protest movements had on transformations of the public sphere in general and on the emergence of a (trans-)national civil society in particular, thereby paving the way for substantial changes in domestic and international systems. More specifically, we examined how globalization processes, human rights discourses, and the emergence of international NGOs (INGOs) influenced established politics, transnational exchange, and international relations since World War II.

What emerged from this framework was not only a plethora of independent and cross-disciplinary research networks and working groups, follow-up projects, and publications, but also—as we had hoped—a desire among its participants to try to capture some of the wealth of methodological and theoretical approaches in this area through a reference work with a broader, decidedly cultural as well as interdisciplinary perspective.[5] This is what we have brought together in this book.

In many ways, the design of this volume reflects the fact that current research on protest, dissent, and social movements is not confined to traditional academic boundaries anymore.[6] Narrow, disciplinary approaches have long been superseded by a broad-based debate about the multifaceted efficacy and significance of protest in today's world, whether it be on the domestic or the international level; a fact that has progressively been captured by the respective scholarly handbooks in the field.[7] This shift is due to the fact that the so-called new social movements of the 1970s and 1980s have now increasingly become the object of historical analysis in the wake of a tremendous wave of scholarship on the 1960s and, in particular, the metaphorical "1968." In many cases, the social movement scholarship these movements themselves generated (social movement theory, history from below, etc.) has become a well-established feature of the academy that has been complemented by other perspectives that transcend political science, sociology, and history, and also include media and communication studies.[8]

The emergence of modern mass media in the twentieth century in particular changed the communication of protest in a fundamental way. Social, political, or habitual forms of protest with the aim of changing society came to depend on the use of mass media and, more recently, on digital network media. At the same time, protest corresponded to the desire of the mass media for a constant supply of spectacular images. As a consequence, protest agents and the media gradually established a mutual interdependence in the last century.[9] Political protest traditionally developed professionalized strategies of symbolic communication to influence political decision-making and public opinion.[10] Social movement theory distinguished these "instrumental" strategies of protest from more "expressive" articulations of dissent. This distinction has, however, become untenable. In today's media-dominated societies, symbolic actions and events have also become politically relevant instrumental strategies.

Expressive forms of protest have also become integral parts of popular culture. The media, fashion, and advertising industries regularly absorb new expressions and symbolic signs used by protest actors. As a result, these expressions of protest impact the habitus and lifestyle in a society. Protest cultures also often form the building blocks of social milieus that create the grassroots level from which other political actors and movements emerge (e.g., the environmental movement of the 1970s and 1980s in the wake of the student movement and counterculture of the 1960s).[11] Protest actors, in turn, have begun to use subversive techniques and guerrilla strategies to resist the smooth integration of protest into popular culture. With the rising importance of the Internet, we can observe the emergence of new kinds of protest cultures that address specific audiences by creating alternative media or networks and news services online, largely ignoring traditional mass media.

Since a coherent and comprehensive overview of the cultural dimension of protest remains a gap in the research on social movements, this companion seeks to examine the cultural elements of protest communication, including the methods and approaches to investigate them. It widens the perspective to protest phenomena in general, a term much more appropriate to cover the various cultures of dissent worldwide.

Overview

Based on our understanding of protest cultures sketched above, this companion uses systematic distinctions that examine basic cultural structures, often integrating different, sometimes even antagonistic, actors and practices. After an introduction to relevant perspectives in the research on protest cultures in part 1, subsequent parts deal with the *morphology* and *pragmatics* of protest communication. Both distinctions are based on the common premise that relevant social realities emerge during performative acts of communication. More specifically, protest is understood here basically as a form of contentious communication implying different rules and conventions; at the same time, the meanings of protest communication evolve in a discursive and public process in which very different actors and institutions are involved.

Accordingly, we distinguish four aspects in the morphology of protest cultures: *constructing reality* (Part 2), including ideologies, identities, or narratives; *media* (Part 3), including/covering different kinds of media such as the body, alternative media, or images; different *domains of protest actions* (Part 4), such as the public sphere, everyday life or cyberspace; and finally, *re-presentations of protest* (Part 5), including witness and testimony, media coverage, as well as archives.

The pragmatics of protest are analyzed in Parts 6, 7, and 8, which introduce significant performative action types and practices and their constitutive contexts. By recognizing a broad spectrum of different protest agents (including mass media, or other established actors), we wish to overcome the close focus on social movements as agents of protest (even though they are still considered relevant ones). As key aspects in the pragmatics of protest, we distinguish protest practices (part 6), reactions to protest actions (part 7), and long-term consequences of protest (part 8). Accordingly, we not only consider the performance of contesting actions (in different contexts) relevant for the emergence and societal effects of protest cultures, but also the reactions evoked in different contexts and actors (e.g., established politics or advertisement). Furthermore, looking at long-term consequences of protest (e.g., changing gender roles or the diffusion of symbolic forms), we understand protest cultures as a historical process, dynamically affected by different, even contrasting interests, motivations, and practices of the actors involved.

In the following, we give a more detailed overview of each of these parts. The first part, "Perspectives on Protest," provides systematic and classic definitions of protest and an overview of the academic disciplines engaged in the research of protest cultures. It assembles a number of articles about different possibilities of conceptualizing and highlighting different aspects of protest in various disciplines. One of the most prevalent is to view protest as an integral part of social movements (Donatella Della Porta) as well as to explore dimensions and functions of protest cultures in social movements (Dieter Rucht). Another perspective deals with protest as a constitutive element of sub- and countercultures (Rupa Huq), not necessarily aiming at political change, but at performing minor cultural practices and antihegemonic cultural discourses. However, as Huq argues, the term "subcultures" requires a critical revision in protest research, given that the interrelations between hegemonic and minor cultural practices and discourses have become highly ambivalent. As Jana Günther shows, protest can also be framed as symbolic politics, a strategic use of signs to meet society's requirements of political orientation, which can of course have a substantial impact on policy. Moreover, protest can be displayed by ostentatious expressive forms in everyday life, manifesting itself in individual lifestyles (Nick Crossley). Along with the redefinition and widening of the concept of art, many forms of protest can clearly be viewed as artistic expressions. As TV Reed points out, this includes both the role of artistic artifacts used within movements as symbolic forms as well as protest events themselves understood as artistic texts. In addition, a constitutive element of every public expression of protest is its articulation in specific media of communication. Taking into account different dimensions of media, protest is therefore generally viewed by Kathrin Fahlenbrach as a media phenomenon.

The second part, "Morphology of Protest: Constructing Reality," reflects on the most relevant forms and functions that come into play when protest is being performed. This morphology of protest takes its cue from mechanisms of the sociosemantic ideologies, identities, as well as motivations and frames that shape the agenda and criticism of protesters. Ruth Kinna (ideologies) and David A Snow (frames, framing processes) introduce these prominent concepts by closely interrelating the cognitive and the cultural understanding of protest, including protesters as well as their addressees and the general public. These dynamics also shape the meaning-making process of protest communications in a *longue durée* and its remembrance in cultural memory, as Lorena Anton explains. With the term of *narratives,* Jakob Tanner inserts another relevant distinction that is useful to analyze more precisely the strategies of assigning meaning to protest in communication. An integral element of this is the construction of utopias (Laurence Davis) as well as the production of images of the self with the aim to generate collective identities among protesters (Natalia Ruiz-Junco and Scott Hunt). Considering the role of emotion (Deborah B Gould) and commitment (Catherine Corrigall-Brown), we also take a closer look at motivational aspects in the practices performed during protest actions.

The third part, "Morphology of Protest: Media," then covers the different symbolic forms and media through which protest is being uttered in different media. Following a broad and multidimensional understanding of media, we define media as communicative forms that relate different areas and actors of communication, which includes the body and its semiotic expressions as well as visual, linguistic, and multimodal media and their relevant genres in protest communication (e.g., posters, humor, or political songs). Such a broader perspective also includes specific forms of protest expressions, such as violence as a medium of protest communication. Starting with an analysis of the body (Andrea Pabst), its aesthetic presentation and its movement patterns (dance, Eva Aymamí Reñé), this section discusses different modalities and forms of actions like violence (Lorenzo Bosi) and parody and humor (Marjolein 't Hart), as well as contentious aesthetical forms in fashion (Nicole Doerr) and design (Tali Hatuka). Additional media of protest explored in this section are: alternative media (Alice Mattoni), graffiti (Johannes Stahl), posters and placards (Sascha Demarmels), images (Kathrin Fahlenbrach), typography and text design (Jürgen Spitzmüller), as well as political music and protest songs (Beate Kutschke). Each of these chapters offers a systematic introduction into the specific qualities of the respective media and how they are typically involved in protest communication and culture.

Articles in part 4, "Morphology of Protest: Domains of Protest Actions" discuss the specificities of different domains of protest actions, such as the public sphere (Simon Teune), urban spaces (Tali Hatuka), everyday life (Anna Schober), and the Internet (Paul G Nixon and Rajash Rawal). They demonstrate that the specific (technological, semiotic, public, or urban) infrastructures of the different spaces and domains have a significant influence on how protest is being articulated and performed. The articles in part 5, "Morphology of Protest: Re-Presentation of Protest," reflect on forms and functions of the re-presentations of protest (events) from the perspective of witnessing (Eric G Waggoner), media coverage (Andy Opel), and the long-term storage of sources in archives (Hanno Balz)—all widely focusing on representing protest performed by others.

The next three parts of the book examine the "Pragmatics of Protest" by looking at specific action types and the contextual conditions that shape them, as well as the interactive effects that derive from performing protest practices. Under the heading of part 6 "Pragmatics of Protest: Protest Practices," specific culturally shaped action types and their performative rules are investigated. Among those are linguistic performances like uttering (Constanze Spiess), street protest (Matthias Reiss), as well as speech acts like insult and devaluation (John Michael Roberts) and public debating (Mary E Triece). Another focus of part 6 is on strategies of protest actions performed by different actors, specifically focusing on artistic and entertaining practices of protest. This includes the strategies used in media campaigns (Johanna Niesyto) or theatrical protest (Dorothea Kraus). Anna Schober discusses cinema as a social and discursive space for mediating protesting themes and values. Subsequent chapters demonstrate different practices of hiding, masking, and the rule-breaking in protest: Helena Flam and Åsa Wettergren examine different ways of civil disobedience, Freia Anders explores the practice of creating temporary autonomous zones, while Sebastian Haunss looks at concepts of mummery. Further protest practices analyzed here include the recontextualizing of cultural signs (David Eugster), clandestine actions (Gilda Zwerman), as well as violent protest practices (Peter Sitzer and Wilhelm Heitmeyer).

Pragmatics as defined above also consists of the reactions to protest by those who are addressed and by the general public, which is its witness. This perspective, which has not yet been sufficiently addressed in protest research, is unfolded on a general scope in part 7 "Pragmatics of Protest: Reactions to Protest Actions," oscillating between refusal, suppression, and control while also including the selective assimilation of protest forms and strategies in mainstream culture. The articles in this section therefore cover the reactions to protest deriving from political and institutional confrontation (Lorenzo Bosi and Katrin Uba), from which one of the most prevailing is suppression of protest discourse and censorship (Brian Martin). They also discuss cultural conflicts in the discursive field (Nick Crossley), reflect on the transformation that goes with the assimilation of protest codes in advertisement and, hence, in mainstream culture (Rudi Maier), and categorize corporate reactions against protest campaigns (Veronika Kneip).

Feedback from social institutions also has a substantial impact on protest which can lead to changes and processes of institutionalization of protest cultures. The articles in the part 8, "Pragmatics of Protest: Long-Term Consequences," deal with the long-term consequences protest can have either on the biographies of the activists themselves (Marco Giugni) or on societal roles, exemplified by the change of gender roles (Kristina Schulz), by the creation of new milieus (Michael Vester), as well as by a rising awareness of conflicts and the diffusion of symbolic forms within a society (Dieter Rucht). As a significant example, Sabine Elsner-Petri discusses the public discourse rules on political correctness as a long-term outcome of protest cultures in many Western countries.

Given the complexity and scope of all of these aspects and the general topic at hand, this volume cannot claim to be either complete or canonical. Especially during the last decade, protest cultures have constantly changed their forms, media, and practices, and we certainly cannot cover all of them. However, we hope that the individual contributions and the book as a whole inspire not only further interdisciplinary discussion, but also a deep appreciation of protest as a multilayered cultural phenomenon that warrants our attention not only as citizens but also as scholars.

Notes

1. See Maria Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, "Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict," *International Security* 33 (2008): 7–44; Erica Chenoweth and Maria J Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York, 2011); Thomas Olesen, *Power and Transnational Activism* (Abingdon, Oxon, 2011); Kathrin Fahlenbrach et al., eds, *The Establishment Responds: Power, Politics, and Protest Since 1945* (New York, 2012).
2. This tendency is for example observed and analyzed in Eva Horn and Lucas Marco Gisi, eds, *Schwärme—Kollektive ohne Zentrum. Eine Wissensgeschichte zwischen Leben und Information* (*Masse und Medium 7*; Bielefeld, 2009); Howard Rheingold, *Smart Mobs. The Next Social Revolution* (Cambridge, MA, 2002); Jan-Hendrik Passoth, Birgit Peuker, and Michael Schillmeier, eds, *Agency without Actors? New Approaches to Collective Action* (London, 2012); Eugene Thacker, "Networks, Swarms, Multitudes. Part One," *Ctheory* (18 May 2004), http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=422.
3. Cf. Britta Baumgarten, Priska Daphi, and Peter Ullrich, *Conceptualizing Culture in Social Movement Research* (New York, 2014).
4. This tendency is currently investigated in a graduate school at the University of Hamburg, dealing with "loose connections" in both urban and digital spaces, directed by Urs Stäheli and Gabriele Klein. Cf. "Loose Verbindungen. Kollektivität im urbanen und kollektiven Raum" [Loose Connections. Collectivity in the Urban and in the Digital Space], http://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fileadmin/sowi/soziologie/Staeheli/Lose_Verbindungen_Programm.pdf.
5. See, for example, the publication series "Protest, Culture, and Society" (Berghahn Books, www.protest-publications.org), the Social Movements Research Network at the Council for European Studies at Columbia University (http://councilforeuropeanstudies.org/research/research-networks/social-movements), or the Institut for Protest and Bewegungsforschung (http://protestinstitut.eu/).

6. Given that relevant areas of protest research and its cultural implications are treated intensively in this companion, we avoid a detailed research overview in this introduction.
7. See representatively Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg, eds, *Methods of Social Movement Research* (Minneapolis, MN, 2002); David A Snow, Sarah Anne Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, eds, *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Malden, MA, 2004); Donatella Della Porta, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Dieter Rucht, eds, *Social Movements in a Globalizing World* (London, 2009); Bert Klandermans and Conny Roggeband, eds, *Handbook of Social Movements Across Disciplines* (New York, 2010); Jeff Goodwin, *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts* (Chichester, 2012); David A Snow et al., eds, *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements* (Malden, MA, 2013); Jacquelien van Stekelenburg, Conny Roggeband, and Bert Klandermans, eds, *The Future of Social Movement Research: Dynamics, Mechanisms, and Processes* (Minneapolis, MN, 2013).
8. Representative examples of this kind of integrative scholarship on “1968” include, most recently Joachim Scharloth, *1968: Eine Kommunikationsgeschichte* (Paderborn, 2011); Timothy Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties: The Antiauthoritarian Revolt, 1962–1978* (Cambridge, 2013). Timothy Brown and Andrew E Lison, eds, *Sound and Visions. Counterculture and the Global 1968* (New York, 2014); Stefanie Pilzweger, *Männlichkeit zwischen Gefühl und Revolution. Eine Emotionsgeschichte der bundesdeutschen 68er-Bewegung* (Bielefeld, 2015).
9. See Kathrin Fahlenbrach, Erling Sivertsen, and Rolf Werenskjold, eds, *Media and Revolt: Strategies and Performances from the 1960s to the Present* (New York, 2014).
10. See, for example, Nicole Doerr, Alice Mattoni, and Simon Teune, *Advances in the Visual Analysis of Social Movements* (Bradford, 2013).
11. Sven Reichardt, Detlef Siegfried, eds, *Das alternative Milieu: antibürgerlicher Lebensstil und linke Politik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und Europa 1968–1983* (Göttingen, 2010); Sven Reichardt, *Authentizität und Gemeinschaft: linksalternatives Leben in den siebziger und frühen achtziger Jahren* (Berlin, 2014).