

**Globalizing Collective Identities:
From the Global Justice Movement to the ‘Global Wave’**

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Introduction: Development of the Literature

From the Battle of Seattle to the Iceland Saucepan Revolution, and from the ‘Arab Spring’ to Gezi Park, we live in age of globalized social movement activism. In this context, many social movements negotiate their collective identities within a self-consciously global framework. These identities often hinge on opposition to the violences and exclusions of globalized neoliberalism and the state and inter-state forms through which it has been institutionalized, they are developed in dialogue with slogans and organizing styles from other parts of the world, and they are increasingly performed to audiences worldwide.

A distinct body of literature examining the relationship between globalization and social movements has emerged in response, covering two distinct periods of mobilization. What became known in the Anglophone world as the ‘anti-globalization’ or ‘global justice movement’ inspired a flourishing of academic research and activist commentary from the late 1990s, linking apparently disparate phenomena such as the ‘Battle of Seattle’ protests and other street actions against international financial institutions, the Zapatista uprising in the Chiapas region of Mexico, and discussions of ‘other possible worlds’ at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil. In this vein, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri wrote about ‘a great movement of the multitude’ (Hardt and Negri, 2003: xvi) in 2003. This was already after the peak of associated activity, although academic analyses of the movement’s form and legacy continue to be published today. The second period of mobilization dates from the 2008 global financial crisis, escalating in 2011 in the wake of challenges to authoritarianism in the Arab world. It took the form of highly visible occupations of public space and demands for the extension of state democracy

and has been characterised in a growing literature less as a unitary global social movement, more as a ‘global wave’ of protest (Tejerina et al., 2013).

There are clear continuities, as well as differences, to be drawn between the global justice movement and the more recent global wave, as well as some debate whether they are in fact instances of the same thing and/or whether either has entirely finished (for comparisons of these mobilization periods, see e.g., Della Porta, 2012; Flesher Fominaya, 2014). Many high-profile writers on the former have switched or expanded their focus to the latter. This chapter will pay most attention to the global justice movement, as this has generated the more extensive literature and can be seen as ‘epitomizing the quintessential interconnection between globalization and social movements’ to a greater degree, with its participants tending to explicitly ‘self-identify as belonging to a global movement’ (Flesher Fominaya, 2014: 53, 183) . However, we will also draw on and speak to the growing literature on the global wave, where relevant, particularly on the 15M mobilization in Spain and on Occupy,¹ in so far as this resonates with work on the global justice movement in terms of its assumptions about identity.

So what do these writings tell us about identity? Intriguingly, the global justice movement and global wave are both frequently positioned as *post*-identity, or, more specifically, as post-identity politics. A preoccupation with identity has been seen as typical of the ‘new social movements’ of the 60s and 70s and the scholarly paradigm that arose to make sense of them and that emphasised the cultural and symbolic dimension of protest. More recently, the term ‘identity politics’ is associated with what has been seen as the co-optation and internal fracturing of movements in the 1980s and beyond. It is with this in mind that writers on the global justice movement claimed that it had ‘transcended [the] identity politics’ of the 1980s ‘by seeking to forge a new internationalism’ (Callinicos, 2003: 113) and by returning to an emphasis on material struggles and class politics, thus moving beyond a narrow focus on cultural representation. Similar claims have been made about the more recent wave of global protests, especially with regards to the Occupy movement and its purported representation of the material interests of a disenfranchised ‘99%’ (documented in Alexander and Eschle, 2016). Such empirical-normative arguments have been supplemented by the analytical-theoretical assertion that research into such activism

therefore need not deploy ‘the “new social movement” analytical category of “identity” and the exploration of how it is constructed’ (Maeckelbergh, 2009: 21; see also McDonald, 2002).

We disagree. In the chapter that follows, we seek not only to critique the political implications of a broad-brush condemnation of ‘identity politics’ and elevation of a materialist alternative, but also, more generally, to defend the category of identity, and particularly *collective* identity, in the study of contemporary activism. In so doing, we are siding with those social movement scholars who argue that the concept of collective identity enables the differentiation of movements from unconnected protest events by drawing out a sense of shared political endeavour over time and space, as well as offering an alternative to a reductively rationalist depiction of movements simply as a response to material incentives and an expression of the convergence of individual interests. Moreover, we hope to demonstrate that approaching the global justice movement and global wave through the lens of identity enables us to paint a more expansive empirical picture, constructing contemporary activism not as transcendent of identity, but rather as doing distinctive forms of ‘identity work’.

The chapter is divided into two main parts. The first section charts the development of the literature, beginning with a brief review of the history and development of social movement scholarship on the concept of ‘collective identity’, and parsing out the associated concepts of social and personal identity, before turning to the ways in which all three have been analysed in the context of struggles for global justice and in the global wave. In the second section, we sketch out our reservations with the ways in which identity has been treated thus far in this literature. The chapter concludes by discussing possible lines of enquiry for the future.

Major Claims in the Literature

Collective Identity and Social Movements

For social movement scholars, *collective identity* is a crucial concept (Flesher Fominaya, 2010a), albeit one that remains contested and controversial. It has been

defined in a wide variety of ways: as ‘constituted by a shared and interactive sense of “we-ness” and “collective agency”’ (Snow 2001: 2), for example, or as ‘an act of the imagination, a trope that stirs people to action by arousing feelings of solidarity with their fellows and by defining moral boundaries against other categories’ (Jasper and McGarry, 2015: 1). Despite the differences, there are some points of agreement here. Notably, collective identity is increasingly approached in processual, interactional terms, with scholars highlighting the importance of ‘identity work’ (Glass, 2009) or focusing on identity as ‘an intragroup or movement *process*, deriving from shared experiences, solidarities, and meanings generated through reciprocal interaction between activists’, rather than on identity as a property or a *product*, the apparently fixed and static claims about a movement presented to the world by the group or its opponents (Flesher Fominaya, 2015: 65).² This could be said to reflect an underlying shift in social movement scholarship (and also in related fields, such as feminist philosophy and queer studies) in response to the perceived problems in identity politics, such that identities as products ‘are now viewed by many scholars as straightjackets that distort and repress’ (Jasper and McGarry, 2015: 2). Arguably, a focus on identity as process in social movement scholarship helps to undercut any essentialist, fixed identity claims made within movements.

Moreover, it seems to us that there is considerable convergence around three key features of collective identity. The first is a sense of solidarity, which is understood here broadly as a sense of affinity with and commitment to others in shared political struggle, often on an international or global scale (Daphi, 2014). In this sense, collective identity involves the deliberate construction of a political collectivity across difference and across borders for mutually-agreed ends. The second key element has to do with agency, with much of the literature emphasizing that collective identity may be a crucial ingredient enabling joint action — that shared grievances, for example, or access to social and economic capital are not in themselves sufficient — and, moreover, that the relationship may be reversed, that a sense of who we are is produced through acting together. A third key element is emotion, with collective identity understood as a kind of ‘emotional connection with a broader community’ (Polletta and Jasper, 2001: 285).

Collective identity understood in these terms is related to, but distinguishable from, other kinds of identity, as David Snow explains. Take for example *social identity*, a term used widely in sociology to indicate those identities ‘grounded typically in established social roles such as “teacher” and “mother” or in broader and more inclusive social categories [or social structures] such as gender categories or ethnic and national categories’ (Snow, 2001: 2).³ Social identity is not politicised in all cases, often functioning simply to provide what Snow describes as ‘orientational markers’ in everyday life. However, it can also be key to the politicization of social structures and it may become animated politically and emotionally in a way that effectively transforms it into the basis of social movement action to transform those structures. Or consider *personal identity*, consisting of ‘the attributes and meanings attributed to oneself by the [individual] actor; they are self-designations and self-attributions regarded as personally distinctive’ (Snow 2001: 2). Again, personal identities are not necessarily political in character. Nonetheless, collective identities may be adopted by individuals as ‘a highly salient part of their personal identity and sense of self’, and considerable analytical attention has been paid to the ‘convergence’ or ‘correspondence’ of personal and collective identification processes (Snow 2001: 3, 7-9).

We have belaboured the analytical distinctions and connections at work here in order to make it possible to disentangle analyses of personal, social and collective identities that get rather blurred in the literature that is the focus of the rest of this chapter (Flesher Fominaya, 2010a: 397). We start with the ways in which the concept of collective identity can help illuminate the global justice movement and subsequent wave of global activism.

Collective Identity and the Global Justice Movement/Global Wave

Analysts face a particular challenge when exploring the operations of collective identity during mobilizations that are not only transnational in scale but markedly diverse in their constituent parts. What has been emphasised for both the global justice movement and the recent wave of global activism is that they have embodied a remarkable degree of heterogeneity. It is notable, for example, that commentators on the global justice movement prefer to outline a range of context-specific aspirations,

than distil one unified global programme for change. In this vein, see Amory Starr's survey of manifestos (2005: part II), which included proposals for the abolition of national debt, assertions of the common ownership of the genetic building blocks of life, and calls for migrant rights and the abolition of national borders. Similarly, for the post-2008 wave of activism, commentary emphasises a range of national and local goals and demands, with specificity being highlighted as much as commonality (e.g., Sitrin and Azzellini, 2014). In parallel, analysts have emphasised the diversity of actors and activities in both moments of activism, as in the vivid, kaleidoscopic overviews of the actors and forces involved in the global justice movement provided by Notes from Nowhere (2003), ranging from the Sans Papiers in France to South African struggles against service privatization, or Flesher Fominaya's (2014) wide-ranging overview of the forces in diverse geographical locations constituting the recent global wave, from Icelandic punks to Turkish environmentalists. In this context, it seems legitimate to ask whether collective identity is politically feasible or analytically useful.

In response, it can be argued that collective identity *was* forged in the global justice movement – and, by extension, in elements of the global wave – through two forms of 'identity work' that sought to elevate rather than dodge the heterogeneity of participants. The first was a distinctive mode of organizing, or 'a whole way of doing politics' (Flesher Fominaya, 2015: 82; see also Eschle and Maiguashca, 2010: 185-6) based on a commitment to horizontal modes of democracy. Particularly key to the self-definition of so-called 'autonomous' groups in the global justice movement (Flesher Fominaya, 2010b), this horizontal ethos was informed by a critique of representative and majoritarian forms of democracy and inspired by anarchist traditions. It entailed not only the flattening of hierarchies within groups in contradistinction to what were perceived as more 'vertical' structures, but also a struggle to develop open-ended, fluid and egalitarian relations between groups, in which decisions were made by consensus and each individual or group was entitled not to participate in actions they have refused to endorse or to organise their own initiatives. A preoccupation with organizing according to principles of horizontality and autonomy was extensive in the global justice movement, from the creation of 'open space' at the World Social Forum to the fluid organization of different coloured 'blocs' at street protests. Furthermore, it was a clear point of continuity with the

subsequent wave of global activism, central to the sense of collectivity among participants in the 15M movement in Spain, for example (Flesher Fominaya, 2015), and to the ‘radical politics of inclusion’ developed at Occupy Wall Street (Maharawal, 2013). While ‘this democratic model is far from perfect and is riddled with problems and inconsistencies at almost every turn’ (Maeckelbergh, 2009: 225), the point remains that it became self-defining for participants in the global justice movement, just as it did for many activists in the global wave: in this sense, how activists organized became crucial to a sense of collective self.

A second form of ‘identity work’ is implied in research into the principled flexibility with which ideological affinities and associational memberships were deployed in these movement contexts. Notably, Donatella della Porta’s (2005) analysis of ‘flexible identities’ at the European Social Forum points to the high ‘associational density’ of the global justice movement — the fact that participants were involved, often over the long-term, in organizations from political traditions that opposed each other in the past. Activists navigated such complex movement terrain by avoiding ideological dogmatism; valuing ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusiveness’; showing a willingness to be ‘contaminated’ by the ideas and values of others; and focusing on ‘limited identifications’ around ‘concrete initiatives’ rather than expecting sustained collaboration around long term, abstract goals (della Porta, 2005: 186-9). The end result was a movement identity founded on the acknowledgement of difference: according to della Porta, ‘the development of a collective identity that is “open” and many-faceted makes it possible to hold together very different spirits, in part combining them, however gradually, and producing a high degree of identification among activists and sympathizers’ (2005: 200). Eschle’s fieldwork with Bice Manguashca on feminist organizations at the European and World Social Forum reinforces this point (2010: chapter 8).

A variation on this theme can be found in work on the more recent 15M mobilizations. In that context, Perugorria and Tejerina (2013: 435) found that a process of ‘identity synchronization’ occurred through a preference for the category of ‘persons’ (rather than of activists) in movement framing, which ‘allowed both people with no previous political participation and those with different militant trajectories to feel part of the same collective’. The category of ‘persons’, moreover,

encompassed ‘different and opposing political ideologies; it also blurred other potentially alienating axes of dissent: gender, class, religious, and political cleavages along the lines of the Left-Right and Spanish unionism-peripheral nationalism divides’ and was accompanied by an avoidance of ‘acronyms and flags because they divide’ (2013: 435-6). In such ways, Perugorría and Tejerina indicate that participants in 15M adopted the same kind of flexible approach to ideological and associational labels and symbols found at the European and World Social Forums almost a decade previously.

Taken together, these arguments about the horizontal mode of action and the flexible approach to ideological and associational affinities in the global justice movement and global wave indicate the centrality of identity work which acknowledged, navigated and even facilitated differences amongst those involved. Or as Flesher Fominaya puts it, ‘some movements, including the global justice movement, understand and even explicitly define their collective identity in terms of diversity, heterogeneity and inclusivity’ (2010a: 399), It is ultimately, then, an error to puzzle over how collective identity was possible in the global justice movement or global wave despite such extraordinary diversity among constituent parts, when that diversity was consciously considered by participants to be a defining feature of their sense of collective self.

Having said that, diversity within a collectivity cannot be entirely unbounded, nor are identity construction processes without centripetal dynamics, and it is to the erection of boundaries and the building of bridges that we now turn. There are at least two further forms of ‘identity work’ (or ‘boundary work’) of this ilk also visible in the literature on the global justice movement, repeated in work on the more recent global wave of activism. The first hinges on a shared critique of the current world order, a common enemy, at least in its generalities. The global justice movement opposed ‘corporate capitalism’ or ‘neoliberal globalisation’,⁴ based on ‘[t]he perception ... that corporate dominion has been organised across global space by the most powerful Northern states in the world ... [through] free trade agreements and policies propelled by the WTO, the North American Free Trade Agreement ... and the privatisation policies of corporations, the G8 countries, the World Bank and the IMF’ (Ponniah and Fisher, 2003: 10-11). Activist accounts of the detrimental impacts of neoliberal globalization ranged from economic inequality and deprivation to political

powerlessness and exclusion, and from ecological degradation to cultural imperialism and violence, but the literature emphasises that these disparate problems were seen as the effects of a coherent, structured global hierarchy, facilitated by the deliberate policy of state elites and interstate institutions (see discussion in Eschle and Maignashca 2010: chapter 5). It is this shared characterization of ‘the enemy’, we suggest, that functioned to draw ideological parameters around the global justice movement, lending credence to della Porta’s argument that the movement had a ‘clearly left wing profile’ (2005: 192).⁵

While neoliberal globalization remained a target of critique for many who mobilised after 2008, the literature shows that specific contextual factors changed the framing of ‘the enemy’ in the global wave and thus shifted the boundaries of collective identity. Specifically, in the US and Europe, the financial crisis and the following austerity agenda enforced by states, along with the influence of the pro-democracy movements across Arab countries, led to the construction of the enemy as ‘*thieving and swindling* bankers and corrupt politicians’ (Perugorria and Tejerina, 2013: 432, original emphasis) and to an accompanying focus on the failures of national democracy to tame banking and corporate excesses. In that light, constructions of collective identity balanced global or transnationally-oriented claims of affinity with struggle elsewhere with a spotlight on more national and local contexts and interlocutors.

Finally, the literature on both the global justice movement and global wave imply that identity boundaries and affinities have been constructed through confrontational encounters with ‘the enemy’ in the form of *protests*. Disruptive, large-scale ‘protest events’ in Northern, urban centres, directed against the institutions most associated with neoliberal policies such as the WTO and the G8, are widely seen as synonymous with and defining of the global justice movement, their coordination facilitated by online connections and organizations conceived as networked ‘nodes’, and their sudden appearances and relocations captured in the metaphor of the ‘swarm’(see, e.g., Starr, 2005). Relatedly, an iconography and aesthetics of mobile and confrontational protest threads through this literature, most obviously in imagery emphasizing the heterogeneity and vulnerability of activists, and the creativity involved in their costumes and props, in the face of anonymous, brutal-looking, massed ranks of police (e.g., Notes from Nowhere, 2003). The literature on the new wave of global

mobilizations similarly emphasises protest as key in the formation of collective identity, but with a distinctive focus on the politics of space and place, and particularly on the tactic of occupying public squares, and thus on the spatial dimension of identity (e.g., Sbicca and Perdue, 2014). This brings with it an aesthetics hinging on the unsettling effect and prefigurative ambition of the insertion of corporeal needs and domestic routines into public places (e.g., Feigenbaum et al., 2013), along with a renewed emphasis on the role of ICTs in underpinning, extending and complicating organizing in concrete, physical space (Milan, 2015). Notwithstanding these differences in representations of protest in the global justice movement and global wave, the overall impression is that protest has provided the glue for a collective identity forged against an Other in the white heat of confrontation.

In sum, the literature on the global justice movement and global wave highlights the identity work that activists undertake when pursuing horizontal modes of organizing, adopting flexible approaches to ideological and associational affinities, identifying a common enemy in neoliberal erosions of democracy, and protesting against that enemy. In the next subsection, we discuss how such processes are seen to connect to personal and social identities.

Personal and Social Identities in the Global Justice Movement/Global Wave

As argued above, social movement scholars have sought to differentiate collective identity from personal and social identity as conceptual categories, partly in order then to be able to study empirically the interrelationships between all three. Personal identity, and particularly the ways in which transformations in it bring an individual into collective action and help sustain that commitment over time, has been the particular focus of social psychological approaches, as can be seen in a subset of the literature on the global justice movement exploring pre-existing critical orientations to social hierarchy as predictors of individual involvement in different types of protest action (Cameron and Nickerson, 2009), for example, or the reasons why individuals feel personally empowered after a protest event and committed to further involvement in collective struggle (e.g., Barr and Drury, 2009). Such work finds an echo in research on the connection between the emotional responses of individuals to their

economic distress and insecurity and their participation in the protests of 2011 (Benski and Langman, 2013). In addition, it seems to us that some of the research into the use of ICTs in the global wave is similarly interested in exploring the mechanisms sustaining individual involvement and linking personal to collective identity. Stefania Milan, for example, argues that social media can foster ‘an extension of activism, and of the collective experience in particular, into the private sphere of individuals and their quotidian, strengthening the symbolic nexus between activism and personal life’ (2015: 893).

In comparison to personal identities, social identities have received more limited attention. One exception is della Porta’s discussion of the heterogeneous ‘social bases’ of collective action in the global justice movement (2005), which points to the surprisingly wide range of social backgrounds of participants and draws attention to the high level of involvement of women and youth, the participation of ‘new’ middle classes as well as ‘labour’ more traditionally defined, and to those motivated by religion. There are also references in the wider literature to how nationalist identifications or indigeneity were important elements in the global justice movement in particular contexts but did not pose a barrier to broader collective identity construction (e.g., Daphi, 2014). Finally, there has been much discussion of the role of class, broadly conceived in terms of the relationship of structural economic locations to mobilization, in both the global justice movement and the global wave. However, it is hard to define either in terms of a revival of working class identity as conventionally defined,⁶ resulting in the prevalence in the literature of newer, more inclusive and flexible categories such as ‘the multitude’ coined by Hardt and Negri, or the ‘precariat’, or the 99% of the Occupy slogan. Furthermore, such economically-based categories are not usually discussed in terms of social identity as such in this literature and, indeed, frequently juxtaposed to social identity categories as offering a different kind of social basis for movement activism.⁷ Our criticisms of this move will be discussed in the next section, along with connected criticisms of the analysis of personal and collective identity.

Criticisms of the Literature

Our initial issue with the literature, then, has to do with the limited attention to social identities within it, and the problematic ways they are theorised on those occasions when they are alluded to. We want to make three main points in this regard.

The first problematic tendency in the theorization of social identities is their positioning as no longer relevant or as eclipsed by economic interests, connected to the assumption outlined in the introduction that the movements under discussion are transcendent of the ‘identity politics’ of the past. Such an assumption, we suggest, relies on stereotyped generalizations about the mobilization of social identities in political contexts. As philosopher Linda Martín Alcoff has argued, leftist political commentary has long characterised identity politics as separatist in orientation, as reifying or fixing identities, and as partisan and solipsistic, incapable of speaking beyond a particular subject position - irrespective of the more complex empirical realities of mobilization on the ground. Moreover, identity politics is seen as concerned with a politics of representation and symbols rather than with material interests of social justice, and in this way structural economic locations and the complex lived experiences of class are positioned as outwith identity. This is to ignore the politics of representation, the cultural and aesthetic elements, involved in the articulation of class identities. And it is also to ignore the structural discriminations and material inequalities targeted in much of so-called identity politics.⁸ While there are clearly some instances where social identities have been mobilised in separatist, essentialist and solipsistic ways, detached from claims for social justice and seeking only to defend a particular subject position for its own sake, this is not the whole story, as Alcoff and others such as Iris Marion Young have argued forcefully. The politicization of social identities can involve the articulation and negotiation of shifting and complex subject positions and engagement with others as equals in a broader politics of social justice.

Eschle’s work with Manguashca on feminist activism in the global justice movement reinforces this point. The many women-only groups investigated during this research rarely relied on fixed and unitary categories, instead investigating and accommodating conjunctural identities combining gender with class, race, religious and other identifiers. In this way, they may have mobilised social identities, but they were not ‘identitarian’ (Flesher Fominaya, 2015). In addition, they may have organized

autonomously, but they were not ‘separatist’. Rather, they sought to develop durable, multiple connections with others in the pursuit of the transformation of economic and political world order — which is why, of course, they were at the World Social Forum in the first place. Similarly, our preliminary research into Occupy found instances when social identities were mobilized in Occupy camps in ways which assumed their complex intersection in peoples’ lived experiences, including in their experiences of economic insecurity and indignity (Alexander and Eschle, 2016). In that light, assumptions about how and why social identities are mobilised and to what political effect in the global justice movement and global wave need careful checking against specific empirical instances.

The second problem with the treatment of social identity in the global justice movement and global wave, again connected to the claim that these are instances of post-identity politics, is the implication that the interlocking axes of oppression which women’s groups, racialised and ethnic minorities, gays, lesbians and transsexuals continue to organise to contest have been overcome, at least within social movement circles. This can be seen, for example, in Maeckelbergh’s analysis of what she calls the alterglobalization movement ‘overcoming identity politics’. She argues that the movement in effect built on the achievements of past identity-based organizing while avoiding its pitfalls:

Without the fights waged around gender, race, ethnicity and sexuality over the past 30 years, the ‘anti-oppression’ principles of most alterglobalization movement spaces would not exist. Today meetings between many different groups and actors are possible because structural discriminations *have been* recognised, and meeting structures are put in place to limit them, but it is no longer ‘identity politics’ because some shared identity is not the basis upon which ... movement actors are demanding recognition.

(Maeckelbergh, 2009: 20, emphasis in original)

Maeckelbergh is careful to indicate that patriarchal power hierarchies are still embedded within neoliberalism and should be challenged by the global justice movement. Yet she also characterises the movement as itself devoid of these hierarchies; indeed, as predicated upon their successful erasure among movement

participants. Such a characterization of the global justice movement would be vigorously contested by the feminist ‘anti-globalization’ activists documented in Eschle and Maiguashca’s study. It would also be resisted by feminist critics within the Occupy movement, who drew attention to the dominance of male speakers in camp meetings, the sexual objectification of women activists, multiple incidences of harassment and rape, and the accompanying prevalence of discourses of victim-blaming and rape apologism (Eschle, 2016). In such circumstances, women and others found it necessary to name and to mobilize social identity categories, to make visible their connection to oppressive power relations, and to insist on such power relations being challenged. Maeckelbergh’s overly sharp distinction between current activism and identity politics thus functions to obscure struggles around diverse categories of oppression within global justice contexts and in the global wave.

Our final criticism of the treatment of social identity in the literature is that on those rare occasions when its role is acknowledged, as in della Porta’s analysis, there is a tendency to reduce it to the pre-political, fixed, basis of action (or barrier to it). We suggest rather that social identities are often politicised *during* mobilization; thus Eschle and Maiguashca found that gendered marginalizations and exclusions in groups and activities associated with the global justice movement precipitated a new wave of women-only spaces in which younger women, in particular, came to a feminist analysis for the first time and which many interviewees robustly defended as a necessary element in the struggle for other possible worlds (Eschle and Maiguashca, 2010: 73-4, see also 156-63). Our research into the Occupy movement has found a similar dynamic, with the establishment of women’s groups and women’s tents within Occupy camps explicitly justified as a response to gendered marginalizations and violences on site and as a space to explore feminist ideas which challenge gendered normativity (Alexander and Eschle, 2016; Eschle, 2016). In such ways social identities blur with, and transform into, collective identities.

Turning to the treatment of *personal* and *collective* identities in the literature on the global justice movement and global wave, we want to question the over-weaning emphasis on protest. Reflective of wider analytical tendencies within social movement theory, this emphasis has narrowed understanding of the processes by which individual activist subjectivities and collective identities are mobilised, created

and sustained. As Flesher Fominaya warns, the exclusive preoccupation with protest may encourage a tendency to reify the “collective identity product” or visible publicly projected identity of the movement. Visible mobilizations are only one arena in which collective identity formation takes place’ (Flesher Fominaya, 2010b: 398). Notably, some versions of social movement theory, particularly that inspired by the work of Alberto Melucci, draw attention to the submerged networks that sustain activism in a more ‘latent’ or ‘subterranean’ form in between protest events (e.g., Polletta and Jasper, 2001: 288). Or we could also examine the more institutionalized movement forms, such as the international feminist non-governmental organizations and coordinating networks which were part of the picture in Eschle’s study with Manguashca; or the anti-bank and affordable housing campaign groups and the like which were spawned by some protest camps of 2011. Taking on board these dimensions of the global justice movement or global wave activity would facilitate enquiry into the ways in which personal and collective identities are forged in the build-up to and afterlife of mobilization in streets or squares: interwoven in everyday interactions, cultural events, bureaucratic organizations, neighbourhood associations and the like. In this vein, Flesher Fominaya has studied the role of local assemblies within the global justice movement, that is, political spaces in which a loose coalition of individuals and groups active on a particular issue got together at regular intervals to plan joint actions (these were also a legacy of the global wave in many contexts). Suggesting these assemblies acted as ‘feedback loops’ between ‘latent arenas of social interaction’ and more public, goal-oriented activities, Flesher Fominaya concludes that the study of them is essential for the study of collective identity as ‘process’, revealing ‘the tensions, contradictions, and negotiations in the latent moments that generate the seeming “unity” of movement in its visible moments of protest’ (Flesher Fominaya, 2010b: 398).

Conclusion: Future Lines of Enquiry

This chapter has examined the conceptualization of identity in the relatively new literature on the global justice movement and the global wave, particularly the 15M movement and Occupy. Drawing on social movement theory to disentangle collective from social and personal identity, we have shown that the literature on the global justice movement and global wave emphasizes that autonomous and horizontal

principles of organizing, along with tolerance of ideological difference, have contributed to a collective identity construction process which has diversity at its heart. In addition, the literature asserts that analyses of a common enemy, and the circulation of symbols and mythology about confrontation with that enemy in protest contexts, have helped to bind diverse groups in a common political project. We then discussed arguments in the literature about the transformation of personal identities through protest and the mobilization of pre-existing social identities, before exploring some of the limitations in the conceptualization of each of these kinds of identities in the literature thus far. Overall, the chapter has sought to contest claims that these globalized forms of activism should be treated as forms of post-identity politics, with analysts abandoning the trope of identity in their research into this field. Rather, we have tried to demonstrate that identity remains a significant part of the picture of the global justice movement and global wave of activism, and that analysts need to think it through more carefully, and investigate its workings in more diverse empirical sites, to avoid reproducing both an overly narrow analysis of contemporary activism and problematic, exclusionary political dynamics.

We will finish by offering some speculations about future developments in analyses of globalized activism. For this, we return to the broad consensus around collective identity emerging in social movement theory and elaborated at the outset of the chapter. This consensus, we argued, has three conceptual pillars: solidarity, agency and emotion. There is plenty of scope for further work on all three of these dimensions of collective identity in the context of the global justice movement and global wave – or in what may come after.

To begin with, the relationship between solidarity and collective identity requires further empirical and conceptual unpacking. Such work has already begun; see, for example, Ruth Reitan's effort to construct a typology of solidarity in the global justice movement based on how individuals become politicised (2007: 51-6), in which identity is one element. Or take the concept of *fluidarity*, invoked by McDonald as an alternative to what he sees as static and bureaucratic processes of solidarity-building (2002: 124) and drawing on a language used in some quarters of the global justice movement to indicate an openness to others viewpoints and a consequent slipperiness and instability in collective identity processes (della Porta, 2005: 187). This language

might perhaps offer a way forward for reframing the relationship between identity and solidarity, one allowing for a fuller understanding of how both work in a particularly heterogeneous, fast-moving transnational movement context. Finally, some contributions to the literature on the 15M and other elements of the global wave have highlighted distinctive dynamics of solidarity construction between activists and wider publics, or between active and passive supporters, the boundaries of which became blurred in protests over many months in public squares and online and with the deployment of deliberately open-ended identity categories (Perugorria and Tejerina, 2013; Perugorria et al., 2016). The extension of solidarity in this way through spatial and discursive practices, and the success or failure in bridging existing social and political cleavages, surely remains a crucial line of enquiry in these polarized political times.

As for agency and collective identity, we have already implied that there is a need to expand our understanding of the kinds of agency found in the movement by expanding our empirical focus beyond protest. Here we want to add that the sequential relationship between agency and identity also need attention. It is too often emphasised in the literature on social movements that the formation of a collective identity is a necessary precursor to action, even as there are hints at the fact that action can produce identity. Taking the latter position seriously raises two sets of questions about the global justice movement. The first is suggested by the argument that the *failure* of collective actions, as much as their success, contribute to the forging of collective identity, particularly at broader levels of regional and transnational networks, through ‘building up a shared history of having weathered difficulties together’ (Flesher Fominaya, 2010b: 399; see also Barr and Drury, 2009). So how is it that even ostensibly unsuccessful movement outcomes can contribute to the successful construction of collective identities, and in what circumstances? The second set of questions stems from our argument about the horizontal mode of action as a key way in which diverse identities are parlayed into a collective self-understanding in the global justice movement. Are there other modes of action which similarly shape collective identity formation? In this regard, the impact on collective identities of what Milan (2015: 892) calls ‘semiotكنولوجies’ is likely to remain a particularly fruitful line of enquiry in this age of digitally mediated protest.

This brings us finally to the issue of the relationship between emotion and collective identity. On this point, there are widespread references in the literature to the importance of anger, rage and fury as passions driving involvement in, and presumably identification with, the global justice movement and global wave. Eschle and Maiguashca argued in 2010 that a more nuanced understanding was needed of the range of emotions involved in motivating global justice movement activists and of the ways in which emotional triggers are intertwined with and feed into cognitive processes, a call which seems to have been met, at least partially, in sophisticated examinations of the connection between cognition, emotion, identity and action in the mobilizations of 2011 (Benski and Langman, 2013; Perugorría and Tejerina, 2013). This may reflect the higher profile of work on emotion and politics in cognate fields over the last few years. The connection charted in the research on the global wave between a sense of grievance and emotional outrage (named as ‘reflex emotions’), and ‘collective enthusiasm and joy’ (or ‘affective emotions’) (Perugorría and Tejerina, 2013: 423, 433) seems worthy of further exploration, as does the role of humour and connected aesthetic and cultural practices in sustaining and extending collective identity over time and place (Yalcintas, 2015). With such lines of enquiry, analysts of contemporary activism can continue to make sense of, and to contribute to, those social movements that have challenged globalized power relations in the recent past and those that are likely to do so in the future.

Notes

1. Our focus on the 15M and Occupy as emblematic of the global wave (a product of limited time and space as well as of the particularly strong parallels drawn in the literature with the global justice movement) replicates the problematic Eurocentric focus of the literature and is deserving of critique. Future work on identities in and of the global wave needs to centre the experiences of the so-called Arab Spring, for example, or the uprisings in and around Turkey’s Gezi Park, in order to develop more inclusive, postcolonial understandings of which identities matters in globalized forms of activism, and how they are constituted (Nayak, 2012).

2. Arguably, a countering emphasis on identity as process problematizes the distinction drawn by Marianne Maeckelbergh between analysis of the *category* of

identity, typical of new social movement theory, and a focus on ‘*process* – where process is a practice, a fluid action, an ongoing activity’, which she thinks more suitable for research on the global justice movement (Maeckelbergh 2009: 21, emphasis in original) – in which process is offered as an *alternative* to identity instead of one dimension of it (see Flesher Fominaya’s critique of McDonald in 2010a: 399 for a parallel argument).

3. There is a potential confusion on this point, with social psychological approaches to social movements using the term *social identity* in the same way as others use the term collective identity, or even invoking the two interchangeably (see, e.g., Cameron and Nickerson, 2009).

4. Note also the significant strand of analysis among commentators and activists which characterizes the enemy in terms of continuities in the underlying system of capitalism (e.g., Callinicos, 2003: 26).

5. Although a handful of commentators have drawn attention to the existence of a right-wing, populist ‘anti-globalisation’ position, by far the bulk of the literature on the global justice movement – and the global wave, for that matter – does not include such elements in its characterisation of its subject matter. This merits revisiting in the light of the rise of the populist right across Europe and elsewhere in recent years, and given comments from made to Eschle by interviewees who participated in Occupy camps in Scotland.

⁶. See the symposium in *International Labor and Working Class History* 2005, vol. 67.

⁷ This dichotomous juxtaposition of class and social identity is most evident in particular kinds of Marxist commentary, see e.g., <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2011/11/iden-n11.html> on the Occupy movement, but we suggest it is implicit in much of the wider literature.

8. For Alcoff’s analysis, see <http://www.alcoff.com/content/afraidid.html>. For a critique of the dichotomous juxtaposition of social identity to class, which functions not only to obscure the economic dimension of claims contesting discrimination on the basis of gender, race and sexuality but also to neglect the cultural and identity elements of class-based politics, see the 2005 symposium in *International Labor and Working Class History*.

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