

## Conclusion

---

Today, international organizations are the institutional backbone of global governance. As actors in their own right, they exercise an increasing degree of power. Among them, MDBs have a particularly wide repertoire at their disposal including economic and discursive means of influence. While MDBs exist to alleviate human suffering by “ending extreme poverty” and “boosting shared prosperity” (World Bank, 2018), TSMs have repeatedly accused MDBs for human rights violations in the context of their activities. To ensure that MDBs effectively safeguard against human rights violations, TSMs engaged in different strategies toward MDBs with the aim to socialize MDBs into human rights accountability. From existing IR and social movement literature on the engagement of transnational civil society (either as TSM or TAN), I derived a causal mechanism of MDB socialization. According to this causal mechanism, transnational social movements should combine a sequence of disruptive tactics toward the MDB with conventional tactics toward important MDB member states. I reconstructed this causal mechanism between two cases of movement advocacy towards the World Bank, applying process tracing in a most-similar case study design. Next to this theory-inspired case selection, there also was an empirical puzzle which consisted in the distribution of movement success/failure among these cases: Why did their socialization strategy work at a time when no other international organization (let alone other MDBs) possessed a human rights accountability mechanism in the early 1990s, but failed at a time when human rights accountability was an established norm among MDBs more than two decades years later?

## Theoretical Implications

What are the implications for theorizing movement tactics and their ability to socialize MDBs into human rights accountability? This section aims to provide some clues to answering this question. First, the fact that the causal mechanism did not work in the second case does not disprove the value of a sequenced approach. Positively formulated, movement success in Case 1 and the specific way this success came about (following neatly each step of the theorized causal mechanism) supports the notion that

movements are well advised to focus their resources on a specific tactic at a time instead of trying different tactics simultaneously. However, this focus should not imply that TSM should apply either disruptive or conventional tactics only. Instead, their engagement should be embedded in an overarching strategy that consists of a sequence of disruptive and conventional tactics. In line with existing literature theorizing the effect of disruptive tactics, both my cases confirm that coordinated disruption is indeed an effective means to create crisis at MDBs and to open up for movement access to meaningful inside channels. In light of limited resources, TSM focus on disruption in part one was in fact necessary, though, to achieve this threshold effect (i.e., MDB crisis). Below this threshold, the sporadically applied conventional tactics proved unsuccessful in both cases, as key decision-makers among member states do not fully appreciate the problem. Without such an appreciation, movement demands for more human rights accountability did not resonate, as the salience of movement frames remained low. Once this first threshold effect is reached and decision-makers do appreciate the existence of a severe problem relating to the MDB's human rights performance, the TSM is well advised to focus on conventional tactics to reach the next threshold effect: the persuasion (operationalized as a full adoption of the frame) of decision-makers.

However, how can movements cause disruption at MDBs in times when important shareholders are not democratically constituted? Notably, there are strong indications that China will become even more influential as a shareholder among MDBs (see analysis and policy implications below). Emanating from this trend, I suggest that a comprehensive theory of social movement influence on MDBs also needs to include propositions about the viability to cause disruption in light of China's authoritarian system. Disruption as theorized in my work consists in causing doubts among decision-makers in important MDB member states regarding the MDBs integrity and competence (i.e., the ability of the organization to rectify its deficiencies). While MDB disruption via demonstrations or concerted media campaigns may well work in parliamentary or presidential democracies, such tactics are not available to TSM in authoritarian states. The failure to cause MDB disruption in the eyes of Chinese decision-makers meant that disruption was incomplete in Case 2. Moreover, Case 2 suggests that human rights violations against vulnerable individuals and communities did not cause outrage among member states equally. To make matters more complex, different human rights violations caused uneven reactions. For instance, China was not susceptible to the human rights violations of indigenous communities, while Uganda strongly opposed the principle of nondiscrimination based on sexual orientation or identity. All the more, differences exist regarding violations of democratic norms. Where works on TSM or TAN influence tended to conceptualize issue resonance with universal validity, my second case suggests that this validity was never truly universal. Instead, it represented the consensus among liberal democratic states. In sum, the issue at hand is this: *how and based on which issues* can TSM cause disruption at MDBs if some of their principal shareholders are authoritarian states? While a response to this question goes beyond the scope of this work, I suggest that TSM might have to engage differently toward different constituencies at the same time (see below). For a comprehensive theory of TSM engagement toward MDBs, this means an extra layer of complexity, as it needs to consider domestic political systems.

Once TSM manage to cause disruption at the MDB, my causal mechanism envisages persuasion through conventional member state channels. Again, my second case suggests that a use of conventional channels among democratic member states only might not be sufficient in the future. We thus need more work on the interplay of TSM engagement across different domestic systems. In addition and in line with existing theories on persuasion and framing, both my cases confirm the paramount *importance of cognitive maps among key decision-makers*. While the TSM managed to persuade Barney Frank, they were not successful in fully persuading Nancy Pelosi or Maxine Waters. In contrast to Frank, who was in favour of strong regulations for banks and human rights (specifically the rights of vulnerable communities), the cognitive maps of Pelosi and Waters entailed elements that ran counter to the movement's frame. In the case of Pelosi, it was her loyalty to Obama, who saw Kim as "his President." As a democratic speaker of the House of Representatives, Pelosi could not afford to go against Obama on the issue of World Bank human rights accountability (an issue the U.S. public did not care about enough). In the case of Waters, the matter is more complex. While Waters was a strong defender of democratic principles and human rights (particular anti-discrimination and labour rights) at home, the conviction that the United States should not mess with foreign states was also part of cognitive map. For framing research, this presents an interesting case, as it suggests that persuasion is extremely difficult in instances of conflicting cognitive priors that possess comparable degrees of salience within the overall cognitive map. Though a change of even deeply held priors (and ultimately of preferences and actions) is possible in principle (Risse, 2000), the movement was not successful in the case of Pelosi or Waters despite excellent access and high degrees of moral/epistemic authority. This suggests that only slight differences among cognitive maps at the individual level may account for major differences in terms of social outcomes at the macro-level.

Then, my work suggests that social movement researchers are well advised to adopt a *broader conception of "counter mobilization"* as a scope condition for movement success. In contrast to classical conceptualizations, whereby counter mobilization consists in the presence of counter movements taking to the streets, contemporary counter mobilization in the context of MDB socialization becomes ever more indirect, tacit and nebulous. Though MDB counter mobilization through attempts to coopt movement critique is by no way a recent phenomenon (O'Brien et al., 2000), MDB "repertoires of reaction" (Anderl, 2018) have become progressively more advanced and deserve further research taking these advancements into account.

Moreover, my empirical material indicates that two *structural* changes took place over the past decades which were not intended by the World Bank, but which had nevertheless an impact on the outcome of the second case as they interacted with the aforementioned attempts at cooptation. The first change is precisely the evolving norm that international organizations should involve the participation of non-state actors (Dingwerth & Weise, 2012; Tallberg et al. 2013). Due to this evolving norm and because IO-NGO consultation has become the gold standard, the World Bank bureaucracy's large scale consultation around the world corresponded to the standard of appropriate behavior. As a result, it is harder to detect why and how such consultation could result in de facto cooptation. To date, most studies have examined the evolution of access or openness in

merely formalistic terms. Oftentimes, these studies carried positive normative connotations to the diagnose of increasing openness, postulating openness as instrumental to effectiveness (Steffek, 2007; Tallbert et al. 2013) and accountability (Grigorescu, 2010; Scholte, 2011). Pouring a little cold water on these hopes, I suggest that the qualitative outcome of increasing IO openness needs critical examination in each case, as it is potentially janus-faced. While increasing IO openness to non-state actors has undeniably left its marks on the agenda-setting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of IO projects, openness seems to have no effect on IO decision making (Tallberg et al., 2013). What is more, my study indicates that consultations may even have detrimental effects and coopt movement critique. Particularly in my second case—World Bank—TSM consultations showed little results, but consumed a great deal of TSM energy. In sum, this work not only cautions against rosy expectations regarding the democratizing potential of openness, it also suggests that TSM seeking substantial reform at MDBs should spent their resources on disruptive tactics toward the MDB and conventional tactics toward member states first.

The second structural change has to do with the evolution of transnational social movements. While I theorized the possession of organizational and epistemic resources as scope conditions that positively effect TSM outcomes the more of these the TSM possesses, there seems to be a flip side of that coin I was unaware of before collecting evidence for both cases: namely, the increasing NGOization and professionalization of social movements. As TSM members that experienced the advocacy campaigns during both cases first hand reported, the shifting balance towards NGOs and away from activists comes with an increasing degrees of professionalization, the adoption of technical, highly specialized language, a thinking in (often one to two year) project logics, competition for funding and a 9 – 17 h job mentality. Such NGOization in turn decreases the movement's spontaneity as well as its disruptive potential. Moreover, as some movement parts retain a strong "activist identity", NGOization also threatens to create ruptures between "activists" and "professionals" (Personal Conversations at Frankfurt Strategy Meeting, 2016; see also: Choudry & Kapoor, 2013; Anderl, 2018). At the same time, the more NGOs are invited to formal MDB-CSO consultations or are even funded by MDBs, the more this trend accelerates. Future research is needed to investigate, what the effects of NGOization are on the strategic portfolio of TSM at large.

Similarly, open and explicit statements and votes on the Board of Directors was only the tip of the iceberg of member state counter mobilization. Two thirds of that iceberg consisted of behind closed doors negotiations, the informal exercise of pressure and counter multilateralism. Specifically, China's new role as a major donor in global development and its creation of a new MDB provided the Chinese-led coalition of member states opposing comprehensive human rights accountability with substantial leverage. Relatedly, these developments also changed the nature of power asymmetries at the World Bank's Board of Directors. While China increased its financial shares at the IBRD only modestly, its informal power increased greatly (for an elaboration, see Chapter 8.3). Therefore, future theorizing of TSM influence against the background of power dynamics at MDBs should *understand power asymmetries not only in virtue of financial shares and voting power*, but to broaden the operationalization to include the "best alternative to a

negotiated agreement” (BATNA) as a critical dimension of (informal) power during a negotiation process concerning organizational reform.

Finally, Case 2 also suggests that the scope condition counter mobilization, specifically to what extent existing counter mobilization inhibits movement-driven MDB socialization, is contingent on *the willingness of liberal democratic states to “mobilize against counter mobilization”* (see analysis). To analyze this reaction to counter mobilization separately (thereby doing justice to the relevance of this factor on its own), it would make sense to include an additional scope condition that captures whether liberal democracies are well-fortified, or not. It is important to note that movement success in a particular case may very well differ from long-term socialization outcomes. On the one hand, there can be little doubt that a firm stance of liberal democratic World Bank member states would have achieved an outcome much closer to movement demands in Case 2. On the other hand, it could very well be the case that an earlier appeasement of Chinese power aspirations as well as that of several emerging donors (e.g., Brazil, India) would have prevented competitive regime creation. If all agree to some standards, then at least all are on board, even though the standards may be less ambitious. What is more, if one defines socialization in a less legalistic way and instead looks at the internalization of norms (defined as “standards of appropriate behavior” (Keck & Sikkink, 1998)), MDB reform based on true member state consensus (i.e., not a “consensus” based on U.S. threats to withdraw funding) is preferable. After all, there are strong indications that coercive and noncoercive means of norm assertion are contradictory rather than complementary (Goodman & Jinks, 2013). Having formulated the theoretical implications for refining the causal mechanism, I now turn to the more hands-on strategy and policy implications my findings suggest for TSM who seek to promote the human rights accountability of MDBs.

## Policy and Strategy Implications for Transnational Social Movements

On a general level, TSM need to work on four main fronts in the future: first, in light of increasingly skilful counter mobilization from emerging powers and MDBs, TSM need to mobilize liberal democratic MDB member states to stand up for human rights accountability. Secondly, social movements increasingly need to expand their network to emerging powers, notably China, finding ways to work on the epicentre of member state counter mobilization directly. Third, the transnational social movement should bolster strong regional networks. These would unburden movement hubs in Western capitals and enable exchange on projects, human rights developments and tactics across regional development contexts. To the extent that the trend toward “country ownership” continues, movements are only successful to the extent that national governments can be socialized into human rights accountability. Finally, TSM should continue to engage with MDB Secretariats. For one, because pressure on MDBs remains a necessary component of the theorized casual mechanism to socialize MDBs. But TSM should also continue to engage in dialogue with internal, progressive norm entrepreneurs, and seek to convince them that there is a lot to gain from comprehensive human rights accountability provisions in terms of organizational learning and reputation. In light of increasing

nationalist tendencies and a corresponding resistance to multilateralism, the only way out is to defend multilateral organizations while simultaneously changing them into more democratic, human rights-bound governance actors.

### Liberal Democratic Mobilization and the End of U.S. Hegemony

A first set of recommendations follows from the global shift of influence in multilateral development funding. The core of this shift consists in the end of U.S. hegemony and the emergence of a more multipolar landscape of development financing with China as a major competitor. The mechanism of TSM-led World Bank socialization broke down partly due to the lack of liberal democratic backbone in light of Chinese counter mobilization. Transnational social movements thus need to work on liberal democratic states to stand up for achievements in the area of human rights accountability among MDBs. To compensate for the decline of U.S. influence and political leadership among MDBs, other liberal-democratic MDB member states (i.e., European states and Japan) have to understand that they need to take up their responsibility and to advocate for human rights accountability. Specifically, TSM should *push liberal democratic states* to take the following actions:

- Play a more active role at MDB Boards of Directors. In particular, European countries failed to translate economic shares into tangible influence during the Safeguards policy reform process. According to a staffer from a European ED's office, this is partly due to a lack of attention and resources. While being the World Bank's third largest shareholder in 2018 (World Bank, 2018), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) had only two employees working on World Bank matters throughout most of the Safeguards review process (Interview BMZ staff). In response to an inquiry from the German Institute for Human Rights<sup>1</sup>, the BMZ reported that Germany abstained from voting on only four projects out of close to 500 from January 2015 – April 2016. While it is understood that the responsible national ministry as well as the German ED office lack staff to oversee World Bank project sufficiently, this high degree of reservation is also possible due to the lack of oversight and pressure from European civil society.
- Enhance the transparency of decision-making. Parliaments of liberal-democratic states retain the obligation to oversee the development work of their executives. However, this task is highly complicated by a culture of secrecy on the Board of Directors. Without knowing which project the Executive Director of the own government voted for (and which it did not), parliaments are not in a position to exercise this control effectively. In contrast to the U.S. Government, which regularly documents its voting behaviour on the Boards of MDBs (as well as other IFIs) on a centralized platform (US Government, 2018), the majority of democratic MDB member states have no such requirements.

1 Information as provided in the BMZ's response of 3 May 2016 to an inquiry from the German Institute for Human Rights of 4 April 2016.

- Instruct their EDs on MDB Boards of Directors to ensure that people affected by MDB projects (including movement representatives, NGOs and marginalized groups) can meaningfully participate in developing and implementing projects as well as country partnership strategies. The disbursement of funds should be conditioned on such extensive and meaningful consultation. This is all the more relevant the more we observe a “closing space” for civil society in several borrowing countries.
- Exercise more, human rights inspired oversight. Specifically parliaments of liberal democratic member states should exercise their right of oversight more effectively. Parliaments already fulfil an important control function when it comes to budgetary support in bilateral development aid. Yet, they fail so far to fulfil this role with regard to MDBs, let alone specific MDB projects. In particular, parliaments should demand insights into all human rights assessments carried out by the MDB and invite Executive Directors to regular public hearings. Moreover, parliamentarians working on development issues should not only visit and report on bilateral development projects during country visits, but also on those financed by MDBs. Since MDBs need to respond rapidly and flexibly to political and social circumstances among borrowing states, prior checking might not be feasible. At a minimum, though, the ex post control of human rights sensitive projects has to balance the lack of prior oversight. A public debate on human rights complaints of MDBs also serves to make the boundaries of development aid transparent.

## Engaging China

In their book “Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power,” Alastair Iain Johnson and Robert Ross already stated in 1999 that

“One of the most prominent elements of post-Cold War international relations is the increasing importance of China to both economic and strategic outcomes at the global and regional levels, and relatedly to individual states’ long term considerations of their national interests” (Johnson & Ross, 1999, p.xi).

Today, 20 years after the publication of their book, we can state that the trend of Chinese influence in global politics continued to grow, spanning a vast array of policy fields from financial to economic, trade and development policy (Acharya, 2018). Consequently, liberal democratic member states have to engage with China if they seek to establish human rights as shared standards in doing development cooperation. For TSMs, a first route of activity consists in pushing liberal democratic member states to engage with China on the issue of human rights in development. Shared membership in MDBs potentially provides such opportunities to further this dialogue—in official meetings and behind closed doors.

Beyond that, and certainly more challenging, is to engage China directly. Since the inauguration of President Xi Jinping, social movement organizations operating in China have come under increasing pressure. China belongs to the pioneers among those countries inhibiting the work of independent NGOs and activists (see limitations and future research section below). Notably, a new law (the “Foreign NGO Law”) from 2017

regulates the involvement of foreign NGOs in China. While it does not prohibit foreign NGOs, it defines a list of requirements for such engagement. Among these requirements is a registration with public security authorities, compliance with activity and funding restrictions as well as compliance with comprehensive reporting obligations (Hsu et al., 2017). According to observers (Interview N. Saus), the law threatens to make close partnerships between Chinese and foreign TSM constituents extremely difficult by impeding communication and joint strategizing. Nevertheless, TSM will have to find ways to work on China directly even under conditions of a restrictive, authoritarian environment. To date, a combination of three strategies have proven successful: a) state subcontracting, b) online volunteering, and c) disseminating information among the public. According to the first strategy, NGOs have acted as unofficial (and most often unpaid) research and development unit of a government department. While these NGOs remain largely invisible, they receive state protection and state funds in return for policy tools and project designs that help to solve specific social problems. The advantage of online volunteering is that actors may use it without possessing the status of an organization. By drawing on social media, these actors mobilize hundreds (even thousands) of volunteers for specific social projects and political education activities. This may go hand in hand with the dissemination of information on social problems, which directly creates pressure on the executive. For instance, environmental activists were successful in catalyzing public concerns regarding air pollution among the public and thus forced the state to react (Hsu et al., 2017). According to Rachel Stern (2017), the development of law is a priority for Chinese leaders. This opens doors for activist lawyers who increasingly develop ties with international lawyers and who seek to shape legal reforms (Stern, 2017). Still others (interview Asienhaus) see Taiwan as a primary interlocutor between movements in China and those in liberal democratic states. This is because Taiwan is a democracy (backed by the US) that has strong ties to Chinese NGOs and decision-makers. In sum, the TSM will have to find ways to engage China by working with and through Chinese-based movement constituents. While several starting points already exist, operating in a context of repression requires flexibility as well as continuous exchange among TSM working under authoritarian regimes. This leads to the next point: strong regional networks.

### **Bolster Strong Regional Networks**

As the World Bank Safeguards reform as well as the Safeguards policy framework of the newly established AIIB demonstrate, the trend among MDBs is to design human rights accountability mechanisms that emphasize country ownership, while diminishing centralized oversight by the development bank itself. To detect human rights violations and hold national governments accountable, the movement depends on a strong network with movement constituents across countries where MDBs are active. Even strong and well-functioning TSM networks cannot possibly pressure national governments in each country where MDBs engage. Moreover, the meta-governance from Washington, D.C. was extremely valuable in both cases. Still, these structures should be supplemented by strong regional networks around the world that enables the network to bundle resources more effectively and to pressure national governments to take up their human

rights obligations. The “NGO Forum on the ADB” as well as the European network of NGOs working on IFIs (“Euro IFI”) are extremely important in that regard and should be developed further. Strong regional networks that meet and exchange on a regular basis would allow to perform a host of independent human rights risk assessments, irrespective of the fact that the World Bank already did one (or not because the policy did not apply). This in turn would allow to identify projects that involve human rights risks and ensure that all potential human rights violations are covered. Since human rights violations (e.g., due to patterns of exclusion; discrimination on the basis of political opinion or affiliation, gender, age, race, disability, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation) are oftentimes structurally embedded in societal norms and institutional arrangements backing such practices, TSM should ideally work on both levels: In parallel to ongoing efforts to enhance human rights accountability at MDBs, national constituents of the transnational human rights movement need to identify which strategies work best to prevent, detect and address human rights violations in a specific sociopolitical context. In this sense, the shift of focus from the MDB to the national government as the primary guarantor of human rights accountability also in the context of development projects means an opportunity – the opportunity to address human rights violations at the level of the nation state. However, the trend of a “closing” or “shrinking space” for civil society activism around the globe also means that we should treat this hope with caution. At the time of the Safeguards policy review, this trend was already ongoing. According to interviewees, it was difficult to judge what the impact of this trend was on movement efforts to socialize the World Bank. However, several movement representatives were worried about the policy reform in combination with that trend. In a worst-case scenario, the transfer of responsibility to national governments and the closing space together would threaten to crush human rights accountability. Movement representatives therefore voiced the following strategies they should follow in the future to secure the survival of its many national collaborators (Interviews with HRW; AI; Greenpeace; Sierra Club):

- Monitor the ongoing closure of space for civil society and scandalize such practices. In doing so, movements should recruit researchers who collect and systematize information on the faces of the closing space.
- Build coalitions and platforms (e.g., Africa Platform) to give advice and technical support to movement constituents under threat
- Mobilize financial support from foundations (e.g., Freedom House), liberal democratic states (e.g., USAID), and Regional Organizations (e.g., European Endowment for Democracy (EED)) for democracy support and capacity building. In particular, there are many countries in which there is a lack of civil society expertise. Donors play an important role here to create an expert network capable to detect early warning signals, build campaigns, disseminate information and engage in litigation.
- Work increasingly through the UN to coordinate initiatives, to connect donors with civil society/movement activists and to move from a case-to-case approach toward more systemic responses. For instance, best donor practices involving greater flexibility to accommodate shifting legal environments or support with registrations inside or outside a given country should be systematized and made available.

## Engaging MDB Bureaucracies

This work tested a particular mechanism of TSM influence on MDBs. Due to the equifinality of results in social science, the fact that this mechanism is effective under the right set of scope conditions does not rule out the possibility for other mechanisms of movement influence. Specifically, TSM could also socialize MDBs into human rights accountability by engaging with the MDB directly and exclusively, without a detour via important MDB member states. Theoretically, the likelihood of such a path of influence receives only modest support at best. For instance, Vetterlein (2014) argues that civil society representatives can build coalitions with reform-minded organizational staff that may then trigger a process of organizational learning (i.e., reform) under the condition of flat organizational hierarchies. At the same time, a bureaucracy's inertia due to path dependencies and standard operating procedures as well as the systemic incentive structure based on spending among all MDBs caution against high expectations. Similarly, anecdotal evidence by movement representatives that worked on MDB human rights reform for more than 30 years points to the difficulty of persuading MDB Secretariats to push for structural reforms. However, if TSM resources so allow, maintaining and expanding networks with like-minded MDB staff would allow the movement to at least moderate MDB counter-mobilization against socialization. Already the official record of human rights violations in the context of MDB-financed development projects clearly points to the urgent need for comprehensive human rights accountability mechanisms. Most likely, the dark figure of human rights violations is much higher than official statistics suggest. MDB bureaucracies know that. In light of a general trend toward (limited) human rights accountability, TSM should continue to advocate for comprehensive accountability. Specifically, TSM should try to use these first-hand insights among MDB bureaucrats and persuade them that sustainable development requires comprehensive human rights accountability mechanisms among all parties involved. In addition to this engagement for comprehensive accountability on a level of policy and institutional design, TSM should closely monitor MDB practice on the ground. This close monitoring on the ground through strong regional networks (see above) would allow movements to detect and scandalize limited and ineffective provisions as well as incidents of a de-coupling of talk and action (see next section) toward managers of MDB secretariats on the ground. Within all the justified critique towards illegitimate MDB governance, there also is a catch: in light of growing nationalist tendencies around the world, multilateral organizations as MDBs should also be defended decisively by social movements interested in human rights. After all, such organizations moderate nationalist tendencies and allow a search for common ground to solve problems of a global nature. As already hinted upon in the introduction and chapter 1, we need MDBs to tackle global challenges such as poverty or climate change. As a result, then, movements should defend MDBs while simultaneously trying to socialize them into enhanced human rights accountability, inclusive deliberation and responsiveness to those they purport to serve (see chapter 1). Given that this is the only way to secure not only legitimate, but any MDB governance in the long term, movements should be able to find like-minded, courageous cosmopolitans among MDB bureaucracies.

## Limitations and Future Research

Existing limitations of the present study result from three main sources: first, the theorization of the causal mechanism of TSM socialization in relation to a particular actor-type – MDBs. Secondly, I did not analyze the impact of MDB policy and institutional reforms on the human rights situation of governance addressees on the ground. Third, both my case studies reveal how human rights accountability across MDBs is also a function of broader geo-political trends, of which I could only focus on those directly relevant to my cases. As I elaborate below, I believe that the most pressing questions for the future emerge out of this third complex. The good news is that these limitations naturally invite further research. In the following, I address these limitations more in depth and outline which questions emerge from them.

First, I only looked at TSM engagement toward the World Bank in my work. The World Bank shares a specific governance structure and identity with other MDBs. Given the proliferation of actors in global governance, looking into TSM socialization toward targets with different actor qualities would be a worthwhile enterprise. As theorized in my causal mechanism, the vulnerability of target organizations to TSM socialization (and thus the generalizability of my causal mechanism) hinges to a critical degree on their mandate. Already among International Financial Institutions (IFIs), we observe considerable differences depending on the nature of the organization: while all MDBs working on development had a human rights accountability mechanism by 2016, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had no such mechanism in place. Different from MDBs, the IMF is primarily concerned with macroeconomic stability, which arguably makes it less vulnerable to human rights campaigns (Heupel & Zürn, 2018). Beyond MDBs and the IMF, bilateral and private donors play an increasingly important role in the context of development financing—either on their own, or in the context of public-private partnerships (PPPs; Beisheim & Liese, 2014; Weber et al., 2016). The more actors participate in partnerships for development financing, the more diffuse chains of legitimation and responsibility become. The challenge for TSM thus consists in transferring their acquired know-how to the context of private actors. Yet in contrast to the relatively manageable amount of MDBs, a plethora of private actors exists. To estimate the future direction of human rights accountability in the context of development, we need, among other things, more research that investigates how and on what level TSM best address this vast range of actors most effectively.

I mentioned a second, and admittedly important, limitation of this study already in the introduction: Ultimately, accountability mechanisms are only as good as they lead to actual *improvements in the well-being of project-affected people on the ground*. However, I restricted my work to an analysis of human rights accountability enshrined in the policies and institutional design of MDBs, without systematically investigating the effects of such organizational reforms on MDB governance addressees. To my defense, I am inclined to argue that Annual Reports of the World Bank Inspection Panel, the report by the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG, 2010), academic literature assessing the IP's effectiveness (Fox et al., 2003) as well as a broad comparative meta-study on existing accountability mechanisms at MDBs (Genovese & Van Huijstee, 2016) all suggest that binding and precise policies, as well as an independent third party

authorized to review compliance in fact bear tangible results. In other words, existing studies and evaluations support my institutionalist approach, indicating an unambiguous relationship between high degrees of legalization of human rights accountability on the one hand, and the human rights protection for individuals on the ground on the other. Having said that, the same studies and evaluations point to the urgency to go beyond such an institutionalist perspective and to pay attention to organizational cultures as well. In principle, the decreasing legalization of human rights accountability at the World Bank could, at least in part, be compensated for in practice by change in the World Bank's (and borrowing countries) organizational culture (see also Chapter 3 for a critique on the concept of legalization). Therefore, I encourage future research that analyses the precise relationships between a) policy and institutional reform with b) the role of organizational culture and c) a rigorous analysis of the impact of accountability mechanisms on the ground.

Related to this point, there is a danger that initial movement success to establish a new organizational template (i.e., the adoption of human rights accountability) complicates the implementation of comprehensive accountability due to a *de-coupling of talk and action*. I already pointed to the trend among MDBs to establish accountability mechanisms. Heupel and Zürn (2018) find, that this trend also applies to international organizations in general (e.g., the UN, FAO, the EU, AU). According to the authors, among the 20 IOs with the highest name recognition, 15 IOs had established human rights provisions by 2018. Notable outliers include the World Trade Organization (WTO) as well as the Association of Southeast Asian States (ASEAN; Heupel & Zürn, 2018). On the level of nation states, human rights protection gradually became part of the “global script” throughout the last decades (Hafner-Burton et al., 2008). The empirical record suggests that we are currently witnessing a similar evolution for the norm of human rights accountability for international organizations. As more and more IOs adopt this script, movement engagement that aims at the establishment of such a mechanism (as in case 1) decreases in importance. In hindsight, movement engagement in case 1 toward the World Bank bears special relevance, as it triggered a socialization of development finance more broadly and, following a logic of institutional isomorphism (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), even spilled over to the IO community as a whole. The critical question nowadays therefore is no longer whether MDBs establish human rights accountability mechanisms, but whether these mechanisms are comprehensive, effective, and internalized in organizational culture. For once HR accountability becomes part of the global script, movement socialization recedes to the back. Instead, imitation and mimicry become more important as sources of MDB's institutional design. To be sure, the growing expectation that MDBs should be bound by their own policies, i.e., fact that human rights accountability is part of a global script for MDBs – despite long-held assumptions of MDB (and IO) immunity – constitutes a major success for the transnational social movement analyzed in this work. Without this movement, this script would most likely not have come about in the first place. At the same time, scholars of sociological institutionalism provide good theoretical reasons to caution against excessive expectations in light of script diffusion: the more MDBs adopt reforms to live up to a script, there is a danger that the script is adopted on the surface only, leading to a de-coupling on talk, decisions, and action (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). This is different

from reform out of genuine conviction, a conviction that emerged out a preceding crisis that in turn triggered a learning process. Where human rights accountability reforms are de-coupled from action, there is a danger that we observe little improvement on the ground despite a spread of the script. Future research needs to go beyond the talk of MDBs and borrowing governments to detect the developments on the ground.

In addition to this danger of organizational de-coupling in light of conflicting expectations (e.g., to adopt the new script *AND* to maintain organizational routines at the same time), we have compelling reasons to be highly skeptical regarding the spread of comprehensive and thus effective human rights accountability in light of *broader geopolitical trends*. While my work could only strip these trends, some of the most pressing research questions emerge out of this complex. For instance, the informalization of global governance should be of particular concern to TSM who seek legitimate global governance organizations. “Informalization” here describes an ongoing trend toward more flexible, soft law arrangements such as the G7/8 or G20 formats (Snidal & Vabulas, 2016). The more informalized the institutional design of the international organization exercising governance, the less movements have the ability to interact with them directly. For example, disruptive tactics against the G20 are not possible outside actual G20 summits in the absence of an independent administration and secretariat. Even if G20 protests during actual summits would amount to a G20 legitimacy crisis, it is not clear how accountability could follow. For in the absence of formalized standards guiding the governance activities of the G20, there is no possibility for *any* human rights accountability mechanism (based on such standards). Further research should address pathways through which TSM could mitigate this problem.

Whether we deal with informal or formal international organizations, all global governance is characterized by a dispersion of legal orders on different levels which intersect and partially overlap (Zürn, 2010). The increasing shift toward “country systems” under the new World Bank policy framework (see case study 2) makes this very clear. If an implementing agency fails to protect against discrimination in the context of a World Bank financed project in Brazil, those affected are most likely uncertain regarding the right level of complaint: should they direct the complaint against the implementing agency, Brazil, or the World Bank? On the one hand, there is a risk that states delegate questionable practices to MDBs, thus exploiting the nature of multi-level governance (Wilde, 2006). Similarly, MDBs could (and already do) delegate high-risk endeavors. For instance, the World Bank’s International Finance Corporation (IFC) increasingly works through so-called “financial intermediaries” to finance implementing partners for their own projects. Such financial intermediaries include commercial banks, private equity funds, and insurance companies. Since they are formally not part of the World Bank, IFC’s human rights standards do not apply, while governments do not feel responsible either (Oxfam/CIEL, 2012). The more actors of different character and legal standing are involved, the higher the risk that states and MDBs evade their human rights responsibilities. At the same time, case studies from the European Union indicate that multi-level governance may also have the opposite effect and improve human rights accountability by providing multiple access points for individuals to file their complaints. A prominent example involves the practice of “blacklisting” by the UN Security Council (UNSC). According to the procedure, states or regional organizations could nominate

individuals for the UN blacklist. The UN Security Council then had the authority to sanction such blacklisted individuals (e.g., by freezing their funds). When several individuals issued a complaint against this practice with the European Court of Justice (ECJ) on grounds that the UNSC violated fundamental principles of the rule of law (i.e., seizing property without a court hearing or allegations of wrongdoing), the ECJ ruled that the practice of the UNSC was in fact unlawful and determined that UN sanctions could only be effected if in compliance with European Human Rights Law (Heupel and Zürn, 2018). Hence, it is an open question whether the shift toward multilevel global governance with dispersed and intersecting normative orders is likely to increase or decrease the human rights accountability for aggrieved individuals and communities.

Next, the causal mechanism I hypothesized heavily builds on the availability of liberal MDB member states that are willing and powerful enough to catalyze TSM human rights agendas. More and more, this premise becomes problematic. At the time of writing, U.S. President Donald Trump managed to dispel the last grains of doubt one might still have had concerning his aversion for multilateralism and governance through international organizations—formal and informal. With respect to *formal* IOs, Trump effected massive funding cuts to the UN (especially UN Peacekeeping) and while funding cuts to MDBs were still moderate (relative to those toward the UN), MDBs relying on U.S. funding lived under a constant fear that more severe cuts might follow. Regarding informal IOs, Trump had affronted the G7 by cancelling the final “Communiqué” via Twitter overnight (after having signed it at first) as he also withdrew support for the Paris Climate Agreement from 2015. Also, Trump ordered trade sanctions against the EU, thereby heavily incriminating US-EU transatlantic relations, cancelled the Iran nuclear deal and instead opted to meet North Korean President Kim bilaterally without substantial outcomes. In short, within less than two years, Donald Trump’s foreign policy based on nationalist unilateralism, the negotiation of bilateral “deals” and protectionism paired with a concordant disrespect for international law, long-term multilateral solutions as well as international organizations fundamentally questions two sub-premises of my causal mechanism:

1. That the United States is a liberal state based on cosmopolitan values and a firm commitment to human rights.
2. That the United States is able and willing to use its power resources inside MDBs (and IOs more generally) to enhance these values.

In an increasingly polarized U.S. society, there is a realistic chance that Trump is able to secure a second term in 2020. With or without a second term, the transition of global power dynamics and the end of U.S. hegemony which preceded Donald Trump’s presidency (Acharya, 2014) seem irreversible. At the same time, states of the European Union—a natural TSM addressee in times of ceasing U.S. influence—are experiencing their own internal challenges: increasingly powerful right-wing populist parties challenge seasoned European democracies (e.g., The Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, France), while nationalists are already in power in Hungary, Poland, Austria and Italy. The latter is, after all, a founding member of the EU. In short, EU member states experience serious contestation of their liberal, cosmopolitan orientation. As a consequence,

movements may simply lack those powerful member state allies who are prepared to push for human rights reforms in MDBs. Case 2 is an early indication of this danger.

At the same time, I addressed the counter mobilization of rising powers, particularly that of China, in length in my analysis. It suffices here to say that China's quest for greater influence in MDBs and its counter multilateralism already had massive implications for TSM socialization efforts in Case 2. Given China's authoritarian political system, it is highly questionable whether TSMs will be able to change China's stance on human rights in MDBs. In the absence of elected representatives and the absence of a free press, China is not vulnerable to disruptive tactics (e.g., public campaigns) toward MDBs it supports (Part I of the causal mechanism). Secondly, even if TSM would manage to set human rights accountability on the agenda of Chinese decision-makers, one may doubt whether the Chinese political system would provide TSM with sufficient access to persuade decision-makers of the appropriate course of action (Part II of causal mechanism). Third, MDB staff that sympathizes with TSM demands is even less likely to push for human reform the more China gains influence in the MDB. Thus, we can expect more, rather than less, MDB efforts to coopt human rights movements. Future research needs to analyze the specific ramifications of these general trends that are beginning to loom more and more clearly.

In conclusion, I believe it is safe to predict that tensions between the basic interests of project affected people on the one hand, and the interests of powerful state and economic actors on the other, will not only continue, but increase for some time to come. To ensure that the basic right of the global poor and vulnerable are protected, MDBs and their member states have a special responsibility to provide for comprehensive human rights standards, transparency regarding their protection and effective sanctioning provisions in cases of their violation. This responsibility derives from basic normative requirements toward minimally legitimate political orders and from international law: the human rights obligations of international organizations and the treaty law binding MDB member states—individually, but also in their capacity as members of MDBs. Transnational social movements played and continue to play an important role to socialize MDBs into their human rights obligations. Through their efforts, movements effected policy and institutional reforms and increased an awareness for human rights violations in the context of development projects. Thanks to movement efforts there is an increasing awareness for the existent legal prohibition of MDBs to finance or support projects in the context of which human rights are violated (Dann and Riegner, 2014; Riegner, 2016). However, after three decades of progress, human rights accountability is under threat: the “shrinking space” for civil society undermines the capacity of social movements around the world to exercise their critical functions as watchdogs and agents of MDB socialization. Increasing counter mobilization toward a “liberal democratic script” including human rights at its core from authoritarian regimes, Chinese counter multilateralism and the growing importance of private investment capital in development finance not only enhance competition to MDBs, but also threaten to undermine achievements in the area of human rights. Thus, to guarantee human rights in development, liberal democratic states and MDBs alike need to realize their responsibility and mobilize their potential as guardians of legitimate, morally sound and sustainable development. Fulfilling this role also means to live up to the very standards of

good governance donors and MDBs themselves demand elsewhere. At a minimum, it means to adopt policies and institutional reform to guarantee comprehensive human rights accountability.