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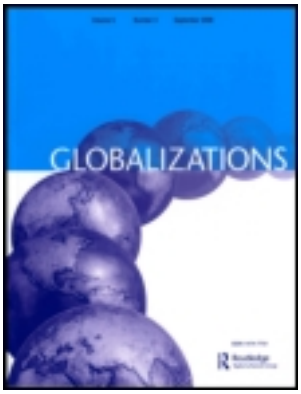

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Global Social Movements in Global Governance

Elizabeth Anne Bennett [a]
[a] Brown University, Providence, RI, 02912, USA

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Global Social Movements in Global Governance

ELIZABETH ANNE BENNETT

Brown University, Providence, RI 02912, USA

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ABSTRACT *Global social movements (GSMs) are networks that collaborate across borders to advance thematically similar agendas throughout the world and in doing so have become powerful actors in global governance. While some scholars argue that GSMs contribute to democracy in the global arena, others insist GSMs have their own representational shortcomings. Both sets of scholars examine the general ways in which GSMs organize members, aggregate interests, and distribute power and resources. However, such features may not be uniform across GSMs. This article argues that in order to assess the affect of GSMs on global governance, scholars must analyze the representational attributes of individual GSMs. The article offers such a framework, using the case of the fair trade movement. The key insight offered is that a small number of institutions sometimes become dominant in a diverse movement, framing the movement to the public in a particular way, and exercising disproportionate influence within the movement. By evaluating the democratic qualities of these institutions, and the degree to which they do or do not represent the broader movement, scholars can evaluate the relationship between GSMs and global governance. The article concludes with a discussion of what representational deficiencies in GSMs may mean for global governance.*

Keywords: Fairtrade, social movements, global social movements, global governance, democratic deficit, civil society, transnational civil society, activism, inequality, INGO, international development, global South

Introduction

Global social movements (GSMs) are networks of organizations and individuals collaborating across borders and outside of national identities to advance thematically similar agendas throughout the world. GSMs have become powerful actors in global governance, exercising influence through the state and independently of government. Some scholars argue that GSMs

Correspondence Address: Elizabeth A. Bennett, Colorado State University, Department of Sociology, Center for Fair and Alternative Trade, Box 1784, Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA. Email: elizabeth_bennett@brown.edu

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contribute to democracy in the global arena, while others insist GSMs' ability to challenge the democratic deficit is limited by their own representational shortcomings. To inform this debate, researchers draw on generalized notions about how GSMs organize members, aggregate interests, and distribute power and resources. However, such representational features may not be uniform across GSMs—some may be more democratic, and others less so.

This article argues that the extent to which a GSM is able to represent the diversity of interests of its members and facilitate democratic decision making in its own institutions has an impact on how the GSM influences global politics. In particular, a GSM's representational features may have significant recourse for the global 'democratic deficit', or lack of direct democratic deliberation and decision in international organizations. It is conceivable that representative and democratic GSMs help democratize public global governance bodies by bringing marginalized perspectives to an otherwise elite decision-making table. Likewise, GSMs may address unequal access to high-level decision making in the private sector by creating incentives to develop non profit-oriented goals, such as environmental sustainability or poverty reduction. In order to assess the affect of GSMs on the democratic quality of public global governors or private sources of international authority scholars must analyze the representational attributes of the individual GSMs involved in a particular case.

This article offers a framework for studying representation in GSMs, using the case of the fair trade movement. Although ethnographic methods have generated rich accounts of events and organizations, these data have limited purchase for understanding movement-level attributes. The framework used here is predicated by the observation that oftentimes a small number of institutions become dominant in a diverse movement, framing the movement to the public, and exercising influence within the movement. By evaluating the representational qualities of these institutions, and the degree to which they represent a more diverse movement, scholars can arrive at more informed conclusions about how a GSM or group of GSMs addresses or reifies the democratic deficit in global governance. This article supports the argument that GSMs are important actors in global governance, and that *how* GSMs are organized has implications for their affect on democracy in global affairs. It demonstrates a framework for analyzing representation in GSMs, and discusses the implications of non-representative GSMs on global governance.

Global Social Movements and Global Governance

The state is no longer the sole, or in some instances even the principal, source of authority in either the domestic arena or in the international system (Hall and Biersteker, 2002, p. 5). On the contrary, globalization has ushered in a new role for the imagination in social life (Appadurai, 2000, p. 13), and its effect on GSMs is as significant as the advent of the nation-state system was on domestic contentious politics (Markoff, 2003; Smith and Wiest, 2006; Tilly, 1984). In the most recent wave of globalization, beginning in the early 1990s, the influence of INGOs has exploded (Mathews, 1997). Transnational networks are breeding new ideas; they advocate, protest, and mobilize public support; they do legal, scientific, technical, and policy analysis; they provide services; they shape, implement, monitor, and enforce national and international commitments; and they change institutions and norms (ibid., p. 53). Non-state international actors are able to mobilize information strategically to help create new issues and frameworks and to persuade, pressure, and gain leverage over much more powerful organizations (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p. x). Quantitatively, the financial resources and expertise of non-state actors at least approximate, and sometimes exceed, those of smaller

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governments and international organizations (Mathews, 1997, p. 53). INGOs may even be able to push around the largest governments (Ibid., p. 53), and rival corporate adversaries (Evans, 2005, p. 655).

Today, 'citizens organize themselves—outside their identity with a particular state or their role as a producer or consumer—to advance shared agendas and coordinate political activities throughout the world' (Wapner, 2002, p. 204). This phenomenon has been examined under many names, such as: transnational civil society (Batliwala and Brown, 2006), global civil society (Smith and Wiest, 2006; Wapner, 2002), international civil society (Appadurai, 2000), cross-border activism (Naidoo, 2006), transnational civil society movements (Ibid.), transnational social movements (Cohen, 1998; Smith and Wiest, 2006), transnational advocacy networks (Keck and Sikkink, 1998), transnational collective action (della Porta and Tarrow, 2005; Kaldor et al., 2007), global justice movement (Evans, 2005), and globalization from below (Appadurai, 2000). In this article, GSMs are *groups of citizens who organize themselves across borders and outside their national identities to advance thematically similar agendas and coordinate political activities throughout the world* (adopted loosely from Wapner, 2002). GSMs include individual citizens, networks, and organizations, and may target state policies and/or private behavior. Examples include the human rights movement, the environmental movement, and the fair trade movement.

This article makes explicit what other authors have noted more casually—that GSMs are global governors. Global governance is 'the collective capacity to identify and solve problems on a global scale' (Slaughter, 2003, p. 83). Public global governors are states, international organizations, and transgovernmental networks. Private global governors include multinational corporations, terrorist networks, and GSMs. Traditionally, the global governance literature has privileged states and interstate organizations as the main actors, limiting private global governors to antagonizing roles. In these studies, GSMs govern vis-à-vis the state by lobbying, setting agendas, framing issues, and mobilizing around states' and international organizations' (IOs) policies and policymaking processes (e.g. Tilly and Tarrow 2007; Tarrow, 1994 on states; and Risse, 2002 on IOs). For example, at the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle (1999) and Cancun (2003), participants of the global trade justice movement aimed to influence how state delegations negotiated new trade agreements, and how the WTO (World Trade Organization) facilitated these negotiations. Another way in which GSMs govern in concert with public actors is by serving on special consultative committees to states and IOs. For example, GSM representatives sit on the Codex Alimentarius Commission which develops food standards, guidelines, and codes of practice for the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. More than ever, the state is sharing and/or ceding policy making to non-state actors (Cashore, 2002, p. 503; Clapp, 1998; Coleman and Perl, 1999),[1] and GSMs are assuming authoritative positions independently of the state (Cutler, 2002; Hall and Biersteker, 2002). In these roles, transnational non-state actors 'have been accorded some form of legitimate authority' (Hall and Biersteker, 2002, p. 4; see also Cutler et al., 1999; Lipschutz and Fogel, 2002). Today, global social movements are taking on some of the state's most challenging problems—eradicating poverty, protecting the environment, and enhancing overall welfare.

A key debate in this literature is whether or not GSMs, in their public and private governance activities, challenge or reify the democratic deficit in the global arena. Perspectives on this issue are polarized. The optimistic position, often promoted by world polity theorists, is that social movement actors democratize IOs and the process of globalization by representing the masses (Boli and Thomas, 1999; Florini, 2000). Cosmopolitan democrats and advocates of deliberative democracy argue that the systematic inclusion of civil society and social movements

in IOs can help public global governors overcome the democratic deficit (Archibugi et al., 1998). In this 'governance without government' perspective, advocacy networks can help reframe international and domestic debates, changing their terms, their sites, and the configuration of participants. By overcoming the deliberate suppression of information that sustains many abuses, such networks are among the most important sources of new ideas, norms, and identities in the international system (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p. x). In this view, the non-hierarchical nature of transnational civil society networks helps to level the playing field (Beckfield, 2003; Risse, 2002).

The general consensus, however, supports the opposite perspective (Zurn, 2002, p. 245)—that 'when it comes to democratic accountability, representivity and participation', GSMs' claims 'have to be taken with a grain of salt' (Risse, 2002, p. 269). Because GSMs do not have reliable systems of aggregating the interests of their members (O'Rourke, 2003, p. 23), they may fail to represent the priorities of broader populations (Conway 2004, 2007, 2011; Lipschultz and Fogel 2002, p. 136; Smith, 2004; Smith and Weist, 2006)—if their input is not democratic, their output will not be either.[2] There are several variations of this argument: GSMs disproportionately serve those who are able to mobilize resources (Boswell and Chase Dunn, 2000); GSMs are dominated by citizens of 'rich, core western states' (Beckfield, 2003); GSMs are not separate from the market (Amoore and Langley, 2004, esp. p. 90; Hall and Biersteker, 2002, p. 221); and GSMs are not purely voluntary (Amoore and Langley, 2004, esp. 90; Hall and Biersteker, 2002, p. 221; regarding Fairtrade, see Raynolds et al., 2007a, pp. 149–50). Some take this argument one step further, arguing that inequality and domination are inherent in civil society, and that GSMs simply replicate and reproduce traditional inequalities (Amoore and Langley, 2004, p. 90; Keane, 2003; MacLean, 1999). At the extreme, scholars argue that democratic legitimacy is not even possible in civil society communities, that only the modern nation provides potential for self-governance (Zurn, 2002, p. 245).

This article takes up the concern that when private actors are included in transnational governance structures or granted private authority in the international sphere, their representational shortcomings do not address the democratic deficit, but instead 'directly challenge democratic and liberal theories of governance and law' (Cutler, 2002, p. 33). It shows that *because* GSMs are global governors, *how* they organize themselves has implications for democracy global governance. Similar work has been taken up by social scientists worldwide. Sites of empirical investigation include the World Social Forum (Conway, 2004; Smith et al., 2008), participatory governance regimes (Baiocchi, 2005), and the global environmental justice movement (Reitan, 2007). Theoretically grounded studies are also ongoing (e.g. Cutler et al., 1999; Hall and Biersteker, 2002). These inquiries have culminated in a rich body of event- or organization-specific descriptions of this phenomenon, which succeeds in problematizing the idea of civil society as 'neutral' territory. This literature identifies three mechanisms through which GSMs may replicate—not challenge—traditional North–South inequalities. First, participation may be more coerced than voluntary, given beneficiaries' marginalized economic locations and limited alternative opportunities (e.g. Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 9; Raynolds et al., 2007a, pp. 149–50). Second, organizations may be subject to corporate co-optation, especially when and certification is used as a tool, and MNCs are able to offer massive demand in exchange for diluted standards and lower prices (e.g. Busch and Bain, 2004; Jaffee, 2010). Third, institutions and policies created by GSMs may not address power differentials (Amoore and Langley, 2004, p. 99; Jaffee, 2010; Mutersbaugh and Lyon, 2010, p. 31).

The literature makes a convincing case that GSMs do not operate as democratic bodies, thus calling into question the capacity of GSMs to democratize global governance. However, neither theoretical nor empirical research concludes that GSMs are uniformly undemocratic. This article

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argues for moving beyond generalized accounts of GSMs, by identifying and evaluating the specific GSMs working on a global issue—such as climate change, human rights, or international trade. By taking seriously the possibility that all GSMs may not be equal, the debate about GSMs reifying or challenging the democratic deficit in global governance can move forward by making empirically grounded claims about governance in specific issue areas.

Case Selection, Methodology, Methods, and Data

Several GSMs contribute to global governance in international trade, including the trade justice movement, proponents of indigenous intellectual property rights, and fair (alternative) trade. This article evaluates the representational attributes of the fair trade movement. Fair trade seeks to alleviate poverty and empower producers in the South by raising commodity prices, improving market access, and providing additional resources for economic and social development.[3] Today's fair trade movement has been developing since the 1940s, when groups in the global North aimed to support producers of crafts and commodities in the global South by developing systems of trade that redistribute profit in the value chain. Fairtrade labeling—a constellation of organizations and stakeholders who use certification as a tool to facilitate fair trade—is the institution that has come to dominate this movement. It frames the movement to nonmembers, establishes norms for movement members, and enjoys a large share of the movement's governing power. The INGO Fairtrade International (formerly Fairtrade Labeling Organizations, or 'FLO' as it is referred to here) manages the global certification system from its headquarters in Bonn, Germany,[4] making policies and setting prices that affect over 1.2 million farmers and farm workers each year (FLO, 2012, p. 12).

Fair trade is an exceptionally appropriate case for examining representation, participation, decision making, and democracy in GSMs. Since the movement is explicitly committed to leveling the playing field between traditionally powerful actors in the North, and traditionally marginalized actors in the South, it would be the most likely type of movement to create equality-oriented institutions. However, several fair trade scholars argue the movement fails to challenge traditional power inequalities or represent broad interests. Likewise, FLO presents an exceptional opportunity to examine how INGOs' institutional designs can facilitate a challenge to—or replication of—inequality in North–South relationships. Unlike many fair trade organizations, the outcomes of its FLO's multi-stakeholder negotiations are explicit, precise, and often quantifiable. For example, its policies set minimum prices, specifying a minimum percentage of fair trade certified ingredients for composite products, deciding what products to certify, and setting fees and social premiums. FLO has a mixed record of empowering producers in its own governance system. On one hand, the organization has excluded producers from the board of directors, withheld voting rights, and created subtle, often cultural, barriers to influence. On the other hand, over the course of two decades, the global system of organizing certified fair trade has moved from informal and erratic producer consultation to a more formal and equitable power-sharing arrangement between North and South.

The framework used to evaluate the representational qualities of the fair trade movement is based on the premise that a single, centralized institution often arises from a diverse, decentralized social movement (e.g. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch from the human rights movement). This approach recognizes that institutions differ from social movements: institutions are 'complexes of positions, roles, norms and values lodged in particular types of social structures' (Turner, 1997, p. 6), whereas movements are specifically '*noninstitutionalized* collective actions consciously oriented towards social change (or resisting such change) and

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possessing a minimum of organization' (Jenkins, 1983, p. 529, emphasis added). Institutions organize human activity (Turner, 1997, p. 6) by structuring social interactions through information provision and the threat of sanctions for noncompliance (Knight and Sened, 1995, p. 9).

In a social movement, the dominant institution (or institutions) becomes iconic, framing the movement to non-members, serving as the spokesperson to media, and defining movement norms. It also becomes a central site of contestation by movement members and non-members. The dominant institution is awarded more authority than other movement groups, allowing it to write rules, alter incentives, and govern in ways unavailable to the broader movement. For other movement actors, as the dominant institution rises, the cost of deviating—pursuing other objectives, using alternative methods, or changing rhetoric—increases. The relationship between new institutions and social movements matters because dominant institutions create winners and losers within a movement. They choose which goals to pursue, what norms to institutionalize, whose tactics to revere as 'best practices', and which individuals should lead. They also evolve over time, and may further converge with or diverging from the broader movement. Tensions between a dominant institution and the broader social movement may include: moderate vs radical goals; legal vs illegal tactics; and mainstreaming for broader appeal vs preserving mission integrity. In public global governance, dominant institutions are awarded consultative roles and asked to represent the movement's perspective. Outside of the state, widespread recognition awards them private authority. To evaluate the movement's capacity to address the democratic deficit in global governance, this study identifies a movement's dominant institution, investigates representation within the dominant institution, evaluates the dominant institution as a representative of the broader movement, and assesses alternative representatives of the movement.

The methods used to collect data about the movement, the dominant institution, and the relationship between the two, include primary and secondary literature review, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews. I first reviewed primary sources, news, and literature on fair trade organizations, networks, events, people, history, and statistics, and met with fair trade scholars. I identified coffee as a fair trade product for which there are diverse practices, and focused on this product as a way to learn about diversity in the movement (for other studies using coffee as a point of entry, see Bacon et al., 2008, p. 260). Using participant observation, I gathered information at the following sites: various sites of fair trade activity in Oaxaca, Mexico (2009), the US Social Forum in Detroit (2010), at the Fair Trade Futures Forum in Boston (2010), the Mid-Atlantic Northeast Coffee Conference (2011), and the Providence Coffee Society (2011). Additionally, I interviewed individuals involved in the development of the fair trade movement, people currently facilitating ethical trade in coffee, and current leaders in the fair trade movement. In-person interviews were conducted in Canada, England, Mexico, Peru, and the United States, and phone interviews were conducted with people in over a dozen additional countries. I initially drafted a list of interviewees using publicly available literature and web sources, then expanded the list using the 'snowball sampling' method of asking each interviewee to recommend additional informants. In total, this article draws on over 100 in-person conversations, phone interviews, and substantive email exchanges conducted between July 2009 and March 2012. Of the interviewees, about 30 are producers of fair trade goods; 30 have developed, staffed, or managed large fair trade systems; 15 are development workers who interact with fair trade; 15 have been fair trade retailers or traders; and 10 are academics, board members, or hold otherwise relevant positions. Individuals named in this article have given their permission to be cited.

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Case Study: The Fair Trade Movement

Although the integration of trade and social values is not a twentieth-century phenomenon, the origin of today's fair trade movement is often traced back to the 1940s. After World War II, individuals and religious solidarity groups in the United States and Europe began purchasing handicrafts from underdeveloped or war-ravaged countries and selling them for the same price in their wealthier home countries (Nicholls and Opal, 2005, p. 20). For example, in 1946, Mennonite Edna Ruth Byler was struck by the overwhelming poverty she witnessed during a trip to Puerto Rico. Moved to take action, Byler purchased Puerto Rican crafts and sold them out of the trunk of her car at church meetings at no additional mark up. In 1952, she and a friend displayed and sold crafts at the Mennonite World Conference in Basel, Switzerland. The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) adopted and expanded her practice, creating what later became one of *Forbes Magazine*'s 'World's Most Ethical Companies': Ten Thousand Villages. Around the same time, the American Church of the Brethren began aiding refugees in post-war Europe by importing their wooden cuckoo clocks from Germany to Maryland for resale (SERRV International). In 1958, their organization, SERRV International, opened one of the world's first fair trade retail stores (WFTO). Similar work emerged in Europe at this time. For example, in the late 1950s, the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief in Great Britain, a group that had provided humanitarian aid during the war, began selling crafts made by Chinese refugees (WFTO). These early direct marketing projects were central to the development of a number of religious and humanitarian efforts to serve the developing world, and shaped the early principles of the fair trade movement (Raynolds et al., 2007b, p. 7).

In the 1960s, these 'direct marketing' practices expanded rapidly. The MCC began a global program called 'SELFHELP Crafts' (Ten Thousand Villages), SERRV established a network churches to sell crafts (SERRV International), and the Oxford Committee created an organization specifically for fair trade. As other groups adopted the concept, more consumer and producer countries were added and 'alternative trade' began to identify and be identified as a movement (Bisaillon et al., 2005, p. 4). As organizations refined their goals and tactics, ideational differences developed between groups (Raynolds et al., 2007b, p. 7). The mainstream objective was to respond to poverty or disaster in the South by providing a network for craft products (WFTO), but many groups also framed their work as a response to the injustices facing the world's poor and the unequal trading relations thought to maintain this poverty (Ibid.). For these groups, the objectives of fair trade extended beyond development assistance to fighting unfair trading conditions, reducing the dependency of the South on Northern aid, and assisting countries to develop from within (Bisaillon et al., 2005, p. 4). Less common, but also emerging at this time, was the use of fair trade to deliver aid to progressive but politically marginalized communities in the South—a combination of political support and fair trade called 'solidarity trade' (WFTO).

By the 1980s, fair trade organizations began meeting informally (WFTO) to exchange information, coordinate trading arrangements, pool resources, and garner support for common campaigns (Barratt Brown, 1993, p. 157). Several organizations established a central secretariat, the International Federation for Alternative Trade (IFAT, now the World Fair Trade Organization), to formalize and develop these activities, plan ways of opening up its membership to Third World organizations, strengthen communication, and serve as an umbrella for the alternative trade movement (Ibid.). To increase sales, some organizations aimed to sell fairly traded products in mainstream retail outlets (Ibid.). For this purpose, several organizations introduced fair trade labels—marks that could be used by existing brands to communicate that their

purchase was supporting cooperatively organized small farmers. These early fair trade certification systems, such as the Dutch label 'Max Havelaar', helped to increase the supply, sales, and consumer recognition of fair trade goods (Smith et al., 2008, p. 2). Today, the worldwide 'Fairtrade' system retails about 550 million Euros annually (FLO, 2011, p. 13), but many members of the movement contest the idea of a label and/or specific features of the Fairtrade certification system.

Movement Diversity and Representation

As fair trade shifted from Byler's trunk of handicrafts to a multimillion dollar enterprise, the movement's growth revealed underlying tensions about the purpose and practice of fair trade. In the earliest years, fair trade was a form of development, reconstruction, or disaster aid. Many groups considered it more empowering or dignified than traditional charity. In the decades following, fair trade came to be framed as a solution to unjust trading patterns. The rise of trade justice discourse brought a tension to the fore: Is fair trade an effort to aid the poor within the existing political economy, or also an attempt to transform international trade? By the 1990s, fair trade organizations began taking advantage of economies of scale and using 'objective' certification systems. This highlighted a second controversy: Is fair trade simply about providing market access or does it also require personal relationships? Likewise, in the 1990s, as the WTO consolidated power over the rules of international trade and states dismantled trade barriers, an opportunity to shape new trade policies emerged, and fair trade was pitched as an alternative to conventional practice. Debates about the movement's relationship to trade policy underscored a third debate: Is fair trade opposed to free trade, a regulatory mechanism within free trade, and/or an option within free trade? Today, the most divisive and well-documented cleavage in fair trade scholarship is the tension between working *within* or *against* the market system—a debate that divides 'regulators' who aim to work within contemporary economic systems, and 'transformers' who fear a drift toward neoliberalism (see Johnson, 2001, p. 20; Raynolds et al., 2007b, p. 224).

These tensions and debates have resulted in a diverse GSM that is divided along many cleavages. The overall purpose and objectives of fair trade can be categorized into four general perspectives: First, fair trade is a safety net that helps groups marginalized by their government, by war, or by natural disaster avoid living in poverty, resorting to undesirable professions, or migrating (see Lewis and Runsten, 2008, on fair trade and migration). For example, in the late 1980s, Equal Exchange, a small cooperative on the east coast of the US, began importing fair trade coffee from Nicaragua to support the Sandinistas' reconstruction (Rosenthal, 2011). Second, fair trade is a development project that provides market access, information, and credit to struggling businesses. Success, in this view, is producers becoming economically sustainable. For example, TWIN Trading imported the first container of fair trade coffee from Mexico to support nascent small farmer cooperatives struggling to compete with large estates (Barratt Brown, 2011). Third, fair trade is a regulatory mechanism. Since producer governments do not enforce labor standards and consumer governments are not allowed to discriminate imports according to process,[5] fair trade is a regulatory framework for a social system of norms. The goal is provide regulated work environments to as many producers as possible so more businesses are operating according to desirable social and environmental norms. For example, Fairtrade certification aims to eliminate child labor and include women in positions of leadership by making these standards on coffee farms (FLO). And fourth, fair trade is an alternative to big business. Similar to farmers markets, fair trade creates social space and

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personal relationships. It is an alternative to commodity fetishism and a return to production-process conscious consumption. The goal is to provide an opportunity for producers to be creative, entrepreneurial, and self-expressive instead of reduced to 'humanpower', 'labor hours', or a 'factor of production'. For example, the American importer Cooperative Coffees supports only small-scale coffee farmers working within cooperatively owned structures (Cycon, 2012).

Movement members also disagree on which tactics best achieve these goals. The myriad systems developed to facilitate fair trade in coffee are illustrative of this diversity. For example, the Counter Culture Direct Trade Certification provides third party auditing that the Counter Culture coffee company complies with its commitments to farmers (Counter Culture); Sustainable Harvest's 'relationship coffee' promises that producers receive training and community development support, but does not engage in an audit process (Sustainable Harvest); and the Fairtrade label audits producers to make sure that they meet certain requirements, such as organizing democratically (FLO). Debates about what constitutes 'fair' are heated, and there is a great deal of disagreement within the movement about how to deliver benefits of ethical consumption in the North to producers in the South.

Fair trade advocates are also conflicted about the degree to which objectives and tactics should be made uniform across the movement. The movement simultaneously advocates coordination and unity, and celebrates of diversity and individuality. This was articulated in the keynote speech at the 2010 Fair Trade Futures Conference, a convening of fair trade stakeholders that takes place every five years in the United States:

> Are we a 'movement' or are we the next SYSTEM? . . . Imagine if the organs of your body were as uncoordinated as the parts of this movement! . . . Let's dump 'tactical sectarianism' . . . each person and each organization has to be a champion for her own approach, but the global emergency requires unity! (Danaher 2010)

Fairtrade Certification and the Broader Movement

Fairtrade labeling privileges some of the movement's goals, tactics, and ideologies above others—it is not representative of the movement. Not surprisingly, several aspects of and decisions made by the FLO are highly contentious in the broader movement. One argument is that certification has marginalized other movement members—when certification advocates teach consumers to 'look for the label', they make it more difficult for other fair traders to validate their own auditing systems. Similarly, when FLO changed its name to Fairtrade International in 2011, some argued that certifying organizations were intentionally aiming to claim ownership of the 'fair trade brand' (see FTRN, 2011). Another point of contention is whether or not certification, as a tool, is compatible with fair trade. As the owner of a relationship-oriented, non-certified fair trade business explained:

> On one side, if consumers only spend five to six seconds making a choice, and the Fairtrade sticker can help them to make the choice the movement prefers, certification grows the fair trade market share. On the other side, perhaps one would rather that consumers be confused and misled and the market share remain smaller, if the cost of certification negates the premium provided to producers. (Pomeroy 2010, summarized)

Likewise, some fair traders take issue with only certifying the product—not the retail outlet in which it is sold. Members of the World Fair Trade Organization, for example, are obligated to document 'fairness' throughout the supply chain (see Raynolds et al., 2007b, p. 224). The price offered under the Fairtrade system is criticized: 'Fairtrade certification should be a minimum

standard; often the price and premiums are not enough to lift families out of poverty, yet it certainly prevents wholesale exploitation of farmers in poor market conditions' (Tilghman, 2009), and it is accused of being growth-oriented at the cost of maintaining mission integrity (Bisaillon et al., 2005, pp. 6–7; Linton, 2008; Nicholls and Opal, 2005, p. 13; Raynolds et al., 2007b, p. 227). Academics also add to these arguments, asserting that certification 'provides the corporations valuable opportunities for image laundering' and that by 'slashing the ticket price for admission to fair trade' the entire movement suffers, as they must compete with multinationals (Jaffee, 2007, pp. 210–11; see also Linton et al., 2004). Finally, members of the fair trade movement criticize FLO's governance:

> Fairtrade [certification] has all of the traditional elements of all politics: who is making the decisions formally . . . and who is REALLY making the decision. . . . Who chooses the decision makers? What are the pressures and incentives on the decision makers? . . . Those of us who are doing so much of the work to trade fairly are *witnesses* and *not in the throws* of making these [certification] decisions. (Rosenthal, 2010)

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Representation in Fairtrade Certification

Fairtrade governance has evolved drastically since labeling began in 1988 and FLO was established in 1997 (see Bennett, 2012). There are two member assemblies that come together at the Annual General Assembly to make major decisions about certification. The Labeling Initiatives Assembly is comprised of the organizations responsible for marketing and licensing Fairtrade goods in the North. The Producer Networks Assembly is comprised of representatives of voluntary associations for certified producers (FLO, 2007). There are three producer networks, one in each of the three continents where certified producer organizations are located: Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Together, the labeling initiatives and producer networks make decisions about what products to certify, when to amend the FLO constitution, how to set prices, etc. They also elect the board of directors: three board members are independent experts, five represent national labeling initiatives, two represent trading organizations, and four represent the three producer networks.

The FLO governance system faces several representational shortcomings. Most obviously, some producers are not represented in the Producer Networks Assembly, such as Palestinian olive oil producers, who do not fall within the three geographical regions (PFTA), and estate workers in Latin America whose regional network, the Council of Latin American and Caribbean Fair Trade, represents only small-scale farms (CLAC). Additionally, although labeling initiatives and producer networks both vote, the former has more resources than the latter, and some argue that producers are ignored in less formal decision-making processes (Del Aguila, 2011). These non-democratic, North-centric critiques of governance are echoed on the ground. The perspective that 'certifiers come in with a paternalistic, northern, policing way' (Pomeroy, 2010) was supported by survey data showing that Fairtrade 'smallholders identify Fairtrade actors as external powerful agents more than equitable partners' (Nelson and Pound, 2009). Certification has become so closely associated with decisions from the North that some are advocating new, inclusive, collaborative processes, which they call 'participatory certification'. As a cooperative leader noted: 'We had a lot of years in which we were doing fair trade but without certification, this is about empowerment and being about to take your own path. Fair trade is now taking many paths, and participatory certification would be about being able to decide what the goal is' (Anonymous, 2010). Although the FLO governance system has included more producers in more high-level positions over time, it cannot be

considered a fully functioning democratic apparatus, and leaders may not represent the broader perspectives of the membership.

Discussion

Scholars debate whether GSMs, in their interactions with states and through their own private authority, mitigate the democratic deficit in global governance. These arguments rely on generalized accounts of how GSMs are organized, how they make decisions, and how they aggregate the interests of diverse groups. However, such 'representational attributes' may not be uniform across GSMs. This article demonstrates a framework for examining the representational features of individual GSMs. This approach identifies the movement's dominant institution, the actor or set of actors most often called upon to represent the movement, and describes its representational attributes. Then, it examines the broader movement's ideologies, tactics, points of tension, and relationship to the dominant institution. If private governors are indeed 'are rife with contradictions, antagonisms, and problems, and serious questions regarding representation and democratization [that] have not, so far, been addressed' (Lipschultz and Fogel, 2002, p. 136), this framework provides a starting point for such analysis.

Like many GSMs, the fair trade movement is diverse by many measures, both demographic and ideological. Its members come to different conclusions about fair trade's objectives, indicators of success, appropriate tools and tactics, and the degree to which the contemporary political economy constrains social change. Because of this diversity, the processes by which decisions are made and populations are represented matters—they determine whose preferences become policies for millions of marginalized workers and farmers in developing countries. In this context, Fairtrade labeling has become the movement's dominant institution, enjoying greater market share, including more producers, and enjoying most consumer recognition. Not only does FLO not represent the diverse range of perspectives within the fair trade movement, but it also faces several internal shortcomings, such as lack of representation, unequal access to resources, and limited voting rights for some areas in the South.

What do these representational deficiencies mean for global governance? On one hand, they constrain the movement's ability to bring broadly supported perspectives to global governance. For example, if leaders of FLO were to represent the fair trade movement on a civil society advisory council to the WTO, many ideas and tactics advocated by the movement would be silenced. On the other hand, any representative of a GSM may bring an alternative perspective to those offered by states and for-profit entities. In the previous example, the FLO leader may represent the interests of marginalized workers in the South better than trade negotiators, industry executives, or heads of state. While including GSMs is *necessary* for bolstering democracy in global governance, it is not always *sufficient*—who is included, and their relationship to the broader the movement, affects the degree to which inclusion begets representation.

How can the findings generated by 'dominant institutional analysis' be leveraged to improve GSMs' contributions to global governance? First, dominant institutions can address representational shortcomings by rethinking institutional designs, developing new mechanisms for input, and incorporating traditionally marginalized stakeholders in meaningful ways. For example, FLO is amending its constitution to pave the way for an equitable power-sharing relationship between members from the North and South. Second, movement members can create horizontal networks with rotating leadership to facilitate intra- and inter-movement communication. In the fair trade movement, the World Fair Trade Organization and the Fair Trade Research Network help to keep non-certified fair traders connected to each other, and to FLO.

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Third, states and IOs can consult with diverse delegations instead of relying heavily on dominant institutions. For example, in developing the *Accord AFNOR*, a legislative and institutional framework devoted to fair trade, the French government consulted with a wide range of fair trade actors (Cremona and Murín Durán, 2012).

Global social movements are important actors in global governance. They set agendas, provide information, and advocate solutions that are different than those presented by other actors in global governance. However, GSMs' ability to act as democratic leaders is limited by their own representational deficiencies, which may not be uniform across all movements. Movement-level analysis of individual GSMs provides the information required to compensate for such representational deficiencies, allowing states and movements alike to leverage movements as democratizing forces in global governance.

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Notes

1 For more on public-private partnerships in development, see Rochlin et al. (2008).

2 It should be noted that movements do not necessarily claim that they are broadly representative of, and accessible to, all the world's citizens (see Naidoo, 2006, p. 53).

3 'Fair trade as a concept refers to a critique of the historical inequalities inherent in international trade and to a belief that trade can be made more socially just. In the current era, fair trade refers to a set of initiatives that challenge global inequalities and create more egalitarian commodity networks linking marginalized producers in the global South with progressive consumers in the global North. Fair trade seeks to alleviate poverty and empower producers in the global South through the provision of better prices, stable market links, and other material and informational resources. Fair trade also seeks to bolster responsible consumption practices among Northern consumers by encouraging the purchase of items that are produced and traded under more equitable conditions. At the broadest level, fair trade seeks to eliminate North–South trade inequalities' (Raynolds 2009, p. 8).

4 In 1997, several national labeling initiatives in Europe and North America joined to form the INGO Fairtrade Labeling Organizations (FLO). In early 2011, FLO changed its name to Fairtrade International, but it is still commonly referred to as 'FLO' (FLO), as it is here. This article was first presented at the *Conference on Social Movement Governance, the Poor, and the New Politics of the Americas* at the University of South Florida in February, 2011. Thus, it does not reflect the significant changes that occurred within the Fairtrade labeling system in late 2011 and early 2012. For a more detailed history of Fairtrade certification governance, including recent changes, see Bennett (2012).

5 'Under the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), it is acceptable for countries to impose trade restrictions based on problems with the product, but it is not acceptable to impose restrictions based on the process by which the product is produced. For example, if a product were a proven health risk to the citizens of an importing country, it would be acceptable to ban the import of that particular product. However, if the product's production process resulted in undesirable social or environmental consequences (including those that are health hazards to workers and citizens in the exporting country), the importing country would not be allowed to impose import restrictions under WTO rules' (Hudson and Hudson, 2003, p. 418).

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Elizabeth A. Bennett is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science at Brown University and a visiting researcher at the Center for Fair and Alternative Trade at Colorado State University. Her dissertation examines the conditions under which fair trade organizations include producers in high-level decision making, and the role of international NGOs and transnational social movements in global governance. Her work is funded by the American Council on Germany, the Tinker Foundation, the German Academic Exchange (DAAD), the Watson Institute for International Studies, and the Stephen Robert Fellowship. She is the co-author of *The Civic Imagination* (Paradigm Publishers, forthcoming), and several book chapters and articles. She holds a MALD in International Political Economy and a Graduate Certificate International Development from The Fletcher School of International Studies.

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