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“From the Arab Spring to Athens, From Occupy Wall Street to Moscow”: Regional Accents and the Rhetorical Cartography of Power

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“From the Arab Spring to Athens, From Occupy Wall Street to Moscow”: Regional Accents and the Rhetorical Cartography of Power

Ronald Walter Greene & Kevin Douglas Kuswa

This essay performs a rhetorical cartography of “regional accents” to draw a map of how they articulate regions into, and out of, maps of power. First, the essay isolates the accent of neoliberalism in the constitution of regions through the use of regional trade agreements. Second, the essay tracks a socialist accent for regional power in Samir Amin’s call for the Global South to execute a political strategy of “delinking.” Third, the essay argues that the rhetorical movement between places in protest, expressed by the Arab Spring and the Occupy Movement, invents a horizontal regional accent. For places of protest, a horizontal regional accent invents and folds regions of protest into one another to fuel the production of new places of protest. As a political subjectivity, the protester emerges in the crease of a regional fold of protest places as these places make and unmake maps of power.

“THE PROTESTER” was *Time*’s 2011 Person of the Year. The front cover provided the evidence in capital letters “FROM THE ARAB SPRING TO ATHENS, FROM OCCUPY WALL STREET TO MOSCOW” (“Person of the Year”). The cover story made explicit the warrant for the magazine’s choice: “Starting exactly a year ago . . . the protester once again became a maker of history” (Anderson). A subject in motion, the protester appears in different places as a common subject of social change. In October 2011, Peter Apps, the political risk correspondent for Reuters, emphasized how the “Arab Spring” mobilized protests on nearly every continent: “Protesters in a lengthening list of countries including Israel, India, Chile, China, Britain, Spain and now the United States

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all increasingly link their actions explicitly to the popular revolutions that have shaken up the Middle East.” The self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi in Tunisia, followed by four self-immolations in Egypt, motivated Asmaa Mahfouz, a 25-year-old woman, and member of the April 6 Youth Movement, to post a video on 18 January 2011 persuading Egyptians: “We want to go down to Tahrir Square on January 25 Bring 5 people, or 10 people; if each of us manage to bring 5 or 10 to Tahrir Square and talk to people and tell them, this is enough! Instead of setting ourselves on fire let us do something positive. It will make a difference” (asamahfous.com).¹ Nine months later, Amy Goodman reported that connections were expanding and “Asmaa Mahfouz was giving a teach-in at Occupy Wall Street” (133). Apps described the common character of this “global Arab Spring” in affective terms: “What [the protesters] share in common is a feeling that the youth and middle class are paying a high price for the mismanagement and malfeasance by an out of touch corporate, financial and political elite.” This common feeling is, perhaps, best expressed by the name taken by Spanish protesters who, in May and June 2011, occupied Madrid’s central square *La Puerta del Sol*, calling themselves the “*Indignados*”—the outraged/the indignant (Robinson).

As we write in the Winter of 2012, Occupy movements have spread globally with “groups on every continent, including Antarctica” (Johannsen). As state repression continues to evict Occupy encampments throughout the United States, the Occupy movement attempts to become “an adaptable community of resistance . . . emphasize[ing] the need to create, when possible, living, breathing alternatives to existing dominator institutions . . . while . . . practicing the art of resistance to oppression in all its forms” (Glenn G.). In Europe, Greek protesters have executed a two-day General Strike and taken to Syntagma Square to denounce the “troika of lenders—the European Commission, European Central Bank and [the] International Monetary Fund” (Tagaris and Papachristou). Occupy Wall Street stands in solidarity with the Greek strikes and proclaims: “From Athens to Oakland, the 99% have awoken—and we refuse to be sold out.” As goes the Arab Spring, so goes continued oppression from the state, as Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s bombardment of the city of Homs to squash a popular uprising against his authoritarian regime has taken center stage.

As a rhetoric of protest, the occupation of such places as Tahrir Square, Zuccotti Park, Syntagma Square, and *La Puerta del Sol* participates in what Endres and Senda-Cook term “place-as-rhetoric” because “the places themselves are rhetorical tactics in movements toward social change” (259). At the same time, the rhetoric of the Arab Spring did not remain exclusively Arab, nor did the rhetoric of Occupy Wall Street (OWS) stay on Wall Street. To encounter the protests of

¹Asmaa Mahfouz delivered her speech in Arabic. Our citation of the speech relies on the English subtitles provided by the video.

2011–2012 is to witness how a “place in protest” (261) travels beyond its own location, pulling and pushing different places, people, and practices into “maps of power” (Grossberg 22). A rhetoric of protest re-draws these maps of power by exposing their present configuration to the potential that another world (another map) is possible. As a materialist rhetoric, a rhetorical cartography of these maps of power forms the object and method of this essay.²

This collection of essays invites rhetorical scholarship to consider a regional orientation to the rhetorical politics of place. For us, this invitation puts in sharp relief how different regions are made and unmade by different maps of power as rhetorics *of* place and *in* place encounter the uneven global flows of ideas and images, guns and butter, capital and labor. Regions express an unstable geography of place because they can encompass sub-national, transnational, continental, and intercontinental configurations of people, territory and practices. Regions exist above and below the nation-state and should be approached relationally. Regional relationships conceptualize regions not as containers of people, places and practices, but as “products of complex condensations of social relationships, of varying density and variety, which combine contingently in specific time/place couplings to produce what are, in the last analysis, unique regions” (Hudson 620). Put differently, regions are rhetorically drawn into maps of power as actors, objects, and techniques of governance. For example, the Arab Spring names a regional relationship of protest and repression that stretches from the West coast of North Africa to Iran and Southwest Asia (“Map of the Arab Spring Protests”). The question we will explore is how the Arab Spring interacts with other regional arrangements and accents of protest to bind and unbind rhetorics of place. A rhetorical cartography helps to track the movement of these places of protest into new maps of power.

Since regions are relational and implicated in maps of power, we contend that the rhetoric of regions parallels what Voloshinov emphasizes about words: “it is precisely a word’s multiaccentuality that makes it a living thing” (81). Accents animate. The multiaccentuality of a region is what makes it a rhetorical thing. This essay posits that the multiaccentuality of a region can be analyzed as different “regional accents.” Rhetorically, a regional accent promotes and evaluates the relational character of a region. This essay advances the claim that regional accents are rhetorically responsible for moving and removing regions into and out of maps of power. The first part of this essay isolates the accent of neoliberalism in the constitution of regions as generative of political subjects though the use of regional trade agreements. The regional accent of neoliberalism circulates under the sign of the “new regionalism” as the protests in Madrid and Athens struggle to displace Europe’s neoliberal accent. The second part of the essay reveals a socialist accent

²For the philosophical underpinnings of the materialist approach to rhetoric used in this essay, see Ronald Walter Greene, “Another Materialist Rhetoric”; Greene, “Rhetorical Agency as Communicative Labor”; and Greene “Spatial Materialism.”

for regions in Samir Amin's call for the global South to execute a political strategy of "delinking." Amin's "delinking rhetoric" (Enck-Wanzer 364) refers to an exodus from the rules of market value by capitalist laws. Amin's approach also accentuates the Arab Spring by aligning it with a socialist map of power. The third part of the essay argues that the rhetorical movement between these places in protest, expressed by the Arab Spring and the Occupy movement, suggests a third regional accent we call horizontal. Inspired by the rhetorical interaction of a general assembly and theorized by Deleuze's reading of Foucault that a subject emerges through the folding of a spatial and temporal outside (108), we claim that a horizontal accent generates a regional variation that allows a region to compose as a political subject. For places of protest, a horizontal regional accent folds unique moments and locations of protest into one another as rhetorical resources from outside fuel the production of new places of protest. The protester that emerges in the rhetorical movement between the Arab Spring and the Occupy movement is one formed in the crease of a regional fold as it makes and unmakes new maps of power.

The Neoliberal Accent of the New Regionalism

Since a region is scalable into smaller and larger geographical units, a materialist rhetoric suggests the need to isolate the governmental dimensions of regions (Greene "Another Materialist Rhetoric"). Regions are formed in light of different accents, and those accents find uptake in different governing institutions responsible for creating relations of rule between a region's elements and its outside. The first part of the essay diagrams the uptake of a neoliberal accent producing and governing regions in bilateral, regional, and world regimes of governance to make and regulate a world market. In international political economy and development theory, regions are enlisted to participate in "the new regionalism" (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development). The new regionalism describes the establishment of free trade and preferential trade agreements between developed and developing countries, as well as among developing countries. According to Laura Gómez-Mera, "The 1980s and 1990s saw the revival of various forms of regional cooperation in world politics. Regionalist activity was particularly intense in the developing world, where several overlapping bilateral, regional and hemispheric trade and security agreements soon emerged" (279). For example, The Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) between the United States, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua is typical of how regional agreements liberalize the trade in goods and services between signatories. The biggest difference before and after the agreement is that "CAFTA immediately eliminates all tariffs on 80 percent of U.S. manufactured goods, with the remainder phased out over a few years. Importantly, the agreement is not limited to manufactured goods, but covers virtually every type of trade and commercial exchange between these countries and the United States" (CAFTA

Intelligence Center). In the wake of such new regionalist agreements, the United Nations Conference on Trade Development warns that “regional and bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) or preferential trade agreements (PTAs) between developed and developing countries . . . often present difficult choices for developing countries and may be more costly than expected.”

The stress on using regional trade agreements to promote the world market is one of the central explanations of what distinguishes new regionalism from the old regionalism. The magnitude of regional trade agreements (RTAs) since the establishment of the World Trade Organization in 1995 explains one of the conditions underwriting the “new” in the new regionalism. The World Trade Organization (WTO) reports that “in the period 1948–1994, GATT received 123 notifications of RTAs (relating to trade in goods), and since the creation of the WTO in 1995, over 300 additional arrangements covering trade in goods or services have been notified” (“Regional Trade Agreements”). As regional trade agreements constitute regions as political actors, these actors are monitored to make sure RTAs are not tilted against the global circulation of capital.

The WTO “is keeping an eye on developments” (“Regionalism: Friends or Rivals?”) in regional trade agreements because regional trade agreements “seem to be contradictory” even though they “often . . . can actually support the WTO’s multilateral trading system” (“Friends or Rivals”). The WTO monitors regional trade agreements to make sure they abide by a juridical framework that maintains the overall framework of the WTO. From the standpoint of the WTO, RTAs are experiments to test new rules and policies at a regional level before those rules and policies become agreements relevant to all WTO members (“Friends or Rivals”). Moreover, while RTAs might hurt the trading interests of nations excluded from the regional agreements, the WTO insists that “the arrangements should help trade flow more freely among the countries in the group without barriers being raised on trade with the outside world. In other words, regional integration should complement the multilateral trading system and not threaten it” (“Friends or Rivals”). For the WTO, the point of RTAs is to promote free trade in goods and services that eliminates tariffs and non-tariff barriers among regional partners without harming the trading interests of other countries excluded from the regional agreement. In so doing, the RTAs serve as scalable agreements of capitalist integration that can move from regional to more multilateral agreements. The surveillance of the Regional Trade Agreements Committee of the World Trade Organization is tasked to make sure that the rules created in RTAs are consistent with WTO regulations.

The goal of the new regionalism is to instill a deeper sense of economic integration between nations through more robust regional attachments of capital and labor. As the CAFTA agreement indicates, this deeper sense of economic integration is very inclusive:

[F]acilitating financial and foreign direct investment flows (real and financial capital mobility) by establishing investment protocols and protections; liberalizing

movement of labor within the RTA; harmonizing domestic tax and subsidy policies, especially those that affect production and trade incentives; harmonizing macro policies, including fiscal and monetary policy, to achieve a stable macro-economic environment within the RTA, including coordinated exchange rate policy; establishing institutions to manage and facilitate integration (e.g., regional development funds, institutions to set standards, dispute resolution mechanisms); improvements of communications and transportation infrastructure to facilitate increased trade and factor mobility; harmonizing legal regulation of product and factor markets (e.g., anti-trust law, commercial law, labor relations, financial institutions); and monetary union—establishment of a common currency and completely integrated monetary and exchange rate policy. (Burfisher, Robinson, and Thierfelder 6)

The intensity of integration desired by the new regionalism is an ideal. Each regional trade agreement can adjust, of course, as CAFTA, for example, does not liberalize the movement of labor from El Salvador to the United States as much as it liberalizes the flow of capital from the United States to El Salvador and back to the United States.

The sovereign debt crisis disrupting the Euro Zone in 2011–2012 provides both an example of the struggles over the intensity of regional integration and insight into how such regionalism inaugurates new demands from richer countries (e.g., Germany) to demand austerity budgets from poorer countries (e.g., Greece) to protect financial interests inside and outside of Europe. The threats to the stability of capitalist integration caused by different regional attachments explains moments when neoliberal accents become pronounced, as they have been since 2008, working through dominant media outlets to coordinate the relationship between nation-states and global capital. Kenneth Surin notes that neoliberal accents facilitate financial and foreign direct investment to promote “the rise of an equity-based growth regime” and “finance-led regimes of accumulation” (76) as the dominant modes of capitalist accumulation. The financialization of global capital allows finance capital to gain more autonomy from the way productive capital generates more surplus simply by betting on its own success or failure. Thus, while increases in foreign direct investment in production sharing may turn out to have some benefits for poorer countries, the growing separation of finance from productive capital is “the main source of international economic polarization” (Surin 91) between rich and poor countries. Neoliberal financialization of the world market generates a regional accent oriented toward economic integration of the North and the South to improve the returns on investments controlled in the North. In so doing, new regional agreements like CAFTA are likely to create maps of power that intensify the polarization between North and South by making the South more dependent on and vulnerable to the strategic decisions of finance capital in the richer countries (Surin 94–124).

The new regionalism generates new antagonisms. The resistance to the neoliberal accent of the new regionalism by the Zapatista National Army intensified on

the very day the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect on 1 January 1994. Moreover, such struggles against the neoliberal accent continue today in what Richard J.F. Day calls the “newest social movements” (5) in the aftermath of the Battle of Seattle. Strikes of Egyptian textile workers against International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies that “privatized the bulk of the textile industry . . . particularly . . . at Mahalla el-Kubra, is credited by many Egyptian activists as a crucial step on the Egyptian people’s path towards revolution” (Mackell). In 2011–2012, the solidarity between Athenian protests against austerity plans in Europe and Occupy Wall Street in the United States takes aim at neoliberal financialization. In February 2012, Occupy Wall Street protesters declared, “We are all Greek Now,” claiming in their call to join an international day of action that “the 99% everywhere are under assault by the same global banking interests. Greece is merely the most severe economic crisis imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other agents of the 1% in the Global North” (Occupy Wall Street). As new anger surges surrounding the results of the neoliberal accent in Europe, protesters focus on the exploitation wrought by Europe’s Wall Street, the “Troika” of the IMF, European Commission, and European Central Bank. Similarly, in Egypt, Wael writes, “I believe that this country’s [Egypt’s] future lies not with the same highly paid, unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats of the IMF Our revolution, before it called for bringing down Mubarak, has called for ‘social justice and human dignity’ and we will not stop until that is achieved.” Regional targets of protest in the United States, Europe, North Africa, and elsewhere fold into one another as corporate and political injustices intensify.

Delinking: A Socialist Regional Accent

It is with an eye toward alternative models of regional relationships that we turn to Samir Amin’s rhetoric of delinking (*Delinking*). We approach Amin’s delinking rhetoric as “a rhetoric of inquiry” (Nelson, Megill, and McClosky 3), that is, as a politicized scholarly argument about the character of capitalism and regional forms of resistance. While Amin’s scholarly advocacy might be fruitfully explored from within the twists and turns of Marxist political economy, political organization, and development theory, we simply note that Amin’s rhetoric of delinking pronounces his accent as socialist. Important for this section of the essay is how his argument for delinking articulates that socialist accent to a third-world regionalism struggling against neoliberal regionalism.

For Samir Amin, delinking refers to an exodus from the rules of the global regime that enforces the laws of market value as the price for integrating national economies into the world capitalist system. Amin initially formulated delinking in response to the Non-Aligned Movement’s inability to create a viable third way in the face of the Cold War’s bipolar world. It grew out of radical strands of development theory that began to demonstrate that development and underdevelopment “are two sides of the—naturally unequal—expansion of capital”

(*Delinking* 62). If the underdevelopment of the Third and Fourth World was not a problem to be solved by modernization, but an effect of the uneven development of an integrated world market, Amin argues, then a “rupture with that system” (62) was called for from the periphery of the world capitalist regime. Delinking describes the periphery’s “pursuit of a system of rational criteria for economic options founded on a national law of value with popular relevance, independent of such criteria of economic rationality that tend to flow from the dominance of the capitalist law of value operation on a world scale” (62). Thus, the initial rationale for delinking is the need to remedy the growing polarization between rich and poor countries and, as a potential solution, delinking requires a national-popular system of value as an alternative to the capitalist law of value.

Delinking takes a position all the more distant from the export-oriented growth strategies and deeper economic integration pursued by the South over the last thirty years under the auspices of RTAs. Against such integration, delinking requires the creation of a national-popular will prompting state actors to subject “external relations to the logic of an internal development that is independent of [these external relations]” (66). Put differently, Amin advocates resistance to neoliberal accents in favor of a more national-popular accent that characterizes socialism. Delinking is advanced as an internationalist socialist strategy in opposition to ethnocentric cultural nationalism that would turn away from “all foreign technology” and refuse to “participate in world and scientific and ideological currents” (67). In other words, delinking is a strategic political and economic “technology of deliberation” (Greene, “Another Materialist Rhetoric” 1) to help poor countries, especially among the Global South, make decisions about their economic dependencies and vulnerabilities to the world capitalist system.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and rise to dominance of the neoliberal accent in development policy, notes Amin, different policy stresses were placed upon regionalism. Regionalism was being advanced “as a subsystem submitted to the rationale of globalization, or a substitute for it, or as a building block for a reconstruction of a different global system” (“Regionalization” 54). In this polysemic rhetorical context, Amin refashions delinking as a regional “building block” for a different global system, one pitched to socialist principles. Amin suggests that it is no longer possible for individual nation states to delink, creating a situation where a regional form of delinking was advanced as “the only efficient response to the challenges of a continuously deepening polarization generated by capitalist globalization processes” (54). Regional delinking still requires a national popular will and state actors, but each nation must orient itself to “building . . . large integrated regions in the Third World—particularly in Africa and the Arab world—but also in Latin American and South East Asia” (54). In absence of these regional counter-powers, Amin argues that the unequal rationality of comparative advantage will maintain the unequal flow of resources from the periphery to the center of the world capitalist system.

Amin challenges the neoliberal accent by attacking its stress on comparative advantage. For Amin, comparative advantage inscribes and naturalizes five monopolistic relationships to the benefit of the North and to the expense of the South. Core capitalist regions (United States, Western Europe, Japan) benefit from monopolies in technology, financial control of worldwide financial markets, monopolies of access to the planet’s natural resources, media and communication monopolies, and monopolies of weapons of mass destruction (“Regionalization” 64–65). It is because of the need to combat these five monopolies that Amin argues the nation state can no longer be “the only basis for that struggle” (66). Regionalism is advanced as “the only alternative, not only for efficient autonomous efforts in the various fields of economic development, but no less in the domains of communications and security” (66). Amin’s delinking rhetoric stresses a regional accent that rejects forms of “neo-imperialist regionalization” that links different parts of the southern world to preferential northern partners or creates regional spaces under economic and military control of “regional leaders because this vision of regionalization . . . is based on a concept of global market logic” (76).

The socialist regional accent made manifest in Amin’s delinking rhetoric reveals a class struggle in the rhetoric of inquiry against the “new regionalism” of preferential trade agreements and finance-led equity-growth regimes. This class struggle does some of its work rhetorically, challenging the privilege of comparative advantage by showing how monopoly conditions between North and South make a mockery of claims to mutual advantages. The monopoly condition is even more pronounced by the financialization of the world economy as the productive and agricultural sectors of poorer countries become ever more vulnerable to fluctuations in the movement of finance capital (Surin 94–124). The regional accent of delinking rhetorics constitutes an alternative regional actor, one less attached to the WTO and the neo-imperialist needs of the United States and other core industrial countries and more oriented toward the production of a socialist logic of value.

For Amin delinking is not a rhetorical concept but a political strategy. As a political strategy, delinking might well be useful for effectively changing the world. Wael Khalil expresses the political strategy of delinking when he rejects an Egyptian future tied to the IMF’s “sacred indicators of budget deficits and market economics” and calls instead for a future “with a new home-grown economics that caters for the majority of Egyptians, the schools where their children are educated, the hospitals where they receive healthcare, and the jobs that guarantee them decent and honourable living.” For Samir Amin, the Arab Spring brings forth the question: “Is this springtime the inception of a second ‘awakening of the Arab World?’” (“2011: An Arab Springtime?”). Amin’s question moves the protest place of the Arab Spring into solidarity with the “first Arab Awakening” that, at least in the Egyptian context, Amin narrates as consisting of “waves of movements which unfolded during . . . 1919 and 1967,” punctuated by Nasser’s

contribution to the “anti-imperialist project after the Bandung Conference of 1955” (“2011: An Arab Springtime?”). In the Egyptian context, the first Arab awakening was a fifty year struggle for “democracy, national independence, social progress” that came to an end with the Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel. For Amin, if the current Arab Spring is to be the heir to the first Arab awakening, “the Arab world will necessarily become part of the movement to go beyond imperialist capitalism on the world scale. Failure would keep the Arab world in its current status as submissive periphery prohibiting its elevation to the rank of the active participant in shaping the world” (“2011: An Arab Springtime?”). Amin’s delinking rhetoric, with its socialist accent, accentuates the Arab Spring into a world struggle against imperialist capitalism.

As a rhetoric of inquiry, Amin’s delinking rhetoric identifies a regional problem where the world capitalist system becomes responsible for the generation of ever-greater polarities of wealth and power between rich and poor countries. These polarities are not accidental, but reproduced by how rich countries leverage their strategic advantage of monopolies in technology, finance, access to resources, communication, and weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, the neoliberal accents of regional trade and security agreements are partly to blame for the economic polarization between the North and the South. Delinking describes the strategic exodus of the poorer countries from current regime of global neoliberal capitalism for the purpose of producing a more polycentric world aligned to socialist principles regionally positioned against imperialist capitalism. As a rhetoric of inquiry, delinking makes possible the socialist accent of regionalism, a trait that accents regionalism by stressing the class struggle of regions as distinct from capitalist value and political domination. It offers the choice of a “home-grown economics” against “sacred market economics” (Khalil). For Amin, it also accentuates the Arab Spring in an effort to move it into a map of power, thereby jump-starting a socialist movement against world capitalism.

The Protester: Horizontal Accents of Regional Protest

As Samir Amin’s diagnosis of the Arab Spring demonstrates, the regions of protest are themselves subject to competing accents associated with rhetorical traditions, struggles, and desires. This section of the essay suggests a third regional accent inspired by the Arab Spring and its proliferation. We describe this regional accent as horizontal because it encourages a fluid and mobile, open and experimental practice of compositional power. To avoid the territorialization of protest places and regions (Ash Amin), the protest map of 2011–2012 suggests certain folds from outside a given place of protest that help to shape new places of protest. The regional accent generated by the protesters builds relationships of solidarity between and among places of protest. David Graeber’s description of the first

general assembly that inaugurated Occupy Wall Street at Bowling Green provides the rationale for our use of the horizontal. A long quotation helps set the scene:

On August 2, I showed up at 7 p.m. meeting at Bowling Green. A Greek anarchist friend had told me it was meant to plan some kind of action on Wall Street in Mid-September. . . . A local anti-budget cut coalition top heavy with NGOs, unions and socialist groups had tried to take possession of the process and called for a general assembly at Bowling Green.

The term “general assembly” proved misleading. When I arrived, I found the event had been effectively taken over by a veteran protest group called the Worker’s World Party

The usual reaction to this sort of thing is a kind of cynical, bitter resignation.

. . . Why advertise a general assembly if they’re not actually going to hold one? But as I paced about the Green, I noticed something. To adopt activist parlance: this wasn’t really a crowd of “verticals”—that is, the sort of people whose idea of political action is to march around with signs under the control of one or another top-down protest movement. They were mostly “horizontal”—people more sympathetic with anarchist principles of organization, non-hierarchical forms of direct democracy and direct action.

[. . .] My Greek friend looked at me and I looked at her and we both instantly realized the other was thinking the same thing: . . . I think the way we put it was more like, “You know something? Fuck this shit. They advertised a general assembly. Let’s hold one.”

So we gathered up a few obvious horizontals and formed a circle. After about an hour of drama, almost everyone abandoned the rally and came over to our side. (25–26)

The regional accents of the protest(er)s of 2011 share this horizontal dimension as speakers, discourses, techniques and technologies, and audiences and occasions create movements of solidarity between different places of protest. Rhetorical movement, bolstered by complementing and competing accents, includes all the constituent elements of a rhetorical situation. The direct action of a general assembly and its horizontal organizing principle provides a governing model for regional interaction between places of protest that sustained the protester of 2011–2012. Rhetorical movements move horizontally and vertically as well as spatially and temporally. Expressions of protest, for example, can gesture to authorities further up a line of command and control or to compatriots along an adjacent continuum of value and equality. Likewise, such articulations both stem from and constitute distinct histories, memories, territories, and locations of embodiment. The forces of life and change are all accented by the folding and unfolding of regional rhetorical movements.

The “horizontals” provide a means of folding places of protest into one another. The horizontals Graeber noticed had converged on Bowling Green from different protest places:

I quickly spotted at least one Wobbly, a young Korean activist I remembered from some Food Not Bombs events, some college students wearing Zapatista paraphernalia, and a Spanish couple who’d been involved with the *Indignados* in Madrid. I found my Greek friends, an American I knew from street battles in Quebec during the Summit of the Americas in 2001, and a Japanese activist intellectual I’d known for years. (25–26)

A Korean Wobbly, the living memory of the Zapatistas, college students, and *Indignados* from Spain all share the spirit of trust built from protests held in other places and fold onto one another to produce a new protest place. The effect can be likened to Deleuze’s notion of the diagram, “For each diagram testifies to the twisting line of the outside . . . without beginning or end, an oceanic line that passes through all points of resistance, pitches diagrams against one another, and operates always as the most recent” (44). The twist of different places of protest from outside challenges a vertical diagram of a general assembly with a horizontal assembly.

A horizontal accent teaches a protester how to become a protester. A subject, Deleuze writes, “is created on each occasion, like a focal point of resistance, on the basis of the folds which subjectivize knowledge and bend each power” (105). The movement of places of protest provides a focal point for the making of the protesting subject. But these folds generate a new protester with each fold: “The struggle for subjectivity presents itself . . . as the right of difference, variation and metamorphosis” (106). The movement of a given external place of protest, a place from another time and another place, weaving together the inventional resources for a new political subject, brings a new protester into being each time new groups assemble with others. The rhetorical movement of these protest places, currently encapsulated by Zuccotti Park or Tahrir Square, makes a horizontal journey across territory and history, while bumping up against other contexts and possibilities through memories of protest.

One such memory of protest emerges through the way Martin Luther King’s rhetorical rationality and practices of non-violence found their way to Egypt. The constitutive power of non-violent direct action expressed in the protest place of Montgomery, Alabama in the Jim Crow South, travels to Egypt through the rhetorical labor of Dalia Zaida, an Egyptian Human Rights activist who translated and distributed the 1958 English comic book *Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story* into Arabic fifty years later (HAMSA). The Fellowship for Reconciliation published the comic book to memorialize, to teach, and to persuade people. Dalia Zaida translated the comic books into Arabic in 2008 and brought them to Tahrir Square during the protests in early 2011

(“Martin Luther King’s Idea Reverberate in Egypt”). The memory of places of protest makes new political subjects possible through the horizontal trajectory of a comic book and its regional translations.

The Arab Spring inaugurates itself as an outside able to move horizontally in space and time. Alain Badiou praises the people’s movements in Tunisia and Egypt as examples of revolutionary action outside the imperial control of the nation-state’s sovereignty. Badiou goes so far as to proclaim the “right to rebel” and the need of “rupture” in the face of “a collective feeling of revulsion at those who occupy state power.” Not only does the political subjectivity of the Arab Spring compose itself through occupations of public spaces, protests, and strikes, “the fact that a revolt against state power can be absolutely victorious is a teaching of universal significance” (Badiou). The Arab Spring teaches new places of protest that they can win, that they can and should desire their liberation. As Strathausen notes, the enactment or articulation of these teachings—these moments of shared pedagogy across movements—can be seen in the way folds of protest will shrink distances, intensify experiences, and magnify connections because “everything folds up, splits open, multiplies, and connects with everything else” (3). As noted in this essay’s opening scene, Asmaa Mahfouz leaves Tahrir Square and leads a teach-in at Zuccotti Park, informing Amy Goodman that “I am here to be in solidarity and support the Occupy Wall Street protesters, to say to them ‘power to the people,’ and to keep it on and on, and they will succeed in the end” (Goodman 134).

Mahfouz’s solidarity with Occupy is a reiteration of the power of the people, a reinvigoration of the pedagogical moment of the Arab Spring that suggests a much wider affective spectrum than simple outrage and indignation defining a typical protest scene. The horizontal movement between regional places of protest is magnified by the affective charges of bodies coming together in direct action. The places of protest are moved into/against/with other places of protest as bodies are affected by other bodies communicating with one another. Matthew S. May explains that “to communicate is to affect and be affected by other bodies. Bodies that communicate a common notion compose an aggregate body which may itself be part of a larger composition” (1). To be sure, these places of protest rely on an embodied rhetoric (Endres and Selma-Cook) of humans in place, but the horizontal movement of affect is charged by the way those places form a body of protest in communication with other places in protest, thereby composing a common body in the fold between physical locations. As May notes, “the communication of bodily composition theoretically may extend in an infinite spiral . . . depending on the capacity of the bodies in question to affect and be affected by other bodies” (1). As Mahfouz puts it: “power to the people . . . keep it on and on.” David Graeber describes the affective movement at Occupy as contagious: “the politics of direct action is based, to a certain degree, on a faith that freedom is contagious” (28). This faith in freedom is an affective surplus constituted by a horizontal faith in one another to form a compositional power more powerful than the

reterritorializing machines of capitalism and the State. Graeber highlights the ontological power of a common body: “the experience of thousands of people, motivated only by principle and solidarity, linking arms to hold their ground against a phalanx of armored riot cops, can change one’s most fundamental assumptions about what politics—or for that matter, human life, could actually be” (28). Outrage, faith in freedom, and power to/of the people are different ways to express the affective dimensions of protest places in common. For these places of protest to move regionally they must produce a surplus that sustains a common body of protest, “an increase in compositional power” (Hamilton and Holdren). In the opening scene of this essay, Glenn G. describes this common compositional power as more than just an *act* of resistance but also as “an adaptable community of resistance” (7). He calls on the Occupy Movement to nurture a community of resistance for the “meta-mind of our social movement to thrive because it will, if navigated skillfully, lead to building trust. And this is the dangerous part for the 1%” (7). Common bodies affectively bound by trust make places of protest as the communities of resistance are moved by the “meta-mind” of the movement.

A horizontal regional accent stresses the movement between protest places, producing a region in protest. Communication technologies provide another means by which places of protest form; they invent regions in/of protest. Communication technology exists as a means of persuasion and a site of contestation. Communication technologies did not cause the Arab Spring, but they did provide a way for protest places to interact with other protest places. Reporting in January of 2011, Dina Zayed writes “Al Jazeera was one of the first outlets to broadcast pictures of [Mohamed Bouazizi].” Moreover, she notes that “when street protests ousted the Tunisian President, 26 year old Egyptian Sabah first heard it in a call from a friend who told her: Switch on Al Jazeera” (Zayed). Zied Abu Oudeh testifies to the technologies of presence made possible by Al Jazeera: “Al Jazeera was like one of those protesting in the streets of Tunis and made people live with the events” (qtd. in Zayed). The experience of Al Jazeera as protester was magnified by their use of mobile phone footage to circumvent Tunisian restrictions on their reporters being physically present (Zayed). Their mobile phone footage also allowed those not situated in Tunisia a way to “live” the event of protest with those on the ground in Tunisia. In Egypt, social media tools mobilized protesters, but so too did the video speech of Asmaa Mahfouz posted online. This speech implored Egyptians to transform Tahrir Square into a protest place by turning away from some media: “Sitting at home and just following us on news or facebook leads to our humiliation” (asamahfous.com).

What Mahfouz teaches is that the body of protest is produced in and through the assembly of communication techniques, technologies, and communicative labor. As Anna Lekas Miller narrates the horizontal accent of regional protest: “I checked twitter when I woke up the morning of September 17. Someone had tweeted, ‘with Love to New York, from #SididBouزيد to #OccupyWallStreet’ and I knew it was actually happening” (50). Protests move with love.

Vlad Teichberg, a member of the media team at Occupy Wall Street, emphasizes the importance of a movement producing its own media “because we had this 24 hour stream coming out, we became the reference point for what this movement was about We were able to define us and put our humanity, our people first, in front of the whole world” (53). The assembly of these different media technologies in egalitarian and democratic ways produces their horizontal access of regional protest.

Can the protest places of horizontal regionalism go global? The scene that begins this essay suggests the answer might be yes: protest places appear on every continent, and each of these protest places claim allegiance to, and solidarity with, the Arab Spring and/or the Occupy Movement (Apps; Johannsen). However, this global protest requires regional articulations of places of protest. Can the compositional power of the people keep going and going (Mahfouz)? The calls for “#GlobalSpring for #Global Change” have been sounded: “Fellow Humans, People from the *Indignados* and Occupy movements from across the world call for a Global Spring, beginning this May [2012]” (“Call for #GlobalSpring”). The “rhetorical globalization” (Greene and Kuswa 17) of protest, protester, and place of protest is likely to be uneven. As Spivak notes “what really globalizes is capital and data and the other things are very uneven” (qtd. in Lahiri). Nevertheless, horizontal regionalism may be one way that “our fight for freedom, equality, peace, justice and real democracy across the world” can fold protest into “the Global Spring” (#Global Spring).

Conclusion

The horizontal accent of a regional fold dislodges the limited context of a place of protest. It allows the living labor of social movement protest to “turn away from closed situations . . . turning toward transsituated circuits that include ordinary spaces and subjects who have fluctuating identities” (Chaput 6). A horizontal accent can materialize a protester and a place of protests by folding rhetorical resources from outside to create new regions of protest. All regional accents attempt something of a fold whether those accents are neoliberal, socialist or horizontal, because they try to articulate a region to its outside. However, each regional accent does this work of articulation differently, inscribing various regions into different maps of power: the new regionalism of neoliberalism gravitates to global capital; delinking gravitates to socialism; horizontal regionalism gravitates toward a common solidarity. These accents do not, however, ensure such arrivals, only certain movements and merging cartographies. A horizontal accent, for example, does not guarantee a democratic region, but it can invite and even coax new subjectivities and places of protest through particular creases that both envelop and unfold previously disarticulated solidarities and common notions. We must remember the horizontal is also always already being twisted back into the twin poles of state and market control. Command, capital and control work horizontally, too. The market

and the military all too often occupy place with imperial reterritorializations. Despite these continual retrenchments, though, the horizon still offers hope as people and places of protest converge and strive to form a common body “In Love and Solidarity” (“Call for #Global Spring”).

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