Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements

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THE term "new social movements" (NSMs) has gained wide currency among theorists sympathetic to the peace, feminist, ecological, and local-autonomy movements proliferating in the West since the midseventies. Yet whether there really is something significantly new about these movements, and what the theoretical or political import of the innovations are, remains unclear. Indeed, there is little agreement among theorists in the field as to just what a *movement* is, what would qualify theoretically as a *new type* of movement, and what the meaning of a *social* movement as distinct from a political party or interest group might be.

My task in this essay is twofold: (1) to compare the two competing theoretical paradigms for the study of social movements that are now dominant in the field, with respect to how each perspective might assess *what is new* in the new social movements; and (2) to show how they could inform each other, despite significant differences. The two approaches I have in mind are the "resource-mobilization" paradigm, and what I shall call the "identity-oriented" paradigm.[1] Each in-

[1] Three excellent summaries of the resource-mobilization approach are: J. Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," *Annual*

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volves a theoretical framework that excludes the main focus of the other. Yet I shall try to show that these approaches are not necessarily incompatible, in part because both rely on key features of modern civil society to pinpoint what is specific to modern social movements. To be sure, neither of these paradigms addresses head-on the theoretical import of the emergence and transformations of civil society for the genesis and changes in types of modern movements.[2] Since the NSMs have all raised the theme of the self-defense of "society" against the state (and the market economy), since they all, in one way or another, struggle for a "postbourgeois, post patriarchal," and democratic civil society, it is well worth the effort to provide a theoretical assessment that makes use of their own key category.[3]

My presupposition is that the contemporary movements are in some significant respects "new." What I have in mind, above all, is a self-understanding that abandons revolutionary dreams in favor of the idea of structural reform, along with a defense of civil society that does not seek to abolish the autonomous functioning of political and economic systems—in a phrase, self-limiting radicalism. On this, more below. I do not, however, believe that it is possible to justify this claim on the basis of a philosophy of history that links the "true essence" of

Review of Sociology 9 (1983): 527–553; Aldon Morris and Cedric Herring, "Theory and Research in Social Movements: Critical Review," in Samuel Long, ed., *Political Behavior Annual* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984); and Sidney Tarrow, "Social Movements, Resource Mobilization and Reform During Cycles of Protest: A Bibliographical and Critical Essay," Working Paper no. 1 of the Project on Social Protest and Policy Innovation at Cornell University, January 1982. I include within the "identity-oriented" paradigm works on social movements by Alain Touraine, Alberto Melucci, Zsuzsa Hegedus, Michel Wieviorka, François Dubet, and Alessandro Pizzorno.

[2] I cannot develop the concept of civil society in this paper. See Manfred Riedel, "Gesellschaft, bürgerliche," in *Historische Grundbegriffe*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart, 1975), and Andrew Arato and Jean Cohen, *Civil Society and Social Theory*, forthcoming.

[3] Jean L. Cohen, "Rethinking Social Movements," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 28 (1983): 97–113; Andrew Arato and Jean L. Cohen, "The German Green Party," *Dissent*, Summer 1984, pp. 327–333; Andrew Arato and Jean L. Cohen, "Social Movements, Civil Society and the Problem of Sovereignty," *Praxis International* 4 (October 1984): 266–283.

what the movements "really are" (however heterogeneous their practices and forms of consciousness) to an allegedly new stage of history (postindustrial society). Nor does the theme "society against the state," shared by all contemporary movements (including some on the right), *in itself* imply something new. The question, rather, is whether this theme has been connected to new identities, forms of organization, and scenarios of conflict.

Of course, one cannot evade the fact that the striking feature of the contemporary (1970s and 1980s) situation of movements is its heterogeneity. The old patterns of collective action certainly continue to exist. In some movements they may even be statistically preponderant. It would thus be futile to speak of *the* new identity of the movements. Since all movements are complex phenomena, however, heterogeneity itself cannot be the unique aspect of contemporary contestations. Instead, it is the thesis here that *some* identities, implying specific forms of organization and struggle within the contemporary movements, are new in the sense just indicated, and that there are good reasons to consider these to be of major significance. Unfortunately, neither of the two approaches to be analyzed here provides an adequate methodological access to these identities. The resource-mobilization approach, which resolutely pursues the objectifying logic of empirical-analytical social science, is interested primarily in aggregate data and not in questions of identity. But the identity-oriented paradigm has also prejudged the hermeneutic issue by positing a postindustrial society whose institutions, forms of collective interaction, and consciousness would all be new by definition. The work of interpretation is inevitably more risky and less totalizing. Yet it must be undertaken if we are not to prohibit the study of what is significant because of purely methodological strictures.

The access of interpretation to identity is through the interrogation of forms of consciousness. This procedure can take the form of an examination of theories so long as the theories

in question are those of participants, produced for movements and, to an extent, within movements. While rarely up to the level of systematic social science, such theories or "ideologies" receive their importance precisely to the extent to which they help the crystallization of already-emergent identities. With respect to the new identities in question, the best contemporary examples of this kind of relation between theory and practice are the works of the French second Left, especially those of André Gorz, the analysis of the pragmatist faction (*Realpolitiker*) of the German Greens, and, in a very different political but related cultural context, Polish KOR and its work for Solidarity. As the theories generated in relation to ecology and feminism show, there are many examples for the other major contemporary movements as well.[4]

Nevertheless, even on the level of "theories for and within movements," heterogeneity predominates. Far be it from me to deny the prevalence of fundamentalist thought within contemporary movements. And yet we are in an intellectual situation in which revolutionary ideology has moved from Marxism, with its rational theoretical core, to eschatologies that have no discernible relation to the potentials or limits of the social structures to which they are addressed. The resurgence of quasi-religious fundamentalisms within the contemporary

[4] For theories of the "second Left" in France, see André Gorz, *Farewell to the Working Class* (Boston: South End Press, 1982); Pierre Rosanvallon, *La Crise de l'état providence* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1976); Pierre Rosanviallon and Patrick Viveret, *Pour une nouvelle culture politique* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1977). For the best theoretical statement of the *Realpolitiker* position of the Greens, see Helmut Wiesenthal, "Grün-Rational: Vorschläge für eine zeitgemässige Strategie," *Kommune* 4 (April 1984): 31–47. For the best discussion of the works of KOR, see Andrew Arato, "The Democratic Theory of the Polish Opposition: Normative Intentions and Strategic Ambiguities," *Working Paper 15* (Kellogg Institute, University of Notre Dame, 1984), pp. 1–27, and Andrew Arato, "Civil Society vs. the State," *Telos*, no. 47 (Spring 1981). On ecology, see Dorothy Nelkin and Michael Pollack, *The Atom Besieged* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982) and Alain Touraine et al., *Anti-Nuclear Protest* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). On feminism, see Ethel Klein, *Gender Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), and Zillah R. Eisenstein, *The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism* (New York: Longman, 1981) and *Feminism and Sexual Equality* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984).

movements demonstrates, if negatively, the costs of evading the available new identity: irrationalism and/or self-destruction. The new identity within contemporary social movements (a cumbersome term that is preferable to the idea of new social movements) is in fact the *only rational* identity that is compatible with the organizational form and conflict scenario of movements today.

An Hermeneutic Approach to the New Identity in Contemporary Movements

It is clearly part of the self-understanding of many feminists, ecologists, peace activists, and autonomists that their identities, goals, and modes of association are historically new vis-à-vis the Old *and* New Lefts. Unlike the Old Left, actors involved in the contemporary movements do not view themselves in terms of a socioeconomic class. Most observers agree, however, that they come primarily from the "new middle classes," although marginals and members of the "old bourgeoisie" participate.[5] Yet class background does not determine the collective identities of the actors or the stakes of their action. Contemporary actors abandon what they see as the "productivist" cultural model of the Old Left as well as its modes of organization. Instead of forming unions or political parties of the socialist, social democratic, or communist type, they focus on grass-roots politics and create horizontal, directly democratic associations that are loosely federated on national levels. Moreover, they target the social domain of "civil society" rather than the economy or state, raising issues concerned with the democratization of structures of everyday life and focusing on forms of communication and collective identity.

[5] See the article by Claus Offe, "The New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics," in this issue of *Social Research*.

To be sure, the New Left already posed many of these issues. New Left activists were the first to focus on the structures of everyday life and to introduce what came to be somewhat misleadingly labeled "postmaterial" values.[6] They also sought to democratize many societal institutions from the university to the workshop. But several differences remain between the New Left and the contemporary movements. In the former, actors came to understand themselves as revolutionaries fighting for a total break with the institutions and culture of "bourgeois" civil society. In short, the New Left became dominated by a revolutionary Marxist political culture. This meant that the concerns of those most involved in contestation—students, women, professionals, new middle strata—were interpreted in one of two distorted ways: either they came to be seen as bourgeois, to be subordinated to the needs of the proletariat or the "third world"; or they were deemed legitimate only to the extent that they could be fit into the neo-Marxist theoretical framework fabricated to accommodate the New in Old Left terms—that is, new working-class theory.[7] Ultimately, the New Left, ". . . under pressure bifurcated between the mind-blowing spontaneity of countercultural politics, on the hand, and a vulgar Leninist practice and Marxist theory on the other."[8] In the process, the original stress on democracy and new forms of association were sacrificed to distorted strategic analyses of total domination and, in some cases, to desperate actions.

The new identity in the contemporary movements is consciously distinguished from the two distorting dimensions of the New Left political culture: its revolutionary and totalizing character. Although the cultural model of the new actors does

[6] The best study of the ideology of the New Left movements remains Alain Touraine, *The May Movement* (New York: Random House, 1971). See Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), for the theory of "postmaterial values."

[7] Jean L. Cohen, *Class and Civil Society: The Limits of Marxian Critical Theory* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), pp. 6–9.

[8] Michael Rogin, "In Defense of the New Left," *Democracy,* Fall 1983, p. 116.

break with those aspects of "bourgeois industrial paternalist culture" that involved inequality, domination, unimpeded growth, and patriarchy, there is, nonetheless, a stress on continuity with those elements of civil society (including its differentiation from the state and economy) that are worth preserving.[9] Here the slogan "society vs. the state" means the democratization of social institutions and not dedifferentiation in the name of one total community.

Indeed, as stated above, the key to the new self-understanding of the nonfundamentalist dimensions of contemporary movements is its self-limiting character. Self-limiting in four senses: First, the relevant actors do not seek to return to an undifferentiated community free of all power and all forms of inequality. Such neoromantic myths are abandoned by actors who limit themselves to the defense and extension of spaces for social autonomy. Second, the actors limit themselves vis-à-vis one another. They struggle in the name of autonomy, plurality, and difference, without, however, renouncing the formal egalitarian principles of modern civil society or the universalistic principles of the formally democratic state. More democracy on local or functional levels, new democratic forms of representation or direct participation, are seen as dependent upon existing central institutions (parliaments, legality) for conflict mediation and for the representation of the unorganized. Third, the actors are self-limiting regarding their own values. The effort to open up contested cultural values and norms to discussion is not identical with immediate attempts to realize an uncompromisable *Gesinnungsethik* as the solution to social problems (Smelser's "short circuiting" applicable only to fundamentalists). Actors who draw upon existing expertise and confront technical or strategic problems pragmatically make a conscious attempt to learn from past experience. They are willing, to a certain extent, to relativize their own values with respect to one an-

[9] Cohen, "Rethinking Social Movements," pp. 101–112; Claus Offe, "Griff nach der Notbremse," *Die Zeit,* no. 34 (Aug. 27, 1982): 8–9.

other through discourse on goals and consequences. Fourth, many contemporary activists accept the existence of the formally democratic state and the market economy. Of course their struggles involve a project of reorganizing the relations between economy, state, and society, and of redrawing the boundaries between the public and the private. Contemporary collective actors often create democratic public spaces and transform formerly private domains into social arenas for the creation of their collective identities and demands. But because they accept some form of structural differentiation, their associations do not take on the form or connotation of a revolutionary underground. Indeed, their organizations are not viewed by the actors as mere resources to serve the goal of mobilization into large-scale confrontations whose stakes are state power. Instead, democratically structured associations and public spaces, a plurality of types of political actors and action within *civil society,* are viewed as ends in themselves. Indeed, many of the actors interpret their actions as attempts to renew a democratic political culture and to reintroduce the normative dimension of social action into political life. This is the meaning of self-limiting radicalism.

The interrogation of the new identity of contemporary movements, based on interpretations of theoretical forms of self-expression, should not be methodologically absolutized. In particular, the confrontation of this method with systematic social science should be doubly fruitful. First, it will be important when judging the contribution of competing social-scientific paradigms to determine the extent to which each is capable of accounting for the experiences articulated by *theories for and within movements.* If we are to avoid a theoreticist or scientistic fallacy that defines "truth" as the possession only of the system of science, we will have to insist on learning not only about but also from movements. Second, in order to assess whether the "new" dimensions of contemporary movements are simply passing novelties or permanent innovations related to major transformations in other aspects of society, we

must shift to a different analytical level. We must proceed more systematically and take the point of view of the observer rather than of the participants. Theories of contemporary movements must, in other words, pose the following questions: In what societal types do the movements occur? What continuities or discontinuities exist vis-à-vis the past? Which institutions are at issue? What are the general political stakes of the contestations? And what are the developmental possibilities culturally available to collective actors? Before turning to the ways in which the two dominant paradigms address these questions, let me briefly summarize the "classical approach" to the study of social movements against which the newer paradigms explicitly distinguish themselves.

The Need for More Theory

The classical theoretical paradigm, dominant until the early 1970s, was the social-psychological tradition of the Chicago school.[10] Yet the variants that received the most attention and criticism by contemporary theorists have been mass-society theories (Kornhauser, Arendt, etc.) and Smelser's structural-functionalist model of collective behavior.[11] Despite important differences, however, all of these versions of collective behavior theory have in common the following assumptions: (1) There are two distinct kinds of action: institutional-

[10] Ralph H. Turner, ed., *Robert E. Park on Social Control and Collective Behavior: Selected Papers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); Herbert Blumer, "Collective Behavior," in Alfred McClung Lee, ed., *New Outline of the Principles of Sociology* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1951) and "Collective Behavior," in J. B. Gittler, ed., *Review of Sociology: Analysis of a Decade* (New York: Wiley, 1957); R. G. Turner and L. M. Killian, *Collective Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1957). For a summary of collective behavior theories, see Gary T. Marx and James L. Wood, "Strands of Theory and Research in Collective Behavior," *Annual Review of Sociology* 1 (1975): 368–428.

[11] W. Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (New York: Free Press, 1959); Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1951); Neil Smelser, *The Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1962).

conventional and noninstitutional-collective behavior. (2) Noninstitutional-collective behavior is action that is not guided by existing social norms but is formed to meet undefined or unstructured situations. (3) These situations are understood in terms of a breakdown either in the organs of social control or in the adequacy of normative integration, due to structural changes. (4) The resulting strains, discontent, frustration, and aggression lead the individual to participate in collective behavior. (5) Noninstitutional-collective behavior follows a "life cycle," open to causal analysis, which moves from spontaneous crowd action to the formation of publics and social movements. (6) The emergence and growth of movements within this cycle occurs through crude processes of communication: contagion, rumor, circular reaction, diffusion, etc. Accordingly, collective-behavior theorists have focused on explaining *individual* participation in social movements, looking at grievances and values as responses to rapid social change (strain). Of course, not every theorist in this tradition deems collective behavior to be an abnormal or irrational response of atomized individuals to change. Nevertheless, they all view the *crowd* as the simplest atom in the anatomy of collective behavior. All collective-behavior theorists stress psychological reactions to breakdown, crude modes of communication, and volatile goals. This indicates an implicit bias toward regarding collective behavior as a nonrational or irrational response to change. It is this bias, most explicit in the mass-society and Smelserian approaches, that triggered the criticism of contemporary theorists. It is also this bias that precludes any examination of innovations or learning on the part of collective actors.

The inadequacies of the classical tradition became obvious in the sixties and seventies when massive social movements emerged in the United States and Europe. The development of movements in polities characterized by pluralists as democratic and in civil societies with a multiplicity of voluntary associations belied the mass-society version of the collective-behavior paradigm. So, too, did the fact that actors in the New

Left hardly conformed to the image of anomic, fragmented, underprivileged, and irrational deviants. Nor was the Smelserian model (structural strain/generalized belief/short circuiting) adequate to explain the timing, cognitive character, conduct, or goals of movement actors. The movements of the sixties and seventies were not responses to economic crises or breakdown. They involved concrete goals, clearly articulated general values and interests, and rational calculations of strategies. Clearly, a new theoretical approach to the analysis of social movements was needed. In the United States the theoretical response involved the emergence of the "resource-mobilization" paradigm; in Western Europe the "identity-oriented" paradigm became the dominant approach.

Despite crucial differences that will be analyzed below, both paradigms assume that social movements involve contestation between organized groups with autonomous associations and sophisticated forms of communication (networks, publics). Both argue that conflictual collective action is normal, and that participants are usually rational, well-integrated members of organizations. In short, collective action involves forms of association specific to the context of a modern pluralistic civil society. In addition, both approaches distinguish between two levels of collective action: the manifest dimension of large-scale mobilizations (strikes, rallies, demonstrations) and the less visible, latent level of forms of organization and communication among groups that account for the everyday life and continuity of actor participation. Indeed, it is clear that the insistence of these approaches on the *prior* organization of social actors and on the *rationality* of collective contestation directly challenges the classical theories of social movements. For it means that those characteristics deemed unique to "conventional" collective action turn out to be true for nonconventional forms of collective behavior. In other words, civil society, with its intermediary and autonomous associations so dear to the pluralists, and not their nightmare image of mass society, is the terrain on which the anathematized social movement appears!

The Resource-Mobilization Paradigm

Resource-mobilization theorists began by rejecting the emphasis on feelings and grievances, the use of psychologizing categories, and the focus on breakdown characteristic of the collective-behavior approach. Moreover, they marshaled a wealth of empirical evidence to disprove the notion that atomized individuals, motivated by social strain, are the main actors in social movements.[12] Most significant from their own point of view, resource-mobilization theorists demonstrated that, in order to mobilize collective action, sophisticated organizational forms and modes of communication that go well beyond the crude mechanisms described in the classical tradition are required.

Drawing on the work of economists (Olson), political scientists (Salisbury), and historians (Rudé, Hobsbawm, Soboul, Wolff), resource-mobilization theorists stress such "objective" variables as organization, interests, resources, opportunities, and strategies to account for large-scale mobilizations. These variables are addressed from the standpoint of neoutilitarian logic imputed to collective actors. The "rational actor" (individual and group), employing strategic and instrumental reasoning, replaces the crowd as the central referent for the analysis of collective action. Of course, there are different orientations within this paradigm ranging from the strictly individualistic, utilitarian logic of pure rational-actor approaches pioneered by Olson to the organizational-entrepeneurial approach of McCarthy/Zald and the political-conflict model of the Tillys, Oberschall, Gamson, and Tarrow.[13] Most of these relax the strict individualist calculus of

[12] For a review of the evidence, see Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory"; Anthony Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973); and Morris and Herring, "Theory and Research."

[13] Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (May 1977); Charles Tilly, Louise Tilly, and Richard Tilly, *The Rebellious Century: 1830–1930*

interest typical of Olson by positing solidary groups with collective interests as the protagonists of collective action. Despite their differences, all versions of the resource-mobilization approach analyze collective action in terms of the logic of strategic interaction and cost-benefit calculations. In this respect, they all operate with a "Clausewitzian" understanding of politics.[14]

Resource-mobilization theorists share the following assumptions: (1) Social movements must be understood in terms of a conflict model of collective action. (2) There is no fundamental difference between institutional and noninstitutional collective action. (3) Both entail conflicts of interest built into institutionalized power relations. (4) Collective action involves the rational pursuit of interests by groups. (5) Goals and grievances are permanent products of power relations and cannot account for the formation of movements. (6) This depends instead on changes in resources, organization, and opportunities for collective action. (7) Success is evidenced by the recognition of the group as a political actor or by increased material benefits. (8) Mobilization involves large-scale, special-purpose, bureaucratic, formal organizations.[15]

This approach is thus diametrically opposed to traditional models that conceive of a social movement as a group com-

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975); William Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1975); Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements;* Tarrow, "Social Movements."

[14] Charles Perrow, "The Sixties Observed," in Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy, eds., *The Dynamics of Social Movements* (Cambridge: Winthrop, 1979), p. 199. Perrow characterized the political-process version of resource-mobilization theory as "Clausewitzian" because it conceives of protest as the continuation of orderly politics by other (disorderly) means—as growing out of the pursuit of interests otherwise unattainable. But he errs in arguing that only the organizational-entrepreneurial model is economistic, because it attributes cost-benefit calculations to the collective actors. Tilly's political-process model does the same.

[15] Some members of the resource-mobilization school acknowledge a variety of organizational forms for modern movements, but the overall emphasis is on formal organization. Thus the school has been accused of an inability to distinguish between interest groups and social movement associations. See Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory," pp. 541–543.

mitted to a specific ideology and motivated by the consciousness of a set of grievances to act together to promote change. For the resource-mobilization paradigm, the object of analysis is not the social movement in this sense but collective action between groups with opposed interests. Analysis does not proceed from an hermeneutic relation to the ideology or self-understanding of collective actors. Instead, the standpoint of analysis approximates that of the movement organizer concerned with the imperatives of mobilization, on the one hand, and a more general observer's overview of the political environment, on the other.

Organization and rationality are thus the catchwords of this approach. However, because this perspective insists on the strategic-instrumental rationality of collective action, and on the orientation to interests by collective actors, it operates on the terrain mapped out by Mancur Olson. It is thus no accident that so many of the theorists using this paradigm have attempted to find a solution to the free-rider problem. As is well known, Olson maintains that, without constraint or selective incentives (the prospect of individual material benefits), the rational individual will not contribute resources or time to collective action. On the basis of the calculation of individual interest and the costs or benefits of contributing to secure "collective goods" (benefits available to all group members whether or not they contribute to collective action), it would be more rational to ride free and let others in the group do the work and make the sacrifices. In other words, collective action lies outside the rational self-interest of the average person even if individual and group interests coincide. Without selective incentives or constraints, collective action, according to Olson, becomes impossible or irrational.[16]

The standard response by resource-mobilization theorists is

[16] Olson argues in short that without constraint (the logic of the state) and without incentives (the logic of the economy), the social dimension of social action dies out. On his model then, actors are oriented only by reification—that is, power and money in society.

that Olson errs in assuming that those who are mobilized into collective actions are unorganized individuals (the market model) whereas, in fact, they are already organized into solidary groups. But this reply simply finesses the problem by displacing it to a different level: what remains unclear is why individuals acting rationally in pursuit of interests get involved in groups and what makes them solidary in the first place. References to "still viable or partially viable communities" or "associational groups organized for purposes other than opposition" (Oberschall), to the existence of "collective interests" (Tilly), "social incentives" (Fireman and Gamson), or "conscience constituencies" who donate resources (McCarthy and Zald) leave this fundamental question unanswered.[17] Indeed, as Parsons pointed out long ago in his critique of utilitarianism, an analytical perspective that focuses on strategic-instrumental action cannot provide an answer to the question of the origin and logic of group solidarity. The question arises nonetheless intrinsically within the resource-mobilization framework because it insists on the instrumental and strategic rationality of collective action. Accordingly, this approach requires an account of the organizational forms it presupposes and a justification of its exclusive focus on the one form of rationality which it imputes to collective actors.

Charles Tilly's reconstruction of the impact of the shift from local to national structures of power on organizational forms and types of collective action takes an important step in this direction. His analysis provides an historical justification for utilitarian theories of collective action, insofar as the development of the capitalist market economy and the nation-state privilege strategic-instrumental calculations.[18] These institutions call forth a corresponding logic of collective action on the part of contenders for material benefits and political

[17] See Bruce Fireman and W. A. Gamson, "Utilitarian Logic in the Resource Mobilization Perspective," in Zald and McCarthy, *Dynamics of Social Movements,* pp. 1–44.

[18] Tilly does not intend an historicist reading of his work, but such a reading does not violate his findings, only his self-interpretation.

power who target the market economy or the state for inclusion and control. Moreover, Tilly's version of modernization theory provides an account of the emergence of the action repertoire and the types of associations presupposed by resource-mobilization theory. His comparative-historical analysis thus simultaneously situates and transcends this framework. On the other hand, many of his most significant findings regarding new forms of group life have implications for the development of the key dimensions of civil society that are not reducible to the analytic categories of the resource-mobilization approach that he himself adopts. As we shall see, despite his expansion of this theoretical framework, he does not really succeed in providing a solution to the free-rider problem that he inherits. Nor does he offer adequate means to account for the new forms of organization or projects of those contemporary movements that do not target the economy or the state for inclusion. Indeed, Tilly's corrective to the resource-mobilization model works best *postfestum*, for the origin and logic of the nineteenth-century action repertoire. Nonetheless, because it is the most sophisticated and general version of resource-mobilization theory, it is worth looking at Tilly's model more closely.

Despite his explicit polemic against the Smelserian and Durkheimian versions of the "breakdown" model of collective behavior, Tilly retains the thesis that large-scale structural change ("modernization") affects collective action:

> There is not much doubt that great transformations sweep away traditional props of the social order . . . . What is doubtful is whether discontinuities regularly breed *anomie,* and whether *anomie* regularly breeds individual or collective disorder.[19]

Tilly disproves standard breakdown theories by showing that the timing and pace of urbanization and industrialization do not govern the tempo of collective action and that it is not

[19] Tilly et al., *Rebellious Century,* p. 6.

possible to directly link hardship, anomie, crises, and conflict. But his analysis of structural change does not challenge the *fact* of differentiation in the transition from "community" to "society." Instead, he shows how economic transformation, urbanization, and state-making produce a *long-run* shift in the character and personnel of collective action. These processes (along with the development of the mass media) facilitate the emergence of new types of mobilizations and organizations while undermining others. What is new in Tilly's version of modernization theory is the linkage between a specific action repertoire and structural changes in the everyday life of the relevant actors:

> . . . the reorganization of everyday life transformed the character of conflict . . . long-run reshaping of *solidarities* rather than the immediate production of stress and strain, constituted the most important impact of structural change on political conflict.[20]

Through an analysis of the changes in the daily routines of populations—their locus and mode of work, the structure of life in neighborhoods, population shifts from countryside to city, and changes in the sites of power—Tilly shows how the action repertoires developed by collective actors interrelate with their forms of association and why new forms emerge. The long-term development involves replacement of communal solidarities by voluntary associations. This entails a shift of collective action away from routine assemblies by communal groups and local markets, festivals, and officially sanctioned gatherings to deliberately called meetings by formally organized groups.[21] The major forms of collective action thus change: food riots, tax rebellions, and appeals aimed at paternalistic authorities typical of the "eighteenth-century action

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 86; my emphasis.

[21] Charles Tilly, "European Violence and Collective Action since 1700," revised version of a paper presented at the Conference on Political Violence and Terrorism, Istituto Carlo Cattaneo, Bologna, June 1982.

repertoire" are replaced by the demonstration and the strike typical of the "nineteenth-century action repertoire."

Tilly's analytic categories of types of collective action capture this overall shift. The eighteenth-century action repertoire involves "competitive" and/or "reactive" claims. The former entails contention among existing communal groups on the local level over resources claimed by rivals. "Reactive" collective action involves communal groups threatened by efforts of state makers to gain control over the general population and its resources. It also involves resistance to the growths of the national market and the insistence of the priority of local needs and traditions. In this case, a group reacts to the claims of another group over a resource currently under its control. In both cases, collective action is carried out by preexisting solidary communities. It involves richly symbolic and expressive action, admirably described by Tilly despite his overall stress on the strategic rationality even of these types of contestations.[22]

"Proactive" collective actions, on the other hand, assert group claims to power, privileges, or resources that have not previously existed. Here attempts to control rather than resist elements of national structures involve the formation of complex special-purpose organizations in the place of communal groups.

The types of mobilization that correspond to the latter two types of claims are "defensive" and "offensive" respectively. Reactive struggles involve defensive mobilizations in the face of a threat from the outside. Clearly what is at stake is the defense of a traditional, communally structured life world against "modernization." "Offensive" mobilizations typical of proactive claimants involve the pooling of resources for the sake of recognition or a larger share of power.

To be sure, Tilly continually warns against viewing compet-

[22] For discussion of these action types, see Tilly et al., *Rebellious Century,* pp. 48–55, 249–252, and Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978), pp. 143–151.

itive, reactive, and proactive collective actions as stages in an evolutionary process. Moreover, he argues that elements of an action repertoire can be used to make a variety of kinds of claims—a demonstration is not by definition proactive or offensive. Nevertheless, he traces a long-term shift from the predominance of the first two, up until the midnineteenth century, to the predominance of the third ever since. Why the shift? Because the "big structures" won control over the resources formerly wielded by households, communities, and other small groups. In addition, urbanization and the mass media reduced the costs of large-scale mobilizatioin for formally organized associations. The new locuses of power and the new structures of everyday life fostered the selection of the new action repertoire and the emergence of associational forms. Social conflict increasingly took the form of proactive, offensive struggles for inclusion in those structures that control national-level resources. Last but hardly least, the development of mass electoral politics created an environment amenable to voluntary association and large-scale mobilization.

Indeed, Tilly argues that the growth of elections and the beginning of popular participation in national politics promoted the spread of the demonstration as a key form of collective action, because it involved a legal umbrella that could be extended to more and more groups and types of gatherings: "The grant of legality to an electoral association or an electoral assembly provides a claim to legality for associations and assemblies that are not quite electoral, not *only* electoral, or not *now* electoral."[23] The rights to organize, recruit, speak publicly, assemble, solicit, publicize, and demonstrate (the key institutional components of modern civil society) are, of course, essential to a multiparty system operating in a context of universal suffrage. The presence of elites with a strong interest in a broad definition of acceptable political activity makes it hard, over time, for governments to withhold

[23] Tilly, *From Mobilization,* p. 167.

these rights from other social actors. Electoral politics thus offer an incentive to social actors to select the demonstration, public meeting, and strike as the modes of collective action, since ". . . those groups are more successful, on the whole, which can produce the highest multiple of numbers, commitment, and articulation of claims."[24]

This means that *civil society* has become the indispensable terrain on which social actors assemble, organize, and mobilize, even if their targets are the economy and the state. Tilly's work thus challenges the conclusions of Foucault, who posits the abolition of all means of effective and autonomous solidarity through the development of techniques of individuation ushered in with modern forms of power: the state, the capitalist economy, and the disciplines that occupy the space of the social. Of course, Tilly shows that the communal solidarities of the famous intermediary bodies of the ancien régime, along with the sites and types of contentious gatherings specific to these structures of everyday life in "premodern" (eighteenth-century) conditions *did* eventually disappear. But his whole point is that they were replaced by new forms of solidarity, association, power resources, and modes of contestation on the terrain of modern civil society. Indeed, Tilly views these forms of organization and protest as *more autonomous* than those "spontaneous" gatherings typical of the eighteenth-century action repertoire so lovingly described by Foucault!

We can now see how the analysis of changing bases of association and action repertoires relates to the resource-mobilization paradigm in Tilly's work. Tilly shows that modern collective action presupposes the development of autonomous social and political spaces within civil society. But he stresses only *strategic* considerations in the emergence of the nineteenth-century action repertoire and in the development and expansion of democracy. In other words, he does not

[24] Tilly, "European Violence," p. 11.

focus on the relation between the emergence of universalistic principles in the new public spaces and the new collective identities, based on new forms of associative life, of collective actors. Nor does he analyze the meaning of their normative political projects. He looks only at those dimensions of these processes that are relevant for the mobilization of organized groups competing for power. To be sure, Tilly's historical work does imply that the transformation of the locuses of power and the corresponding change in forms of collective action *presuppose* the creation of new meanings, new organizations, new identities, and of a social space for these to appear (civil society). Yet the resource-mobilization perspective he embraces leads him to treat the latter as faits accomplis and to focus on the manifest level of movement activity, namely, mobilization. Consequently, the rather wide range of what is relevant to social-movement analysis opened up by his historical investigations is considerably narrowed. In short, social conflicts in and over civil society and the form of the political public sphere are viewed from only one side—as defensive or offensive reactions to change.

This strategic-instrumental bias was already there in Tilly's approach before his major work on methodology appeared. The earlier political-process model rested on a specific interpretation of Marx which, despite the misleading use of the term "solidarity model" to describe it, predisposed Tilly to focus on questions of interest, control, and strategy. Marx's message, according to Tilly, is as follows:

> . . . if you want to analyze major conflicts . . . identify the major classes and interests which emerge from the organization of production. Catalogue the resulting conflicts of interest. Examine each class you have enumerated in terms of its preparedness to act on its interests. Work out the class basis of the chief institutions and leaders involved in the conflict. Watch out for crises which make the dominant classes vulnerable and expect the organized underclasses to strike. . . .[25]

[25] Tilly, *From Mobilization,* p.14.

Of course, this version of Marx is selective insofar as it neglects the dimensions of ideology and class consciousness. It is this selective reading of Marx that is recast in resource-mobilization terms.

The result is a general methodology for the analysis of collective action for which Tilly apparently claims universal validity. Its purpose is to enable one to assess the organizational, structural, and situational chances for a group with articulated interests to engage in collective action. The combined polity and mobilization models[26] focus attention on the interplay of repression/facilitation, power, opportunity/threat on the one side, and interests, organization, and mobilization of capacities on the other. It is presupposed that collective action involves costs and brings benefits in the form of collective goods. It is also assumed, although not explicitly stated, that there is a zero-sum relation between contenders and members in the struggle over inclusion in the polity. I say this because Tilly defines power as the extent to which a group's interests *prevail over* the interests of others with whom it is in conflict.[27]

But what is a group? Tilly insists that groups are the main actors in collective conflicts and that they pursue collective interests. What hinges on the definition of the group, then, is the explanation of why collective action is collective. The definition he offers, however, is unsatisfactory in several respects. Tilly defines groups in terms of two elements: (a) categories of people who share some characteristic, and (b) the networks that link people to each other. Common identity and internal networks constitute the "groupness" of a group.[28] Common interests are shared advantages or disadvantages likely to accrue to a group in consequence of interaction with other populations.[29] It is implied by the polity model that entry into

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 52–97.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 115.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 118.

the polity to gain control over resources or power is sufficient to create common interests.

Three problems are immediately evident with these definitions. First, it is entirely unclear when and why a shared characteristic becomes relevant for the mutual recognition of group members—this is the *problem of collective identity*. Second, as numerous critiques of Marx have shown, the connection between relations of production (or to the state) and the articulation of interests over the long or short run is not automatic—this is the *problem of consciousness*. And third, the category of collective interest requires a prior analysis of what counts as collective advantage and how collective interests are recognized, interpreted, and able to command loyalty and commitment—this is the *problem of solidarity*. The concept of interest is either too broad or too narrow to resolve such questions. The concept of group offered by Tilly presupposes precisely what has, with the transition from the communal to the associational basis of group identity, become problematic and needs to be explained. In other words, Tilly's own historical work suggests that the construction of group identity, the recognition of shared interests, the creation of solidarity within and between groups (networks), can, with the emergence of modern civil society, no longer be treated as givens. These are *achievements* that have increasingly come to be treated as such by the actors involved in these processes. Increased reflexivity regarding the social construction of identity and reality involves learning along dimensions other than the strategic. Not even Tilly's expanded resource-mobilization framework, however, is able to adequately confront these questions.

One could, of course, argue that, insofar as the nineteenth-century action repertoire is concerned, these problems are not pressing. For the collective actors involved in creating it tended to define themselves in terms of the economic and political systems they targeted. The major movements of the time, socialism and nationalism, involved collective actors who

defined themselves in economic (class) or political (national) terms and who sought economic or state power. It thus seems perfectly legitimate for the twentieth-century theorist to treat these collective identities as givens. But Tilly makes universal claims for his analytical framework. He does not restrict it to the emergence or logic of the nineteenth-century action repertoire, to which it seems most suited. He thus cannot avoid these theoretical issues. Moreover, these questions become all the more pressing if one turns to those contemporary collective actions that do not address the economy or the state for inclusion or increased benefits, and that do not involve actors defining themselves in class or national terms.

In "Models and Realities of Popular Collective Action," Tilly addresses these issues and tries to resolve the free-rider problem to which they obviously relate.[30] He grants that there is as yet no convincing explanation of why an individual joins a collective action, or of what the connections are between individual and group interests. In what seems to be a self-critique, Tilly admits that the creation of solidarity and commonality of interest, which resource-mobilization theorists took for granted, is a pressing theoretical problem. However, the solution he offers to these problems—a more focused (game-theoretic) analysis of strategic interaction in the formative stages of group emergence and in the development of collective interests—is insufficient. Tilly wants to replace models of rational action with models of rational interaction. "Rational," however, still means strategic and goal-oriented. We have not really transcended the metatheoretical limits of the resource-mobilization approach.

With the revisions suggested by Tilly, this approach could account for the emergence of common *interests* in the context of conflicts and negotiations. It can show, in other words, that frequent interaction brings egoistic parties to recognize that

[30] Charles Tilly, "Models and Realities of Popular Collective Action," in this issue of *Social Research*.

cooperation suits their interests. This is Tilly's new resolution to the free-rider problem. But it remains doubtful that the character of interpersonal ties that constitute and shape social life, and "that involve so little strategic interaction,"[31] could be adequately addressed even in this revised framework. An explanation of how *some* collective interests emerge in the mobilization process is not equivalent to an account of the formation of collective identities, ideologies, or solidarities. We are still not offered an analysis of the rewards of collective action from a nonstrategic point of view.

Nor has Olson been adequately refuted. Only if one switches to a model of analysis which also looks at collective interaction from a nonstrategic standpoint can one find a solution to the free-rider problem. In other words, only if one sees solidarity and identity as goals of group formation, in addition to other goals, can one see that, with respect to these goals, collective action is costless.[32] One cannot, however, simply add a consideration of solidarity, collective identity, consciousness, or ideology to the resource-mobilization perspective without bursting its framework.[33]

Clearly, the resource-mobilization perspective, in all of its variants, operates with a concept of rational action that is too narrow and hence unable to address these questions. Instead of challenging the concept of rationality employed by collective behaviorists and pluralists, the resource-mobilization

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] A. Pizzorno, "Political Exchange and Collective Identity in Industrial Conflict," in C. Crouch and A. Pizzorno, eds., *The Resurgence of Class Conflict in Western Europe since 1968* (London: Macmillan, 1978), 2: 277–298.

[33] Fireman and Gamson, in "Utilitarian Logic," try to do just that. Their analysis of the role of "solidarity and principle," or "social incentives," which blur the distinction between individual and collective goods and thus reduce the costs of mobilization, ends up reintroducing precisely those dimensions of analysis omitted by resource-mobilization approaches. They thereby depart from the core assumptions of this approach and, despite their own intentions, demonstrate that the nonstrategic dimensions of collective interaction are relevant to movement analysis. Their own approach, however, is to instrumentalize solidarity and principle from the standpoint of movement organizers' tasks of mobilizing participants.

theorists adopt the *same* concept of means-ends rationality and apply it to the analysis of social movements. It is, of course, useful to look at collective action in these terms. We are thereby afforded a sorely needed corrective to the ideological biases of the older traditions that relegate collective action to the realm of the irrational and view it as emotional-expressive outbursts. But one might still question whether strategic-instrumental rationality is the most salient or important feature of collective action at all times. Hasn't the critique of the collective-behavior tradition thrown out the baby with the bathwater by excluding the analysis of values, norms, ideologies, projects, culture, and identity in other than instrumental terms? There is no reason for analyses of these dimensions of collective action to presuppose that value choice is individual and nonrational and thus to resort to psychologizing explanations. Nor is it necessary to embrace at face value the ideologies or self-understandings of collective actors, or to reify the concept "social movement" by resorting to single-actor models.[34] But it is necessary to analyze those aspects of experience that shape the interpretation of interests, individual and collective, and affect the very capacity of actors to form groups and mobilize. This is especially true for contemporary collective actors who do not target the state or the economy for inclusion and whose identities cannot be deduced from these subsystems.

Of course, many resource-mobilization theorists have recognized some of the unique aspects of contemporary movements. Indeed, the paradigm was initially elaborated by theorists involved in or directly affected by the New Left. These theorists explicitly addressed innovations in the organizations and mobilization processes of the sixties movements such as the deliberate choice of decentralized structures, grassroots participation, and federated national organizations. They

[34] Tilly's inclusion of Touraine under the heading of theorists operating with single-actor models is unfair, as Touraine clearly presupposes at least two sets of actors in his model of social movements. See Tilly, "Models and Realities."

also took note of the emphasis on goals such as direct personal involvement in political action, self-help, personal change, and the creation of new identities and solidarities. However, most of the analysts in this tradition conclude that these "new" orientations result in a loss of strategic effectiveness.[35] They thus operate with an anachronistic concept of success.

Moreover, Tilly has explicitly *rejected* the idea that changes in tactics (sit-down strikes, mass picketing, sit-ins), in issues (local autonomy, sexual freedom, right to a distinct life style), or actors (prevalence of the new middle classes) amount to a new action repertoire. "Looked at closely, however, almost all of these cases in point involve forms of action that already have their own histories."[36] Despite some innovation, contemporary collective actors continue to use the routines of meeting, demonstrating, striking, etc. To Tilly then, although issues and alignments have changed, the fundamental fact is continuity—the means of action have remained the same. *But do they have the same meaning?* In short, are the demonstrations, meetings, etc. of the "new movements" really proactive and offensive? Clearly, in the case of the new dimensions of the feminist, ecological, peace, and local-autonomy movements, this is *not* so. And Tilly himself has argued that no action is in itself proactive or reactive, offensive or defensive. Indeed, the contemporary movements combine features of both Tilly's main types: they are often defensive and reactive but do not protect preexisting communities from outside incursions. Rather, they defend spaces for the creation of new identities and solidarities. They are, moreover, associationally organized, yet the associations are not treated as simple interest groups but as ends in themselves. Finally, the new movements also have an "offensive" side, not in the sense of struggles for

[35] This despite Zald and Ash's early argument that different organizational structures are effective for different goals. See M. N. Zald and R. Ash, "Social Movement Organizations," *Social Forces* 44 (1966): 327–341.

[36] Tilly, "European Violence," p. 24. See also "Fights and Festivals in 20th Century Ile de France," CRSO Working Paper no. 305, University of Michigan, December 1983, pp. 63–68.

inclusion in the polity but insofar as they involve conflict between social adversaries over the control of a *social* field.

With these developments in mind, it would nonetheless be possible to apply some of the core concepts of Tilly's version of the resource-mobilization approach to contemporary movements. Within the spirit of his work, we could ask whether a new twentieth-century action repertoire is in the making. We could attempt to correlate changes in organizational forms, targets, and tactics of collective action with changes in the locus and technology of power and resources, alterations in the relation between state, economy, and society, and transformations in the experiences and structures of everyday life. In other words, the abstract elements of Tilly's analysis could be used to develop a theoretical account of changes recognized by everyone in aspects of contemporary collective actions. Tilly himself grants that one might legitimately pursue such an inquiry.[37]

This, however, would involve transcending the narrow framework of resource-mobilization theory and, above all, the exclusive focus on strategic action. Contemporary collective actors consciously struggle over the power to socially construct new identities, to create democratic spaces for autonomous social action, and to reinterpret norms and reshape institutions. It thus becomes incumbent on the theorist (a) to look into the processes by which collective actors create the identities and solidarities they defend, (b) to assess the relations between adversaries and the stakes of their conflicts, and (c) to analyze the structural and cultural developments that contribute to such heightened reflexivity.

The Identity-Oriented Paradigm

The "identity-oriented" paradigm purports to do just that. The European theorists of the NSMs have returned to the

[37] *Ibid.*

dimension of integration in contestatory collective action without, however, reproducing the Durkheimian thrust of the breakdown thesis or Smelserian models of collective behavior. On the other hand, these theorists are also aware of the inadequacies of Marxist analyses of social movements, despite their sympathy with those dimensions of neo-Marxism that stress the importance of consciousness, ideology, social struggle, and solidarity to collective action. These "post-Marxist" thinkers argue that theories stressing the primacy of structural contradictions, economic classes, and crises in determining collective identity are inappropriate to contemporary collective actors. They also maintain that one cannot apply neoutilitarian, rational-actor models to collective actors whose conflictual interaction is not restricted to political exchanges, negotiations, and/or strategic calculations between adversaries. This means that the logic of collective interaction entails something other than strategic or instrumental rationality.

It would be misleading to imply, however, that a new paradigm has been formed around a *pure* identity model such as the one proposed by Pizzorno.[38] Indeed, this model on its own has serious difficulties that have been criticized by the more complex theoretical approach to contemporary movements articulated by Touraine and his school.[39]

Pizzorno rightly points out that no version of the logic of exchange relying on cost-benefit calculations can explain the collective action of "new groups" seeking identity, autonomy, and recognition. Such an account applies to the case of individual exchanges on the market. It also applies to the case of the collective-bargaining models of negotiated exchanges around the joint regulation of work terms by unions and management. But the former does not involve collective actors; the latter

[38] Pizzorno, "Political Exchange," p. 293. See also A. Pizzorno, "On the Rationality of Democratic Choice," *Telos*, no. 63 (Spring 1985): 41–69.

[39] Here the situation is the reverse of that of the resource-mobilization paradigm. An actual school has, in this case, emerged around the expanded model (of Touraine) rather than around the "simple identity model."

involves *already organized* groups within the sphere of production that are capable of *negotiating demands*. The process of identity formation, however, involves *nonnegotiable* demands. The model of political exchange is thus also inadequate to the logic of collective action of new movements, because political exchange, like collective bargaining, requires negotiations between opponents. Strategic calculations on the part of adversaries in a political exchange revolve around the concession of benefits in the face of threats to social consensus and order. This entails bargaining by legitimate representatives able to ensure compliance to settlements. Yet it is precisely the logic of exchange and negotiation that is *absent* in the case of NSMs involved in the creation of solidarity and identity. According to Pizzorno, in this case,

> The real end is non-negotiable, since it consists in the formation of the very subject which has successively to become the actor of the exchange and the bearer of gains and losses. There is a category of action which may be observed in social conflicts, that can be understood only if it is asked of them not what gains and losses they will produce for the actors, but whether they will produce solidarity or not. These are actions connoting a process of formation of an identity.[40]

Here Olson's law that participation for the acquisition of collective goods is uneconomical is suspended.

The logic of collective identity formation involves direct participation on the part of the actors and the exclusion of representation. Before the recognition of a common identity by the others and by the participants themselves is secured, before group solidarity is attained, representation, which presupposes trust, is not possible. Moreover, for the collective actor to be able to calculate the costs and benefits of collective action and act strategically, his identity has to be established. The process of the creation of identity occurs through collective interaction itself, within and between groups. Indeed,

[40] Pizzorno, "Political Exchange," p. 293.

Pizzorno points out that conflictual action may be undertaken in the absence of "real claims," for the sake of affirming the existence of a new or unrecognized collective actor.

Pizzorno identifies this logic of collective action as *expressive.*[41] Accordingly, he sets up a simple (too simple) dichotomy between, on the one hand, emerging social actors seeking identity and recognition, or "new social movements," for whom expressive action, universalistic, nonnegotiable demands, and direct participation are appropriate, and on the other hand, already-recognized collective actors (unions, parties) for whom strategic-instrumental rationality, trusted representatives, and negotiations are characteristic. Once the new collective identity becomes recognized as part of a new, expanded system of representation, action shifts from the expressive to the instrumental, and representation replaces direct forms of participation.

This pure identity model shows that emphasis on the strategic dimension of collective contestation misses key features of the logic of collective action. But it does not take us much beyond the truisms already articulated by collective behaviorists. The latter have long maintained that social movements engage in (or indulge in) expressive forms of action. Moreover, it is well known that religious communities, secular communes, political sects, and the like stage expressive and ritualistic actions to secure their identities. So, for that matter, do nation-states. Expressive action to create and maintain an identity is thus *not* unique to the conflictual collective action of social movements as distinct from the sect or commune. Moreover, Pizzorno's thesis of a developmental logic of movements that moves from expressive noninstitutional action to instrumental action by members of an expanded polity precludes examination of new features of contemporary movements. If all movements go through this process, then there is nothing new in the concentration of "new" actors on

[41] *Ibid.*

issues of identity or direct participatory democracy—they are simply at an early stage in their life cycle.

Yet, one might argue, the salient feature of the NSMs is not that they engage in expressive action or assert their identities but that they involve actors who have become *aware* of their capacity to create identities and of power relations involved in their social construction. Contemporary actors are not only concerned with affirming the content of a specific identity but also with the formal elements involved in identity formation. On the one hand, they have articulated the formal principle of an equal chance for all to participate in group processes through which identities are formed. According to Melucci, contemporary collective actors have become reflexive regarding the social processes of identity formation.[42] In addition, this increased reflexivity is applied to existing societal norms and to the structures of domination involved in their maintenance. Contemporary collective actors see, in other words, that the creation of identity involves social contestation around the reinterpretation of norms, the creation of new meanings, and a challenge to the social construction of the very boundaries between public, private, and political domains of action.

Using an expanded identity paradigm, one might say that collective actors strive to create a group identity within a general social identity whose interpretation they contest. The category of expressive action cannot give an adequate account of such a doubling of the problem of identity for two reasons: first because it misses the normative component of shared social identity, and second because it excludes the strategic dimension of conflicts concerning the latter's interpretation. Both steps are important, because even a stress on the new reflexivity of social movements concerning identity problems does not on its own introduce the dimension of conflictual social relations between adversaries. Not even the reflexive defense of an existing or newly created identity involves a

[42] Alberto Melucci, "The New Social Movements: A Theoretical Approach," *Social Science Information* 19 (1980).

generalizable political aim. Thus what is needed is an approach that looks at the political aspects of conflict and is able to say why identity has become a major focus today. Accordingly, a pure identity-oriented paradigm becomes too restrictive from within.

The theorist of social movements who has provided the broadest theoretical framework for an identity-oriented paradigm is, of course, Alain Touraine. Touraine begins with a hermeneutic relation to the self-understanding and ideologies of contemporary movements. But he moves beyond this level in order to account for their historically new dimensions—reflexivity regarding the creation of identity and norms, emphasis on the democratization of society, self-limitation, and focus on cultural issues. His work moves on two analytical levels: (1) the elaboration of a theory of the structural and cultural dimensions of contemporary society and (2) an action-theoretical analysis of the conflictual processes of identity formation of collective actors. In addition, he focuses on the social dimension of collective action, in part by reviving the concept of civil society. He thus significantly expands the identity-oriented approach while retaining many of its key insights. Nevertheless, as will become clear, Touraine does not develop an adequate theory either of civil society or of the action type he studies and thus fails to construct a model around which a highly desirable integration with the best of resource-mobilization theory could take place.

Touraine defines social movements as normatively oriented interactions between adversaries with conflicting interpretations and opposed societal models of a shared cultural field.[43] Yet he explicitly rejects a pure identity-oriented analysis of social movements, arguing that it tends either to reproduce the ideological self-understanding of actors or to slip into a social-psychological account of interaction at the expense of a truly sociological analysis of struggle. This is especially risky in

[43] Alain Touraine, *The Voice and the Eye* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 31–32.

the case of the analysis of contemporary collective actors. Their quests for personal and communal identity, advocacy of expressive as opposed to strategic action, and focus on direct participation involve a tendency to "retreat to autonomy"—to abandon the field of social-political struggle and turn in on themselves in the fashion of communitarian or sectarian groups. An exclusive theoretical focus on the creation of identity would only parallel the tendency of some contemporary actors to construe their own ideological representation of social relations (direct, democratic, communal) as a utopian organizing principle for all of society and to equate their expressive development of identity with the cultural stakes of the struggle. Although Touraine maintains that cultural orientations cannot be separated from social conflict, he nevertheless insists on the objectivity of a common cultural field shared by opponents. The various institutional potentials of the shared cultural field, and not simply the particular identity of a particular group, comprise the stakes of struggle. Accordingly, both actors and analysts who focus *exclusively* on the dynamics of identity formation tend to veer off the map of social movements.

The same holds true, however, according to Touraine, for an exclusive focus on strategies. Strategic action is only barely social and relational. Of course, it involves taking into account others' likely calculations within the rules of the game, and it entails interaction in this minimal sense. But strategic calculations exclude explicit reference to a common cultural field or to structured social relations between actors.

> A strategic concept of change entails the reduction of society to relations between the actors and particularly to power relations, detached from any reference to a social system. . . . There are no stakes in the social relation and there is no field other than the relation itself.[44]

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

Accordingly, an analytical framework that focuses exclusively on strategic interaction misses both the cultural orientations and the structural dimension of conflict and thus bypasses what is specific to social movements.

Indeed, Touraine sees the exclusive orientations to identity and to strategy as opposite sides of the same coin. Both look at social conflicts in terms of the response to long-term changes (modernization) rather than in relational terms of social structure.[45] Moreover, both approaches correspond to an image of contemporary society as a loose ensemble subject to a permanent spiral of technological innovation and structural change led either by managerial-entrepreneurial elites or by the state. From this standpoint, "society" is stratified in terms of the actors' ability (power and privilege) to adapt to change successfully (elites), their success in securing protection from change (operatives), or their victimization by change (marginalized masses).[46] Both of the "nonsocial" accounts of collective action theorize the conflict behavior of "actors" conceived in one of the above three terms. The pure identity model corresponds to the *defensive* behavior of actors who resist their reduction to the status of powerless dependent consumers of imposed change through withdrawal into countercultures or through refusal of innovations that threaten existing privileges and/or the cultural integrity of groups.

On the other side, the purely strategic analysis of collective action corresponds to the standpoint of managerial or state elites, *even* when it is meant to take the part of "ordinary people" and offer the view from below.[47] When the stake of collective action is construed as membership among elites who control developmental resources, then collective action ap-

[45] Alain Touraine, "An Introduction to the Study of Social Movements," in this issue of *Social Research.*

[46] Alain Touraine, "Triumph or Downfall of Civil Society?", in *Humanities in Review* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 223.

[47] *Ibid.*, pp. 221–227.

pears as *offensive,* proactive struggles of interest groups competing for power and privilege in those areas that development, or modernization, opens up. Here the effort is not to resist change but to strategically adapt to it. The problem with this approach is that neither the direction of the change nor the structural relations of domination it involves appear open to contestation because actors are related to a changing environment rather than to one another. In short, these theories of collective action articulate only those dimensions of conflict behavior that correspond to organizational developments and/or structural crises of the state and the political system.[48]

In order to clarify the difference between these modes of conflict behavior and the concept of a social movement, Touraine introduces an analytical distinction between the "pattern of development" of a society (diachronic axis) and its modes of functioning (synchronic axis). The state, system crises, change, and conflict behavior opposing elites to masses are situated on the first dimension. Social relations, and the "system of historical action"—that is, the conflictual processes by which norms, institutions, cultural patterns are created and contested by social actors—are situated on the second dimension. Accordingly, the type of collective action in which Touraine is interested and for which he reserves the term "social movement" are struggles around cultural patterns involved in the present functioning of society.

Touraine thus reintroduces many dimension of collective action stressed by collective behaviorists: social contestations between actors must be understood in cultural and normative terms. But there are three differences between the classical tradition and Touraine's approach. First, Touraine rejects all versions of the breakdown thesis to account for social movements. Breakdown and development govern conflict behavior on the diachronic axis of change. Second, social movements

[48] Hence Touraine's sweeping criticism of the resource-mobilization paradigm in "Introduction."

are not seen as abnormal occurrences. Instead, they make up the fabric of social life by producing and contesting social practices, norms, and institutions. Third, the cultural orientations of a particular society (its pattern of knowledge, type of investment, and image of the relation of man to nature) are not seen as incontestable givens, seamlessly transposed into social norms and institutions. Rather, the way a society produces its cultural orientations involves both social conflict and social relations of domination. Society itself is understood as "the changing, unstable, loosely coherent product of social relations, cultural innovation and political processes."[49] Unlike the societal model of the theorists of strategic action, however, this fluid view involves a conception of society as a set of systems of action or structured social relations among actors. Consequently, those dimensions of social action ignored by resource-mobilization theory move to the center of analysis. The focus turns to fields of alterable but nonetheless structured social relations rather than development, the state, or the market.

The meaning of collective action is accordingly redefined. *Action* refers to the capacity of human societies to develop and alter their own orientations—that is, to generate their normativity and objectives.[50] An action is *social* only if it is normatively oriented and situated in a field of relations including power and shared cultural orientations. A social *movement* involves a double reference to cultural orientations *and* social relations, opposed social projects *and* contested structures of domination. Therefore the social field that is contested by movements cannot be conceived of as a battlefield for which a military model of action (strategy) is appropriate.

But what is this contested social terrain which is neither the state nor the market mechanism? It is, of course, civil society. According to Touraine, civil society is the locus of the "light

[49] Touraine, "Triumph," p. 220.
[50] Touraine, *Voice,* p. 61.

side" of collective action—of social movements. Indeed, they rise and fall together: both require a certain autonomy from the state to exist, both can be crushed by a total state. Yet social movements do not target the state—they involve confrontations between social, civil adversaries within and over the structures of civil society. Civil society, then, is seen in action terms as the domain of struggles, public spaces, and political processes. It comprises the social realm in which the creation of norms, identities, and social relations of domination and resistance are located.

Touraine is aware of those theories that deny, implicitly or explicitly, the relevance of "civil society" to contemporary social systems. Indeed, he grants that the increased capacity of society to act on itself at the expense of absolute power and the metasocial guarantees of social order also opens the way for the enlargement of the state's role in social and cultural life.[51] But he nevertheless maintains that the increased societal reflexivity involves the expansion of civil society and the public realm. What is at stake here is the choice between two competing visions of collective action,

> one based on conflict [social movements] and the other based on violence. The sociologist knows that violence cannot be avoided, that it appears whenever social problems are dominated by problems of the state . . . but he certainly cannot accept the language of the state and make himself a direct tool of the destruction of civil society.[52]

Neoutilitarian theories of strategic collective action which focus on the state or take an entrepreneurial-managerial view are thus seen by Touraine to be diametrically opposed to a social view of social movements.

But there is something else at stake here, namely, the understanding, at least on a descriptive level, of what is new in the contemporary movements. Touraine's idea of the "expansion" of civil society is related directly to contemporary move-

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 115.
[52] Touraine, "Triumph," p. 233.

ments contesting the control of an increasing range of social activities formerly shielded from public scrutiny by tradition, a rigidly defined private sphere, or metasocial guarantees:

> The public space—*Oeffentlichkeit*—strictly limited in a bourgeois society, was extended to labor problems in an industrial society and now spreads over all fields of experience . . . the main political problems today deal directly with private life: fecundation and birth, reproduction and sexuality, illness and death and, in a different way, home-consumed mass media. . . . The distance between civil society and the state is increasing while the separation between private and public life is fading away.[53]

The issues raised by feminist, ecological, peace, and local-autonomy movements are thus all connected to the shifting boundaries between public, private, and social life, and involve struggles against old and new forms of domination in these areas.

Nevertheless, Touraine nowhere develops either a theory of civil society or a concrete analysis of its institutional makeup.[54] The concept remains unclear and descriptive in his work: at times it is equated with the public sphere, at times with the locus of social-movement activity, at times with social reflexivity. Instead of pursuing and clarifying this line of inquiry, Touraine turns to a different analytical level and constructs a model of our contemporary societal type which he calls "post-industrial" or "programmed," in order to specify *theoretically* what is new in contemporary movements and to ground the claim that they are *radically discontinuous* with previous movements.

"Postindustrial" society is an allegedly new societal type characterized by new locuses of power, forms of domination, modes of investment, and a "reflexive" cultural model. Power, investment, and domination are located at the level of cultural

[53] By "metasocial guarantees" of the social order, Touraine means religion, philosophies of history, economic laws, evolutionary theories of progress, etc. See Touraine, "Introduction."

[54] I explain why in Cohen, *Class and Civil Society*, pp. 211–228.

production itself. Innovations in the production of knowledge (media, computers, data banks) transform our representation of human nature and of the external world (a new cybernetic cultural model). "For these reasons, research and development, information processing, bio-medical science and techniques, and the mass media are the four main components of a post-industrial society."[55] More and more domains of social life are opened up to technocratic projects of control and/or alternative projects to democratize the newly contested terrain. In short, "postindustrial" society represents itself as capable of producing its own knowledge, normative guidelines, and sociocultural forms.

The increase in reflexivity these developments entail governs the change in the identity of collective actions and the kinds of movements they develop. The struggle for the democratization of society, and the concern with participatory forms of association on the part of contemporary collective actors, are due to recognition that not only the means but also the ends of social production are social products. This is why they focus on the cultural and normative dimensions of everyday life and conceive their struggles in terms of a population's right to choose its own kind of life and identity. The new dimensions of the identity of contemporary actors, and what makes them radically discontinuous with earlier movements, are thus not their action repertoire but the level of reflexivity and the changed locuses and stakes of struggles that correspond to the emergence of a new societal type.[56]

The circularity in this mode of argumentation is obvious. Contemporary collective action is defined as new because it involves struggle around the areas opened up by postindustrial society; we know that postindustrial society is a new societal type because it triggers new forms of collective action. Touraine's theoretical model, however, is not meant to be

[55] Touraine, "Introduction."

[56] For a discussion of the other societal types, see Alain Touraine, *The Self-Production of Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 92–109.

neutral. Indeed, he hopes to avoid the circularity of the theoretical argument by means of his partisan method of sociological intervention. His purpose is to tease out of existing conflict behavior the dimension of a social movement (in my terms, the new self-limiting collective identity):

> What we must now discover is how, *in our kinds of countries,* defensive reactions against permanent change can be transformed into social conflicts and anti-technocratic action, and how such struggles extend the area of political activity and create what we might call a new *Oeffentlichkeit*. . . . The major problem is to move from the defensive to the counteroffensive, from the quest for identity to collective action, to control the process of change.[57]

While this method does provide fascinating data on the self-interpretation of contemporary collective actors, while it does reveal, in some instances, the emergence of a new self-limiting identity, it nonetheless does not extricate the theory from its circularity.

I have criticized elsewhere the dogmatic aspects of Touraine's methodology and his hierarchization of forms of social struggle to correspond to the theory of societal types.[58] I have also criticized the insistence on radical discontinuity between societal types and social movements as antithetical to the use of the concept of civil society. For, by "our kind of countries" Touraine means countries that have had, still have, and are animated by struggles to preserve and expand civil society. But the idea that civil society existed in the West at least since the seventeenth century implies institutional and cultural *continuity* with our own past—an idea at odds with the thesis of radically discontinuous societal types, cultural models, and social movements. While the distinction between synchronic and diachronic axes renders the innovations of contemporary struggles *visible,* it provides no room for institutional analysis of civil society and *conceals* the continuity between past and

[57] Touraine, "Triumph," p. 229; my emphasis.
[58] Cohen, *Class and Civil Society,* pp. 214–228.

present. It thus becomes impossible to account for the learning processes on the part of collective actors vis-à-vis past movements, institutional forms, and societal projects. The concept of "societal type" is *too abstract* for the institutional analysis of civil society. Moreover, the rather streamlined concept of postindustrial society forces one to construe those aspects of struggle that do not involve the new reflexive collective identity as regressive or anachronistic.

On the other hand, the thesis of the new locuses of domination, investment, power, and protest is able to account for the dual character—defensive *and* offensive—of the new dimensions in contemporary collective actions. The first involves the tendency to retreat into the defensive preoccupation with identity and autonomy. The second involves a tendency to take the counteroffensive and engage in struggles for the control and democratization of social institutions. For Touraine, unlike Tilly, "offensive" does not mean a competitive, strategically oriented battle among interest groups for inclusion in a polity. Offensive action here refers to struggles to extend the field of political activity and to democratize new and existing public spaces at the expense of state control and the technocratic model of society. *Both* defensive reactions to permanent change *and* offensive struggles against technocratic projects to reprivatize the control of social institutions and cultural innovation are elements of contemporary collective action.

Nevertheless, although Touraine offers an action sociology of the new features of contemporary movements, he does not develop a theory of the type of action presupposed by the thesis of increased reflexivity. Of course, he does analyze the processes of communication engaged in by contemporary collective actors as they articulate new identities and societal projects. But only a theoretical self-reflection of communicative action of the type offered by Habermas could articulate the specificity of these processes, pinpoint their limits, and open the way toward understanding the relation between all

types of action in collective contestations. Because this level of analysis is missing in Touraine's theory, he takes the false step of excluding strategic interaction from the concept of a social movement and from his vague image of civil society. He is right, a one-sided focus on strategy misses the social and norm-oriented dimensions of contemporary struggles that are central to the emergence of new collective identities. But he is wrong to restrict strategic interaction to lower levels of conflict or to the diachronic axis of change. For, as resource-mobilization theory clearly demonstrates, both social movements and civil society involve strategic interaction.

Conclusion

Habermas's recent reformulation of the theory of communicative action allows one to see how the paradigms of collective action discussed above can be complementary. To be sure, Habermas himself does not reconstruct the rationalities of action with respect to analyses of social movements. His focus is on general paradigms of social theory:

> The *teleological* concept of action was first rendered fruitful . . . by the founders of neo-classical economics, and then for a theory of *strategic* games by Von Neumann and Morgenstern. The concept of *normatively regulated* action gained paradigmatic significance for theory formation in the social sciences through Durkheim and Parsons, that of *dramaturgical* action through Goffman, that of *communicative* action through Mead and Garfinkel.[59]

Nevertheless, one look at the analysis of the action types will show that they correspond to each of the various logics of collective action articulated in the conceptual strategies discussed above. The concept of "teleological action" presupposes an actor who chooses between alternative courses of action

[59] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), p. 86; my emphasis.

(means) with a view to realizing an end. This involves relations between an actor and a world of existing states of affairs which obtain or can be brought about by purposeful intervention. The degree of rationality of the action can be assessed by a third person with respect to success and "truth"—that is, the fit of the actor's perceptions and what is the case.[60] Teleological action thus corresponds to the concept of rational action at the heart of resource-mobilization theory.

Tilly's call for a switch from theories of rational action to theories of rational interaction corresponds to an expansion of the teleological model into a strategic one, in which calculations of success involve the anticipation of decisions on the part of at least one other actor. This type of action still presupposes only the "objective world" of existing states of affairs, but now includes within it both physical objects and decision making. Other actors are treated as external factors to be reckoned with, not as subjects with whom one shares an understanding.

Pizzorno's pure identity model argues for a rationality of action specific to new social movements that fits the Habermasian concept of dramaturgical action. This action type involves the *purposeful and expressive* disclosure of one's subjectivity (feelings, desires, experiences, identity) to others who constitute a public for the participants. Here at least two "world relations" are presupposed: an orientation to the subjective world of the actor and one to the external world. The "presentation of self" entails an effort to get one's subjectivity and identity recognized. But from the standpoint of the actor, normatively regulated interpersonal relations are considered only as social facts. Thus dramaturgical action can take on latently strategic qualities and become cynical impression management. The dimension of collective action involving the expressive assertion of an identity described so well by Pizzorno is thus not a matter of *spontaneous* expressivity but in-

[60] *Ibid.*, pp. 85–101 for a discussion of all the action types.

volves *stylized* and *planned staging* of one's identity for the purpose of gaining recognition and/or influence.

While Touraine's concept of a social movement hovers somewhere between the normative and communicative types of action, he makes no clear distinction between them. According to Habermas, the concept of normatively regulated action refers to members of a group who orient their action to common (institutionalized) values that have a general binding force for interpersonal relations. Each is entitled to expect that the other will comply with shared norms. Thus, in addition to presupposing the external world, normative action involves a relation to a social world and a social identity—that is, a normative context that designates the totality of legitimate interpersonal relations. This means that cognitive and motivational dimensions are relevant to the assessment of the validity of normative action and that learning can occur on both of these levels. Action can be evaluated in terms of its conformity with a given norm; norms can be assessed in terms of whether they deserve to be recognized on the basis of an accepted standard. Premodern defensive movements have operated on the basis of a normative orientation of action.

Communicative interaction takes the second level of questioning of norms a step farther. It refers to the linguistically mediated, intersubjective process through which actors *establish* their interpersonal relations and coordinate their action, through negotiating definitions of the situation (norms) and coming to an agreement. Whereas normative action presupposes a consensus that is merely reproduced with each interpretative act, communicative action involves uncurtailed communication between actors who must first create a consensus. This involves a reflexive relation to dimensions of all three "worlds"—the objective, the subjective, and the social. Here any aspect of our culturally ingrained knowledge which has become problematic can be thematized and tested through an interrogation of validity claims.

If we apply this abstract analysis of action to the conceptual strategies described above, it becomes clear that, although each tends to screen out the forms of action analyzed by the others, they all can inform the study of collective action. For it is perfectly conceivable that a concrete social movement can involve all the forms of action. This is clearest in the case of the contemporary collective action. The new dimensions of the NSMs, from feminism to ecology, involve a reflexive relation to the objective, subjective, and social worlds insofar as they thematize issues of personal and social identity, contest the social interpretation of norms, communicatively create and agree on new ones, and propose alternative ways of relating to the environment. There is thus no reason why the analysis of the various logics of collective action should be seen as incompatible, so long as they are not construed as the sole rationality of collective action to the exclusion of others.

I by no means want to suggest that Habermas himself provides the synthetic theoretical paradigm of social movements that his theory makes possible. While available movement theories have a lot to learn from Habermas's theoretical framework, Habermas's own social theory could also benefit by integrating the results of existing analyses of movements. To be sure, there has been an evolution in his approach to social movements. Habermas's earlier analysis of movements was rather close to that of Alain Touraine.[61] Like Touraine, he too saw the New Left and especially the student movement as potential agencies of societal democratization against technocratic projects to functionalize social institutions and the existing public sphere. These earlier movements seemed to hold the promise of a new rational social identity and a revived democratic political culture to the extent to which they sought to expand and democratize public spaces from the university to the polity. As such, they involved offensive di-

[61] Touraine, *May Movement*; Jürgen Habermas, *Student und Politik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1961), *Protestbewegung und Hochschulreform* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969), and *Towards a Rational Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970).

mensions of struggle against a social adversary. In more general theoretical terms, Habermas ascribed two interrelated roles to social movements. First, movements were seen as the dynamic element in social learning processes and identity formation. Drawing on cultural traditions and new forms of socialization, social movements transpose latently available structures of rationality into social practice so that they can find new institutional embodiments. Second, movements with democratic projects have the potential to initiate processes by which the public realm could be revived and expanded in a wide range of social institutions. But, and also like Touraine, Habermas argued that the revolutionary Marxian ideology of the sixties movements involved a shift in focus from the project of the further democratization of political and social institutions to their total overthrow—a shift which blocked this potential as much as did the forces of order.[62]

In his more recent conception, movements appear solely as defensive reactions against penetration by the state and the market into social life.[63] This thesis is dependent on the part of Habermas's theory that draws on classical sociological analyses of modernization. The central idea of these theories is that modernization involves the differentiation of the state and market economy from society. This process, according to critical versions of the thesis, tends to reify and impoverish social life. Habermas, however, does not view the mere fact of differentiation as reification in the Lukacsian sense. Indeed, he argues that the freeing of the "life world" from the tasks of material reproduction allows for the development of post-traditional forms of social life. Only the tendency of administrative and market-steering mechanisms to take on the tasks of *symbolic reproduction* of social life involves reification. The sub-

[62] Jürgen Habermas, *Die neue Unübersichtlichkeit* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1985), pp. 81–82, offers a recent reflection by Habermas on his earlier political assessment of the New Left.

[63] Jürgen Habermas, "New Social Movements," *Telos,* no. 49 (Fall 1981): 33–37 (translation of part of the last chapter of *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns,* vol. 2).

stitution of the coordinating mechanisms of money and power and of the logic of strategic-instrumental action for the symbolic processes of communication (on which culture, social integration, and socialization depend) leads to cultural impoverishment and the loss of freedom. Habermas calls this process the "colonization of the life world." The response to this process ranges from anomie, alienation, and pathology to resistance and conflict.

It is worth pointing out with Habermas that what is at stake in the new forms of resistance and conflict is not the defense of a traditional sociocultural world (communal, ascriptive, diffuse) but of an already (yet incompletely) modernized life world (associational, achievement-oriented, differentiated). Habermas also distinguishes between defenses of property and status acquired on the terrain of a modernized life world and defensive action involving experiments in new forms of cooperation and community. The latter are the core of the new conflict potential.[64] These distinctions notwithstanding, it is clear that Habermas's recent interpretation of the NSMs as particularistic and defensive reactions (parallel to pathologies and anomie) to the penetration of social life by the economy and the state involves the *revival of the classical breakdown thesis.* With the exception of feminism (which Habermas misleadingly approximates to the tradition of bourgeois and socialist emancipation movements), the NSMs are seen only as forms of resistance and retreat seeking to stem the tide of the formally organized systems of action in favor of communicative structures. Although they signify the continued capacity of the life world to resist reification, and thus take on positive meaning for Habermas, they are *not* viewed as carriers of a new collective identity, as capable of institutionalizing the positive potentials of modernity or of transcending particularistic

[64] By "life world" Habermas means culturally ingrained background knowledge, on the one hand, and social institutions around culture, socialization (personality), and integration. Only segments of the life world can become open to reflection—a life world can never be fully transparent. See Habermas, "New Social Movements," p. 35.

and expressive politics. Habermas situates contemporary struggles around dimensions of cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization. Instead of linking them to processes of modernization in these spheres, however, he places them at the "seam between system and life world"—as resistances to the expansion of steering mechanisms.

And yet Habermas's most important contribution to the theory of modernity involves three theses which provide the basis for a different interpretation of contemporary movements. The first is the distinction between processes involved in the differentiation of the economy and the state (subsystems of strategic action) and processes involved in the modernization, or "rationalization," of the sociocultural life world. The second is the thesis that with the emergence of cultural modernity—of the autonomous cultural spheres of science, art, morality, and law organized around their own internal values—the potential for increased reflexivity regarding all dimensions of action and world relations is given. These two developments hold out the promise of a posttraditional and postconventional relation to key dimensions of social, political, and cultural life—that is, their coordination through processes of communication interaction.

Such would be the basis of the *further modernization* of the life world—that is, the incorporation of the achievements of cultural modernity into everyday life, involving the replacement of *gemeinschaftliche* coordination of social life by potentially self-reflexive forms. With the (third) thesis of the "selective institutionalization" of the potentials of modernity (of reflexivity, autonomy, freedom, and meaning), however, Habermas takes note of the one-sided character of actual developments and of blockages to their realization due to the conditions of capitalist class society. The "colonization of the life world" related to capitalist development and technocratic projects of administrative elites has blocked and continues to block these potentials. This is the cause of the gap between expert cultures developed around the autonomous cultural

spheres and the everyday life of the nonexpert (cultural impoverishment). Nevertheless, Habermas insists on the "utopian horizons" of contemporary civil society, ". . . in which the formally organized spheres of action of the bourgeois [economy and state apparatus] constitute the foundations of the post-traditional life world of *l'homme* [private sphere] and *citoyen* [public sphere]."[65] This means that the selective realization of the potentials of modernity entails institutional developments in civil society that involve domination but *also* the bases for emancipation.

I have criticized elsewhere an earlier version of Habermas's theory for its "institutional deficit"—that is, for locating emancipatory potentials on the abstract level of cultural modernity and in socialization processes.[66] The role he once ascribed to movements (offensive, democratizing) was consequently only very abstractly stituated in contemporary developments. Now Habermas has resolved this difficulty through the analysis (albeit sketchy) of the two-sided character of the institutions of our contemporary life world, placing the core elements of civil society—legality, publicity, mass culture, the family—at the heart of the discussion. He thus supplies the dimension of institutional analysis missing in Touraine's theory of societal types. It is all the more ironic that his analysis of the NSMs focuses only on those dimensions that involve a defensive reaction to the negative side of contemporary institutions. The important point is that Habermas's sketch of developments *within an already modern civil society* (from the eighteenth to the late twentieth century) provides a way to understand the double character of contemporary movements *and* their continuities or discontinuities with the past. The idea of the double character of the institutional makeup of civil society is a real gain because it goes beyond the one-sided stress on

[65] Jürgen Habermas, *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns,* vol. 2 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), p. 485; my translation.

[66] Cohen, *Class and Civil Society,* pp. 194–228; and Jean L. Cohen, "Why More Political Theory?", *Telos,* no. 40 (Summer 1979): 70–94.

alienation or domination (Marx, Foucault) and the equally one-sided focus on integration (Durkheim, Parsons). While I cannot go into detail here, let me mention some of the points in the analysis.[67]

The development of legality to the bourgeois constitutional state, the democratic *Rechtsstaat* and finally to the contemporary democratic welfare state is the story of the expansion/protection of civil society *and* of its penetration by administrative agencies. On the one hand, the expansion of legal regulation involves the protection of individuality, associations, and autonomous public spaces from the state while subjecting the state to the control of formally democratic political institutions. On the other hand, and especially in the third stage, legalization carries administrative agencies into areas formerly free of state control, opening them up to bureaucratization, monetization, and manipulation. The empowering dimension of legal regulation thus conflicts with the authoritarian-bureaucratic dimension of state intervention created by legalization itself.

A similar duality holds true for the institutionalized political public sphere of representative democracy. The principles of democratic legitimacy express for Habermas the primacy of the life world with respect to the subsystems of state and economy. But, under welfare conditions, these subsystems come into tension with democratic principles to the degree to which the processes of accumulation and administrative decision making are uncoupled from the need interpretations of those affected by them. The selective exclusion of these from the public space is the product of the uncoupling of decisions from genuine participation. But, on the other hand, the "use-value" orientation of welfare-state policies shows that the pressures of the life world can't simply be eliminated.

The distortions of the originally bourgeois and literary public sphere through manipulation of mass culture are related to

[67] These dualisms are discussed in *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns*, pp. 563–593.

this. Yet the promise of a democratically organized publicity freed from domination remains an organizing principle of the political order. In an important break with the older Frankfurt theorists, Habermas now sees the mass media as ambivalent phenomena which contain authoritarian *and* emancipatory potentials. Although they are in the service of manipulation, they remain media of communication and are never fully protected against the ability of actors to disagree. In a recent interview, Habermas neatly sums up the two-sided character of contemporary forms of publicity:

> . . . a diagnosis of the present . . . can have no other point than to sharpen our perceptions for the ambivalent potential of contemporary developments. . . . On the one hand I have the impression that the tendencies to disintegration of a public sphere of the liberal type . . . have intensified since the late fifties. The mode of functioning of electronic media testifies to this, above all the centralization of organizations which privilege vertical and one-way flows of second- and third-hand information, privately consumed. . . . This is matched . . . by another tendency which is also well advanced: a manipulation of mass loyalty . . . administered by political parties which have migrated from the life world into the political system. . . . On the other side, the reactions to this evacuation of the public-political sphere are getting stronger. After all, our observations of how the provision of legitimacy is running into difficulties, and the mirror-image laments of the neoconservatives about "ungovernability," are not totally mistaken.[68]

Finally, the transformation of the modern nuclear family from a private institution subject to unrestrained paternal authority, burdened with assuring the material reproduction of its members, and thus based on internally distorted communication (power relations), to one which is increasingly relieved of these functions is equally ambiguous. Habermas contests the thesis that equates the loss of the father's authority with the loss of ego autonomy for all family members. This thesis rested on the assumption of socialization tasks by

[68] See the interview with Habermas, "A Philosophico-Political Profile," *New Left Review*, no. 151 (May/June 1985): 97–98.

the schools and the mass media, and the transformation of the middle-class proprietor into an employee. But Habermas points out the potentials these developments carry for egalitarian interpersonal relations, liberalized forms of socialization of children, and increases in autonomy. Nevertheless, he also points out the potentials for distortion and pathology when imperatives of membership in the economy and state conflict with the higher level of competencies, moral capacities, and motivations these changes facilitate.

Within the Habermasian perspective, an all-important task (both intellectual and political) would be the working out of an adequate relationship of movements to the *two-sided* character of these institutional developments. The contribution of Touraine to such a project is his emphasis on the dual character of movements and their contestation over alternative institutional potentials of cultural developments. The contribution of resource-mobilization theory is the stress on the plurality of associations (one key category of civil society insufficiently analyzed by Habermas) and organizations created by movement actors. Analysis of this dimension is the only way to avoid a genetic explanation of movements based on the breakdown thesis. The synthetic result would be to view the associations as "protomovements" (the latency level) *and* as responses to a set of dualities in contemporary society. One dimension of the response is indeed the defensive fundamentalist refusal of reification in family, publics, mass culture, etc. The other dimension is the offensive and structurally reformist, self-limiting identity articulated on the basis of genuinely modern (in normative sense) potential of contemporary institutions. Habermas has paid attention to this dimension only in some very recent political statements. He has not yet integrated it into his theory, in my view, because of a still-incomplete analysis and incorporation of the categories of civil society.

A synthetic theory of social movements faces three gaps that have to be bridged. The first is between theory emerging from

within social movements and social-scientific theory. The second is between social-scientific paradigms based on strategic and/or communicative concepts of action. The third is between macro social theory and theories of social movements. As we have seen, macro social theory itself, if based on a sufficiently broad conception of action, can do much to bring social-scientific paradigms together. Thus the second gap can be bridged by a move toward greater abstraction. The first and the third, however, are best mediated by a step in the direction of the concrete. The hermeneutically accessible concept of the movements themselves, "society" in the sense of civil society, helps to bridge not only the gap between movements and their analysts but also between a philosophically—that is, normatively—rooted, global social theory and empirical social science.