NORTHERN THEORY, SOUTHERN PROTEST: OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE ANALYSIS IN CROSS-NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE*

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The study of protest outside the industrial North is largely under-theorized. This article extends the political process model and particularly its opportunity structure component to cases of Southern protest. It begins by investigating the model's central variables and relationships and then considers how to render them with enough flexibility to accommodate new cases outside the industrial North. Three questions are asked. First, how do movement networks' internal social connections vary across settings? Second, how do variations in state strength and elaboration influence protest? Third, how does the relationship between the movement's social structure and its external political environment shape its opportunities? The article considers how political opportunity can illuminate new cases if it is used in connection with specific collective forms that are both encouraged by structures external to the movement and responsive to the needs and constraints produced by the movement's internal structure.

Until recently, research on Third World collective action proceeded as if it required entirely distinct theoretical and methodological treatments. Most authors concerned with contentious politics in the South relied on the revolutions literature. Few seemed inclined to apply approaches to social movements developed in industrial settings (Mullin 1972, Wolf 1973, Lewis 1974). Recently, however, several scholars have begun to consider the usefulness of resource mobilization and political process models—developed primarily with reference to the industrialized North—in relation to what I will call Southern movements.[1] Many efforts to deploy this theoretical literature southward, however, have been perhaps too confident that it applied to new and unfamiliar social climates. To charge that Northern theory has been inappropriately applied to Southern cases, admittedly, is an old and perhaps tired complaint lodged against an important endeavor. I hope in these pages to do more than merely join the chorus, but to propose a systematic strategy for extending the political process perspective to cases outside the industrial North.

My work begins with a critical assessment of one concept which has particularly suffered in the transplanting: political opportunity structure. Some have attempted to broaden its application by asking what is unique about Southern movements, and contrasting these features with those commonly associated with Northern movements. This approach runs into problems, however, because it conflates heterogeneous Southern protest into an artificially single category and because it ignores similarities between Northern and Southern movements. To avoid these errors, I suggest a different strategy: investigate the central variables and relationships delineated in the political process model (which considers the resources and opportunities offered to actors by shifting conditions), and consider how to render these variables and their interrelationships with enough flexibility to allow for broader application. The effort promises two payoffs. First, it will permit us to deploy this powerful work to Southern protest—in ways that allow important distinctions *among*

* I gratefully acknowledge assistance rendered me in the preparation of this article by Fred Lawson, David Meyer, Kyaw Yin Hlaing, Sidney Tarrow, Antoinette Raquiza, and Charles Tilly. Any errors in fact or logic, of course, remain my own.

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[1] The first shoots of this approach were apparent in earlier works by Joel Migdal (1974), Charles Tilly (1974), Jeffrey Race (1974), and Jeffrey Paige (1975). Each brought a concern for political and organizational resources to the study of revolutionary movements outside the industrial North.

these new cases as well as *between* them and the Northern ones. Second, it may provide new insights into protest *in general* by situating Northern movements in a broader field, from which we might draw more meaningful and theoretically rich cross-national comparisons.

THE CRITIQUE: POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY AND COLLECTIVE STRATEGY

Comment on opportunity structures in the South often search political environments for equivalents to structural variables operationalized in the North. For example, in his insistence that "political opportunities for challenges . . . vary with the availability of meaningful access points within the political system," Brockett sets out to adjust for differences between Northern and Southern political and social structures, but without discussing manners in which the movements themselves might vary across situations (Brockett 1991: 260). It is generally assumed that all movements seek access to state institutions and decision-making power. This assumption implies that a repertoire of movement strategies, established mainly by Northern theory and example, also defines Southern opportunity. Yet this suggests more how a Northern movement might respond to a Southern environment than the actual opportunities for Southern movements. To inquire about Southern opportunities, however, is essential. While Northern movements frequently strive to pressure political leaders in one policy direction or another (Hannigan 1985, Jenkins 1983), Southern movements often aspire to seize state power, to capture (as an end in itself) resources, or to shield society from state initiatives.

In a related work, Cuzan takes an opposite tack but encounters similar difficulty. He assumes that the Nicaraguan social setting produces revolutionary movements because political processes do not permit civil redress (Cuzan 1990: 404), relegating what should be an empirical matter to a background assumption. Like Brockett, Cuzan works with a fixed assumption of movement strategy which generates a rigid conception of opportunity. His analysis cannot account for the potential duality of movement reactions to state structures—that both openness and closure may trigger some mobilization. The central question for Cuzan's Nicaraguan case might more appropriately be, not "What opportunities facilitated the revolution's success?" but, "How did the structures compel the movement to develop a revolutionary—rather than a civil—dynamic of collective action?"

Both arguments place fixed expectations about modes of resistance at the center of their analysis. Like much of the literature, the two investigate the relationship between political structure and mobilization, rather than the relationship between such structures and the character of collective action. Earlier analysis examined cases where extensive or emergent participatory institutions and a sufficiently constituted national society led movements to seek influence within and access to the polity. Although institutional arrangements varied across cases, opportunities consisted of factors that facilitated this access and influence. Yet in an expanded universe which includes Southern cases, structural influences over movements may vary more fundamentally than either author acknowledges. Often participatory institutions are absent, rudimentary, or unevenly developed. This requires more than mere reoperationalization, but rather the reconceptualization of how movements engage such structures and of the collective strategies which these engagements produce. Only in relation to such variations in strategy can one meaningfully define political opportunity.

These reflections recall that the resource mobilization (RM) approach's initial theoretical break with its predecessors was its assumption that social movement organizations (SMOs) and collective action are rational. This rationality, however, requires a contextually sensitive treatment in two respects. First, as Tarrow (1994b) convincingly argues, SMOs with leadership over a social movement acquire a vested interest in maintaining that collective. The SMO therefore constitutes the apex of a social structure from which position it focuses, collectivizes, and may even directly address mass concerns. Second, as the political process model notes, the SMO has a more prominent extrovert face which looks to direct activity down channels that promise success in a given setting. Genuine movement opportunity, therefore, represents the concrete possibilities a social structure contains for movement advance *in light of* the movement's own social demands and capacities.

VOLATILE AND STABLE STRUCTURES

The extension of opportunity structure analysis brings up an initial problem: within this literature scholars disagree about the exact nature of the structural comparisons at the approach's analytic core (Gamson and Meyer 1996). Kitschelt (1986) and Eisinger (1973) have consistently argued for the comparison between differently structured states to determine which provides the greatest opportunities for social mobilization. In contrast, Tarrow (1994) and McAdam (1982) have argued for a time-series approach to the question, and Tarrow's work in particular has demonstrated how changes in the political structure influence a movement's access to resources, and produce cycles of protest in the process (see also Meyer 1990).

Rather than demanding a choice between these two approaches, my extension of opportunity structrue analysis suggests a framework for their partial synthesis—a synthesis also suggested in the newer literature on collective repertoires (Tilly 1986, Tarrow 1994). The key lies in the relationships conceived between the political structure's more or less permanent features and the forms of contentious collective action they facilitate. Tarrow, to take an author most closely associated with a time-series approach, argues that the expansion of states, markets, and a national print media enabled modular forms of collective action. His point is not that one or another structure provides more opportunity for collective action, but that the character of collective action varies across (sufficiently) different settings. Although his work concentrates on the development of differences over time, it also provides a model for cross-national comparisons: when cases differ in significant and more or less permanent manners, the main question concerns the relationship between structures and collective strategies.

Importantly, this cross-national analysis would be absolutely consistent with Tarrow's main time-series material. When a repertoire has been established within a politicocultural context, collective action rises and falls in relation to conjunctural openings and closures in its environment. Hence, semipermanent structural variation influences the character of collective action (including, perhaps, the sequence of events produced in a cycle of protest) but mobilization and demobilization depend on more temporary structural opportunities.[2]

This analysis also suggests a sequence for research. The identification of short-term influences which constitute structural opportunities requires a prior elaboration of the collective repertoire and their associated structural opportunities: circumstances which provide opportunities for a bread riot differ substantially from those which provide opportunities for a march on Washington. Nor does any of this preclude cross-national comparisons to explain variable levels of mobilization. The task before us, however—the extension of opportunity structure analysis to new cases—begins with the identification of collective repertoires and their relationships to the new cases' structural environments. Having made this identification, one can move on to questions of how short-term structural variation may encourage mobilization, or (eventually) how differences between differently structured states may influence the frequency or intensity of mobilization. Yet the inquiry should pay close heed to McAdam's caution: "[I]t is critical that we be explicit about *which dependent variable* we are seeking to explain, and *which dimensions of political* opportunity are germane to that explanation." (McAdam: 1995, emphasis in original).

THE PROPOSED ADJUSTMENT

Two sets of variables—one residing in the movement's environment and the other in its internal social structure—lie at the (often implicit) conceptual core of the political opportunity structure. The cross-national elaboration of this analysis entails adjusting these two variables and clearly describing how they interact. First, to the extent that solidarities, mass needs, and perspectives differ across contexts, analysis will require an account of the differences between movements as well as those between their social and political environments. Movements that arise in industrial slums behave differently from those in middle-class

[2] McAdam has also argued this point: "[M]ovement form would appear to be yet another variable that owes, in part, to differences in the nature of opportunities that set movements in motion" (McAdam 1995). Still, Tarrow's discussion of modular movements (1994) must in part be read as a caution against inferring any necessary relationship between state and social structures because a repertoire may diffuse from one context to another.

suburbs or preindustrial agrarian villages. Without careful adjustment, the geographic expansion of opportunity structure risks identifying all movements with the implicit yet powerful examples established by research on Northern movements.

Second, particularly at the fringes of the approach's outward geographic expansion, analysis will encounter macropolitical structures that vary, not merely in terms of how states and societies are put together or function, but in the extent to which they are fully articulated. Since these structures constitute central considerations in the determination of collective action, basic distinctions between them deserve note. A final adjustment comes from fundamental variations in macrostructures: the analysis must reconceive how collective needs and perspectives (the demands of the movement constituency) interact with the structural environment to influence the expressions of dissent, resistance, and claim-making. The level and direction of collective action, then, reflects the influence of structural opportunities, themselves selected for by the movement's own microstructure. In what follows, I will first suggest adjustments that seem necessary in the two variables, and then turn attention to their interaction in the production of collective activity and internal movement politics.

SOLIDARITY AND THE MOVEMENT

One of resource mobilization's central images depicts the potential movement recruit as a bystander (McCarthy and Zald 1977). The language conjures a vision of individuals ranged along the bank of a protest—a march or a rally—poised on the verge of a decision either to join or to return to the normal activities of everyday life. In this vision, the movement's vitality and dynamism rest largely in its ability to entice such bystanders to participate, either by actually joining the protest or by providing the movement material resources. Mobilization and demobilization rest with these passages between normal, routine life and nonroutine movement participation.

However, this conception of participation depends on the viability of everyday life as an alternative to political activism—a viability which also varies from case to case. In comparatively prosperous populations the bystander position may be quite tenable: higher levels of resources make everyday life a bearable and plausible alternative to collective struggle (in this connection, see Bailey 1957, Popkin 1979, Edelman 1987). In cases of extreme poverty or oppression, the bystander position grows problematic (Piven and Cloward 1979). An entire branch of the peasant politics literature (to take one of many examples) has examined collective relationships as routine elements of village life (Wolf 1966, Scott 1976). This theorizing suggests that Jenkins's (1983) description of the central dilemma of protest—identifying the factors that contribute to collective mobilization—is more relevant for economically secure populations.[3] For the impoverished, collective action may of necessity be a more constant phenomenon.

Ongoing extra-economic struggles for subsistence force particular considerations upon the analysis of social movements. While everyday resistance (Scott 1986) is not the same as public dissent or disruption, prior and ongoing material struggles do suggest something important about the internal social relations of movements that *do* manage to rise among impoverished populations. SMOs attract mass support by offering more promising avenues (massed demonstration, armed battle, land occupation) to achieve popular goals than existing modes of action. The SMO that recruits from impoverished populations assumes responsibilities previously vested in everyday, individual struggles. Mass members entrust their material aspirations to the movement, and so their recruitment produces complex reciprocal bonds which may constrain, as well as enable, collective activity.

This conception of solidarity suggests themes that differ from the existing approaches. The French Action School regards solidarity as an aggregate movement characteristic, the varieties of which correspond to different movement types (Castells 1990, Touraine 1988).[4] In contrast, the American position

[3] Jenkins (1983) is one source. Others (Hannigan 1985) note that the RM literature often discusses reform rather than revolutionary movements. Where individual solutions to social problems are less tenable—where social groups face deep structural crises—collective action tends to be more prevalent and more holistic (Bailey 1957).

[4] Hannigan (1990) posits a social movements typology based on patterns of emergent solidarity conceived along two dimensions: (a) the movement's anti-institutional critique; and, (b) the movement's cultural unity. Combinations

less explicitly acknowledges movement variety, and presents participatory incentives as germane to an implicitly generic and universal movement type. It moves toward a vision of solidarity that motivates movement participants to bind themselves to the collective, and assumes that an answer in one case serves for others (see Olson 1965). Authors describe incentives to movement participation ranging from social solidarity (Smelser 1962), selective and material incentives (McCarthy and Zald 1977), to purposive incentives (Moe 1980, Fireman and Gamson 1979).[5]

Our current puzzle requires a vision of solidarity that combines these two perspectives. The American variant, with its concern for participatory incentives, can accommodate French insights in two respects. First, the analysis would acknowledge differences between movement types, and understand, for example, that incentives to participate in an agrarian movement differ from those in a civil rights struggle. Second, solidarity is at least partly an aggregate characteristic that systematically colors the movement's internal social relations. Together, these two accommodations would allow the American concern with the interaction of incentives and participation to more easily ask how relations between SMOs and social bases vary across settings. To inquire after solidarity, then, is to ask how particular (rather than generic) collective actions produce distinct social relations and obligations within the movement.

These two elements of solidarity—relying on collective behavior to address problems and reciprocal SMO obligations—are interrelated and tied to environmental conditions. Comprehensive constituent need, sweeping poverty, and oppression make individualistic life impossible and drive recruits with multifaceted demands into collective undertakings. During routine periods, collective action may consist of unremarkable mutual assistance or secretive everyday resistance. In extraordinary moments of protest, an SMO that represents the poor's claims acquires both a powerful measure of solidarity *and material obligations to sustain its mass base.* SMOs with tight bonds to impoverished masses must incorporate these responsibilities into their action program, a move which may constrain the SMO's practical options. The analysis of poor people's movements in *both* the North and the South must therefore treat poverty, and its effect on movement society, as a central variable influencing movement tactics.

THE CONTEXT OF RESISTANCE

The analysis of social movements in industrial societies is able to take for granted the existence of states and nationally integrated societies. Interpretations of these structures' influence either describe how change in one setting influences mobilization or how differently structured states may hamper or facilitate collective action and outcomes (Kitschelt 1986). For the purpose of wider cross-national analysis, however, these assumptions of structural coherence generate more confusion than insight, and require pointed reconsideration.

Recent work on the evolution of social movement repertoires, especially in historical perspective, highlights how variations in political and social contexts influence collective strategies. Charles Tilly (1993) suggests that protest and demonstration emerged first in Britain toward the end of the eighteenth century in response to—and seizing on opportunities presented by—the expansion of states and markets. The links he establishes between state forms and collective action repertoires bear tremendous significance for cross-national research. Analysis of political development and state-society relations outside the industrialized North has painstakingly described the central state's uneven or incomplete penetration into society and society's resistance to that expansion (Kohli, Migdal and Shue 1994). To the extent that variations in state form and substance influence collective action, therefore, contemporary cases may produce collective repertoires that vary as much cross-nationally today as they have in the North historically.

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of these two variables yield four movement types: the social liberation movement, the revolutionary movement, the cultural movement and the professional reform movement.

[5] Hirsch (1986) takes issue with all three of these general positions to the extent that they advance a single interpretation to the exclusion of all others. He convincingly argues that patterns of solidarity and recruitment may be flexible, depending on the movement's choice of tactics and strategies, its environmental conditions, and the period in the movement's life cycle.

As Tilly (1993) suggests, the demonstration requires and presumes an audience. To succeed, a demonstration must influence decision makers; to prosper, it must strike a chord with a population. Yet before the massed demonstration entered the collective repertoire, some audience must have been practically and conceptually available to claim makers. Participants at that point were able to imagine their activity communicating to a politically significant audience—to some combination of polity and society, and especially to elements either with power or resources. Nor will *any* state or social network do: the initial expansion of state control generally occurs through overtly coercive state agencies—the military, the police, conscription agents, and tax collectors (Hutchcroft 1991, Shue 1988). Such agents are more than merely unresponsive, they often ignore and repress popular resistance.[6]

State agencies which respond to social demands (or simulate a response) typically emerge only after central authority has established control in a territory. While this control was achieved by European states by the early nineteenth century, it is often still a work in progress elsewhere. After the state has established its control over the national territory, its most prominent face may shift from police and military agencies to more civil or service oriented agencies: departments of agriculture, local land reform courts, health and education offices, and representative agencies. Such agencies seek to regulate society; they also may work to broaden the government's popular base or mobilize social support. In pursuit of these tasks, the agencies often engage demands for reform and resource allocation, neither of which would likely be advanced or received while control over geographic areas was at issue. In time, these functionally more responsive agencies can exercise considerable discretionary power and represent reasonable audiences for demonstration (Ryan 1958, Landsberg 1974).

That the state has established nominally responsive institutions is no guarantee that they will actually respond to movement demands. Still, where these institutions emerge, there are three reasons why they validate the process of reasoned appeal backed by strong social support. First, local state offices represent political authority that is geographically separate, even though not strictly autonomous, from local landlords, strongmen, and caciques. The separation of state authority from local interest gives the social movement an interlocutor that is not necessarily an immediate adversary.

Second, these offices deal more exclusively in the currency of policy rather than productive resources. While a department of agrarian reform regulates land tenure, it does not itself hold land. A labor relations board may set minimum wages, but runs no factory. In short, such agencies have comparatively little to seize, appropriate, squat on, sequester, or redistribute. They represent agents for the resolution of movement grievance only insofar as they can be convinced to produce change.[7]

Third, the functional differentiation and physical separation of state agencies from one another requires that collective action is presented in discrete packages—a land tenure claim at one office, and a human rights claim at another. This movement from office to office, the disaggregation of dissent into jurisdictional segments, transforms the relationship between movement and authority. As the movement unbundles its broad political vision, it may tune claims to the more discrete policy orientations of individual state offices. In subtle ways, this adjustment acknowledges the authority of specific state offices to regulate discrete issue areas. That concession gives away a great deal of ground to state authority, and also undercuts the explosiveness of a single, totalizing opposition to the state. Together, both influences push the act of dialogue, rather than resistance, to the forefront of collective action.

By way of contrast, such audiences are not present in all social settings. None, for example, exists in the political wilderness of a state power vacuum or the disjointed parochialism of the unintegrated countryside. In such situations, national elites' attention may neither extend to the site of contention nor be

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[6] Perry Anderson (1993) indicates that the initial deployments of the absolutist state's armies took advantage of foreign mercenaries, who, speaking a different language from the populations they set out to control, could be counted on to efficiently implement their orders. Their inability to understand individuals they fought was an explicit aspect of these armies' plan of operation.

[7] In fact, state agencies such as a department of agrarian reform often, from the state's point of view, represent optimal sites of struggle. At such locations, the aggrieved may make speeches, gather, pitch tents, occupy lawns—all under the close scrutiny of government officials, all without interrupting production or, frequently, governance.

attracted by weak and parochial social movements. In either case, protest would never receive significant attention. Demonstrations would attract local note and recruit from a proximate population, but could not hope to convince decision makers who are, for all practical purposes, absent from the site of struggle. Under such conditions, aggrieved groups have generally less reason to believe that claim-making through demonstration and discussion will produce material results, and perhaps more immediately move to more direct forms of struggle such as land occupations, factory seizures, storehouse raids, or insurrections.

To summarize: state expansion (to which one might add several related phenomena, such as improved communication networks, and a rising middle class) helps to create an audience—a ring of watchers—on whom demonstration need not necessarily be lost. As the seats of the social theater begin to fill, producing the drama of demonstration makes increasing sense, and may appear a wise use of movement resources. The constitution of this audience enables demonstration, without necessarily eradicating more direct struggle. State and social structures influence resistance by (in some cases) presenting the opportunity to articulate social movements into larger processes of representation and civil government, or (in other cases) rendering such civil demonstration palpably impossible or unwise. At the extremes—where audiences are either clearly present or unequivocally absent—these macrostructures strongly suggest specific patterns of collective action. Hence, before considering the murkier waters that lie in between, a brief look into the clearer relationships at the poles is in order.

STATE ELABORATION AND COLLECTIVE TACTICS—TWO POLAR RELATIONS

The principal difference between strategies of demonstration and direct action (such as seizures or insurrections) lies in the relationships they construct (or perceive as possible) between the movement and authorities. Demonstration seeks to accumulate influence within a political structure, to communicate a demand, convey resolve, and (where the polity is unresponsive) raise the costs of disregarding the movement. Demonstrations inconvenience or embarrass authorities and establish the movement's social support but never themselves attain the collective goal. They play to the polity (and to allies) whose subsequent action resolves movement grievances (see Tarrow 1993). In contrast, direct action is less intent on staging a performance, and sometimes camouflages rather than publicizes (at least beforehand) uprisings and seizures. Participants seize resources to satisfy their demands or take unilateral action to resolve a grievance. Separatist movements withdraw from and defend against central authority. Other movements seek to overthrow the existing state and—at least in theory—systematically reform or restructure society (Migdal 1974). Direct action seeks itself to achieve collective goals.

This linkage between sociopolitical structures and forms of struggle present a theme to unify heretofore disparate strands of the structural analysis. Structural perspectives have long implicitly acknowledged different modes of rebellion. Skocpol's (1979) analysis of revolutions indicated structural factors which weakened the regime vis-a-vis the revolutionary movement. Opportunity structure analysis, on the other hand, frequently related mobilization to actors' vulnerabilities within a regime, but seldom to the weakness of the regime itself.[8] Hence, structural approaches specified variables that, for revolutions, enhanced movement power *upon regimes,* and for protest, enhanced movement influence *within regimes*. What has so far been missing from the analysis is some manner of determining the conditions under which movements will pursue one or another of these avenues to power. Nor has the task been completed by the linkage of collective repertoires and macrostructures: while explaining how such structures permit new forms of collective action, such links incompletely explain how social movements choose from among several structurally "permissible" strategies and the implications of such choices for movement politics. The massed demonstration has clearly not eradicated more direct action, but what accounts for individual movements' decisions between these strategies?

[8] Eisinger (1973) and others elaborated factors that granted movements more influence within the existing regime. Gamson even considered the movement's official acceptance a measure of its success (Gamson 1979).

In fact, Tilly rejected distinctions between protest and revolution explicitly because they "prejudge the intentions and political positions of the actors" (Tilly 1981: 17). I suggest, however, that those intentions should be a matter for explicit empirical investigation in the process of decoupling organizational type from collective strategies.[9] The forgoing discussion, ranging as it has from the movement's social composition to its context, suggests that forms of struggle are contingent on the interplay of both factors. While shared obligations, aspirations, and grievances may motivate and underpin collective action, that action's expression represents a contextually specific reading of how power can best be accumulated. Any given macrostructure will present opportunities for collective action, but these opportunities are significant only when they correspond to a collectivity's specific and socially defined needs. As I shall more explicitly discuss, a movement univocally choosing between strategies is not an accurate representation of its complex internal interactions. While strategy and tactics remain central to the analysis I propose, they occupy that position as an answer to a question about the power advanced by a given population in a specific environment.[10]

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN THE SOUTH

As states and markets establish themselves in developing countries, they seldom render their societies more generally prosperous or equitable. In fact, the apparent expansion of poverty and social dislocation has led several theorists to advance the underdevelopment thesis: institutions of modernity have impoverished societies by eroding traditional social and economic structures while simultaneously increasing exploitation (Rodney 1973, Emmanuel 1972, Amin 1974). Whether causally or coincidentally linked to state and market expansion, underdevelopment sets up a peculiar juxtaposition: the coexistence of what we have called a vigorous and robust political audience, precisely the sort that seems to enable demonstration, and a society with desperate and pressing needs.

The combination of this robust audience and substantial poverty renders opportunity ambiguous and creates fundamental questions about strategy and tactics. On the one hand, the political structure may provide opportunities for reasoned debate and consultation with authoritative decision makers, and so promote strategies designed to win a movement more influence within the polity. On the other hand, daunting social need (a factor that may enhance mobilization potential) can *simultaneously* impose substantial limits upon a strategy of civil demonstration. Even nominally sympathetic states—as existed in the Aquino-era Philippines, in Mandela-era South Africa, Aristide's Haiti, or several Latin American populist regimes—may be unable to generate the resources or the will to redress massive grievances. Thus, movement strategists may be forced to seize resources directly—even marginal resources—rather than mount demonstrations with little likely return. Questions surrounding collective strategy give rise to internal movement debates over contending formulas and differing objectives.

But there are other questions about selecting appropriate collective strategies. Both demonstrations and forms of direct action are torn by ambiguities produced by the social and political environment. When a movement with a substantial mass base adopts a program of demonstration, it assumes significant responsibilities for its internal social structure. Demonstrations which produce little material change lose support when impoverished participants grow weary of bootless marches. The movement organization then must either directly respond to mass member needs (in the process

[9] Both Lofland (1985) and Tarrow (1989) suggest this decoupling.

[10] Most movements do not exclusively pursue either demonstrations or direct forms of struggle. These categories abstract away from the confusing mix of actual strategic choices and smooth over considerable variations. Within large and complex movement organizations, activity geared towards demonstrations and legal resistance may coexist with more direct or illegal activities. To the extent that the movement reacts to specific external opportunities (for example, the prospect of greater influence within a government) one might say that one or another logic is, for that movement at that time, dominant. Just as frequently, however, the debates and disagreements that occur within the movement reflect, not merely different interpretations of the external political environment, but also the struggles between advocates of different strategies, each backed by a different logic.

diverting collective energies from external targets) or face diminishing support. Direct action, on the other hand, faces no less pitched dilemmas where civil norms exist. While tactics such as seizing land or food supplies might more squarely respond to mass demands for concrete action, they risk alienating middle class or elite allies—such as might exist on university campuses, in the media, or within one or another faction of a divided ruling class—whose interests are largely met within the prevailing (i.e., civil) norms.

In terms of the allocation of movement resources, the dilemma between strategies is equally pitched. Protest that achieves no material victory usually depletes, rather than augments, organizational resources. A movement may resolutely stick to mass demonstrations, even as its base of support grows smaller, or it may begin passing endogenous resources between supporters. The former strategy risks massive depletion of movement membership, while the latter shores up the membership at the expense of collective resources.

Some forms of direct action may offer an alternative to protest despite apparently robust civil opportunities precisely because they address member needs in the process of struggle. Land occupations, factory seizures, and storehouse raids all generate resources that can sustain the mass base. Again, however, tactics that most directly seize resources also, by the very violence they do to civic norms, limit the movement's social support. The prospect that direct action will emerge in the center of a broadly mobilized movement, then, diminishes with the expansion of states and markets. Any social movement faces potential tension between externally directed activity and internal maintenance, but where an impoverished mass movement mobilizes amidst robust civil institutions, those tensions are stronger. They pose sharply focused and potentially disruptive dilemmas regarding movement strategy and resource allocation.

By way of contrast, consider briefly two counter-examples: first, the professional reform movement; and second, more direct modes of resistance like rebellions or land occupations. The professional reform movement has been a generally Northern phenomenon that recruits fairly prosperous supporters to a loosely linked collective. It produces fewer demands to provide material results yet presents a symbolic struggle that can sustain protracted support from its base. Relevant political opportunities increase either the collective's access to the attentive polity or its prominence in civil society. The relatively unfettered SMO can pursue opportunities to improve either aspect of the collective's standing, and assume that movement supporters will require nothing more of their participation except esteem-related incentives. Demobilization occurs when participants' support for the movement wanes, often when political opportunities close.

Direct action, on the other hand, often produces resources through expropriations, which allow movements to sustain an impoverished base even when state access is closed. As Hinton (1966) so eloquently demonstrated in his history of Long Bow village, revolutionary expropriations judiciously distributed among participants may provide an exogenous spur to collective action (see also Race 1972). Separatist movements, and even everyday modes of resistance, produce at least some resources useful to sustain activity. Relevant political opportunities in such cases reflect weaknesses or gaps in the structures of authority or enforcement, as well as increased state or social pressure on populations. Hence, focused and brutal state oppression may crush such movements without separating them from their mass bases. The problem which direct action most commonly faces, as both Scott and Skocpol indicate, is a powerful adversary prepared to defeat movement forces. Where symbolic protest loses supporters, direct action more commonly loses battles.

To this point, the argument I am building runs as follows: different combinations of macropolitical structure and social need will elevate one collective strategy over others. A mixture of extensive open input structures[11] and generally prosperous societies encourages aggrieved groups to make claims through tactics of demonstration and civil protest. Alternatively, a combination of closed or rudimentary state institutions and great poverty seems to direct claim making, when it occurs, toward more direct modes of struggle. The observation holds no implications, of course, for the

[11] The term comes from Kitschelt (1986).

frequency or intensity of collective action—merely its form. Both combinations of macrostructure and social need produce a dominant form of collective action.

Open and attentive state institutions can create opportunities for *demonstration* even as a society's impoverishment produces demands for *direct action*. Elements of the external structure and the movement's internal social fabric pull against one another. The inherent ambiguity of opportunity can divide movements—leaders may note participatory opportunities even as mass members advocate direct action as a certain avenue to concrete resources. No single collective strategy or conception of opportunity can provide a sure vehicle for the collective aspiration: *both* become contingent on the social and political arrangements worked out within the movement. Quite often, such divisions fall along class or organizational lines. In Piven and Cloward's work (1979), poor people's movements divided between a militant underclass and an elite and conciliatory movement leadership. Leo Panitch (1980) represents divisions within a corporatist associational structure as essentially a matter of organizational position and orientation, while Zald and Berger (1978) describe insurgencies launched from within existing organizations.

None of these positions, however, express adequately that such divisions, class or organizational, are intimately connected to the movement's environment. Class heterogeneity or organizational stratification always threatens organizational conflict. Such potentials are greatest where substantial mass demands are mobilized into a movement that makes civil appeals to a robust audience. These conditions create dual or multiple structures of opportunity, each relative to a different collective strategy and with appeal to a distinct submovement constituency. Particular patterns of internal movement conflict stem from this specific mix of a movement's environment which allows demonstration and participation, and a movement's structure built upon the economic needs of impoverished populations.

Inevitably, the task of mediating between these dual structures of opportunity falls to the SMO. Situated between the population and the macrostructure, the SMO conceives the trade-offs between one strategy and the next in aggregate tactical terms as they affect movement power and success. Indeed, the dilemmas are often nearly impossible: opportunities for civil participation generate insufficient material return from an entrenched polity, while direct action never generates the requisite social support to overpower or withstand authorities' sanctions. Hence, demonstrations become ineffective while direct action is removed to the criminal margins. Such, arguably, is the character of unmobilized, everyday life in stratified but liberal societies such as the Philippines, Mexico, and India—elite oppositionists with few material grievances vie for the polity's attention, and individuals with greater need pursue more direct but surreptitious modes of action to secure subsistence.

RESOLVING STRATEGIC CLEAVAGES

Social movement organizations situated between open state structures and a needy mass base must decide whether to issue potentially futile calls for reform or potentially disastrous calls to arms. The key questions surrounding social mobilization are therefore overwhelmingly matters of strategy: which forms of collective action are encouraged by which structural change? The question defines a search for strategy that projects movement power but does not violate—and ideally, satisfies—a range of constituent demands. Moreover, given that contending strategies and visions of opportunity often attract distinct social bases, this first question entails another: which conditions can produce a synergy between different modes of action sufficient to produce collaboration between heterogeneous constituencies?

The analysis I propose here always will inquire into the social and organizational implications of the relationship between opportunity structures and collective strategies. The nearly impossible trade-offs between demonstration and direct action also contain the ghost of a strategy for interpretation. An entire host of questions, from the direction and success of collective action to the timing of mobilization and demobilization, require that one understand how the mobilization processes

resolve this dilemma of strategic choice, and what political legacies that resolution leaves behind to influence protest. Even where no clear SMO exists, it is heuristically interesting to assume the perspective of a hypothetical organization to pin down the tactical and collective choices of the movement. This heuristic produces several initial points of interest.

First, the *manner in which* structural changes promote mobilization, conceived of as alliances and compromises between different social constituencies, will be more important than the mere fact that they do. How and why do changing political conditions undermine or promote one mode of action or another? An opening polity may produce its most dramatic influence by encouraging those with substantial and urgent material needs that demonstration can resolve their grievances. Sharply curtailed avenues of civil expression—as occurs, for example, with the declaration of martial law, the suspension of habeas corpus, or the closure of parliamentary institutions—may exercise its sharpest effect by making demonstration seem bankrupt, and driving demonstrators into alliance with those who favor direct action. Either case broadens mobilization potentials by enhancing the political logic for one mode of struggle and undermining that of others. In those circumstances, broader unity in action becomes possible as the movement converges around a program of action. In light of that more compelling action orientation, a clear standard of opportunity emerges.

Changes in the political structure that encourage mobilization produce the initial terms and logic of movement activity. By asking what conditions permitted the movement's particular alliance around its program of action, one also asks about the relationship between the social structure, the movement's internal bonds, and its program. The initial conditions surrounding mobilization exert a powerful influence on subsequent movement trajectories. The movement that gathers in response to an opening in the polity, for example, will likely not initially respond to opportunities for direct action against the state. The experience of mobilization leaves a stamp on the collective, and attunes it to one package of opportunity or another. Its future activity will depend on the continued utility of that form of collective action or its ability to convince its supporters to adopt different ones.

A second group of concerns emerges around how movement politics unfolds. Many aspects of the political structure that produce mobilization are transitory—such as a reform, electoral campaigns, or struggles between elites. When polities grow less open or attentive, activists who advocate demonstrations will have difficulty convincing mass allies that civil assemblies will produce any material victory. An increasingly open polity may erode movement leaders' support for direct action. Conversely, states often respond to insurgencies with ruthless repression, widespread arrest, or socioeconomic reform, each of which alters the movement's structural context. Structural changes undermine the fit that a tactic can produce between collective goals and diverse constituent interests. Hence, the analysis of movement politics should ask how a movement's environment influences alliances between supporters. How do movement politics work toward the dual tasks of projecting collective power and maintaining internal solidarity?

Structural changes produce an assortment of potential reactions from the movement. Many analysts have examined movement response to external events in terms of unified rational actors. The foregoing suggests and alternative approach: that structural change precipitates a crisis of consensus within movements. As a consequence, their base of support and very viability may change. Rather than progressive inactivity or outright defeat, demobilization under these circumstances reflects the movement's inability to balance constituent objectives. The resumption of controversies over direct action versus demonstration threatens the rupture of movement alliances. In other situations, SMOs respond with a round of tactical innovation. One useful approach to the interpretation of these innovations is to regard them as attempts to recapture the agreement that once cemented movement solidarity around a program of struggle.

To illustrate the interpretive potential of this perspective, consider briefly two developments in collective action, one widely commented on, the other less so. The interpretive framework I propose advances workable explanations for both the radicalization of movement politics and the recent proliferation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in states of the South.

Until recently, radicalizing protest has been discussed mainly in terms of participant frustration. Eisinger, for example, notes that violence becomes most likely when the movement has "essentially thrown cost considerations to the wind" (Eisinger 1986: 13). His analysis, however, does not consider that a mass base with substantial and pressing needs must achieve material gains to secure its subsistence. In such situations, violence may represent a political calculation—the need to secure material incentives and member relief—rather than its abandonment. In such cases, it is not violence per se which should attract analytical attention, but rather the ends of resource generation, via direct action, to which violence is turned.

I have argued elsewhere (Boudreau 1996) that constituent needs also underlie the demobilization of some movements. Direct socioeconomic relief can convert protest organizations into collectivities geared mainly to provide services to constituents. In the South, NGO and development organizations (particularly when they evolve from more radical movements) often fit this description; in the North, tenant unions and welfare advocacy groups may do the same. The entry of resistance movements into development work has not to date attracted the systematic study it deserves. While most observers have viewed the proliferation of development and nongovernmental organizations as a reflection of the debate within the development community, it seems at least as reasonable to regard it as a response to movement organizations' needs.

CONCLUSION

It is encouraging that an increasing number of analysts view Southern struggles through the glass of opportunity structure analysis. The effort to extend this analysis Southward is decidedly well-timed to match the increasing responsiveness of Southern governments and emergence of political actors who can receive and (perhaps) act upon movement demands. These developments promise to make demonstration, rather than rebellion, a more common global phenomenon. If the initial attempt has met with sporadic success, the impetus behind the effort—to begin to understand Southern collective action in terms already deployed to explain movements in the industrial North—is well conceived.

Yet as I have argued, the expansion of the opportunity structure approach cannot define itself in geographic terms. All movements confront the relationship between external opportunities, strategic choice, and internal movement relations. I have described this interplay not because of its particular importance in the South but because it accounts for the most important variations between movements in general. The approach's primary payoff, therefore, is not a reformulation of opportunity structure analysis for Southern cases, but a set of principles by which one can account for a fuller range of basic variables.

The first principle is that opportunity is everywhere contingent on forms of collective action. To meaningfully speak about political opportunity requires a reading of movement strategy. Social or political structures often influence collective struggle in ways that effectively confine tactics—and thus opportunities—to a narrow and easily specified range. In these instances, one may be tempted to describe opportunity as a universal rather than contingent, set of conditions. The result is a fairly tidy package of explanatory variables with a correspondingly limited application. Investigating the relationships between structural conditions, forms of activity, and opportunity immediately broadens the model's scope.

A second and related principle is that opportunity structures do not merely or mechanistically stimulate collective action. They influence activity by altering the apparent prospects of—and social support for—different forms of struggle. Most obviously, such alterations change the level of collective activity. Even that change, however, should be approached in social terms, as a consensus around a mode of behavior. A more subtle ramification, but one with tremendous implications for movement politics, is that structural change affects protest by influencing the movement's internal political balance. Movement militants may, like chess masters contemplating a board, respond to changing conditions. Yet the analysis cannot pin too much on such moves. Cadres seldom have decisive control over movement activity—no matter how tactically prescient they may

be. Structural shifts also influence the probable ramifications of collective action, and therefore change how participants behave. Accordingly, changes in collective action often reflect evolving social pressures within the movement as constituents revise their behaviors or preferences in relation to shifting opportunities. At minimum, tactical innovations pass through the filter, and may be constrained by, the movement's social fabric. Often, the social base may force movement leaders down new paths.

Hence, my recommendations hold their greatest promise as a plan to refocus attention on the links between the social and the political dimensions of collective action. Too much work has emphasized one or another aspect of this relationship—asking either what forms of collective action will a movement adopt or how environmental conditions encourage or discourage mobilization. By viewing strategic choice as a solution to a collective puzzle solved under specified conditions, the analysis underscores the unique feature of collective action—it is a social behavior that engages external adversaries. With this connection in mind, analysis will naturally ask how movement activity is perceived by the collective, and how the larger structural environment, by altering the prospects of collective activity, also alters those perceptions.

Finally, a blueprint for broader cross-national application of the opportunity structure approach inevitably reflects back on industrial and postindustrial society. For some time, analysts have argued that poor people's movements are essentially different. However, few have been able to reconcile this difference with the opportunity structures that exist for entire societies. Once one makes opportunity contingent on strategic choice (and collective action on the movement's social base) the analysis begins to acquire tools to explain differences between movements in the industrial North as well. As the objective characteristics of community, solidarity, and political structure change, this broader interpretation of opportunity structure promises a more accurate guide to theoretical evolution than existing frameworks. In the aftermath of the 1992 riots in urban America, and given the rise of neoconservative and ethnic nationalist movements throughout Europe (both indicating direct and instrumental forms of action far more than indirect or symbolic struggles), the effort to build a broader conceptual foundation for the analysis of political opportunity is imperative.

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