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Vocabulary for the Study of Religion

Volume 3

P–Z, Index

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of different symbol systems. Thus, for example, a religious symbol such as the Christian cross or the Muslim headscarf can be taken—and contested—as a political statement. Especially in today's societies where the symbolic form of religion is no longer a frame for societal life as a whole, but one system of meaning and orientation among others, analyzing the various kinds of signs and symbols in the field of religion is not only key to an understanding of religious communication, but also sheds light on the competing and sometimes conflicting symbolic worlds which mediate and orient human lives.

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Markus Höfner

Social Movement

Although persons have always pursued collective action for social change, the term "social movement" is relatively recent. In fact, it is only in the late 1960s, with the emergence of increasingly visible and often surprising forms of collective action in Europe and the United States—student, environmental, and women's movements—that social movements began to be recognized as suitable objects of scientific research.

Even though there were some similarities in these movements across the Atlantic, especially around the year 1968, the approaches of researchers in Europe and the United States differed. In the United States the paradigmatic precedent was the civil rights movement of the 1950s. In Europe the precursors were much older: the labor and suffrage movements. While the American civil rights movement sought rights and inclusion within the existing state and society—notably, equality before the law and desegregation—the

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European labor movements and their precursors challenged both state and society. Whether there should be a socialist or capitalist state was a far more prominent consideration in Europe than in America.

Many of these differences continue today. They reflect specific situations—for example, the condition of African-Americans in the United States in the 1950s and the nature of the US Constitution. These differences have shaped the field of Social Movement Studies, especially the different understandings of "the political," "the social," "the economic," and "the cultural."

The differences between the European and North American approaches also reflect differing intellectual and political traditions. The European approach has a significant Marxist and post-structuralist lineage, which is concerned with how and whether class-based movements can mount challenges to the prevailing model of social and political organization. The North American approach is that of liberal pluralism, which presumes that movements function primarily to mount grievances or claims as a normal part of interest representation. These differences often lead to very different kinds of explanations when scholars ask the following questions of social movements:

(a) Why do some *individuals* participate in protest, where others do not?
(b) What are the *structural* or societal conditions that cause or at least accompany social movements—for example, economic factors, political factors, technological changes, alienation, and repression?
(c) What do social movements *mean*, and how do they shape our understanding of society?
(d) What do social movements want, and how do they pursue their goals differently from protest or lobby groups?

These questions suggest a wide variety of different methods and theories, which rest on fundamental debates within social science—for example, over structure versus agency and over quantitative versus qualitative analysis. Where the focus is on the individual, research is usually carried out through interviews, questionnaires, and specific empirical studies. It is assumed that human agency rather than structural determinism is primary. Where the focus is on the economy, politics, and other structures, research usually assumes that human actions are shaped by gender, age, race, class, sexuality, and religion. A third approach, that of hermeneutics, sees meanings and cultural products as the mixed outcome of both structures and agency. For the most part, Social Movement Studies does not choose one side or the other of this debate but instead studies social movements as key sites from which to gather empirical evidence and to test or develop new theories.

At its inception, Social Movement Studies (SMS) was centered in North America and Europe in both the movements studied and the locale of researchers. While there is a growing body of work on movements elsewhere in the world, concepts and approaches from SMS often still reflect the place of origin. At the same time the differences between North Americans and Europeans also remain.

The North American School and Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT)

The North American school of social movement theory is rooted in responses to what had been the "traditional" (see McCarthy and Zald 1987; Klandermans et al. 1988) or "classical" (see Byrne 1997) conceptualization of collective action prior to the 1960s. Collective action was taken to be an individual or collective grievance stemming from some kind of imbalance or crisis, one caused by periods of accelerated economic or social change (see Turner and Killian 1987; Smelser 1962). This perspective is rooted in both interactionism—the study of small-scale social interactions with an emphasis upon the agency of the actors—and in structural functionalism, or the study of the interactions between larger social institutions. Structural functionalism is often called the collective behavior approach. Here collective action is

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assumed to arise outside pre-existing and ordered social relations. It is assumed to arise in reaction to a "pathology" of the system, one that requires an adaptation to enable the system to return to a normal state.

During the 1970s sociologists produced studies that pointed to the qualitative difference between *organized* political action and *deviant*, irrational collective behavior. Where deviant forms supposedly arose spontaneously as a response to ambiguous or irrational grievances, organized movements engaged within a rational framework that required prior work and coordination (see McCarthy and Zald 1973, 1977; Oberschall 1973). These arguments were the basis for Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT).

Arguing that grievances and strains are always present, proponents of RMT argue that instead of trying to discover *which* grievance has given rise to *which* movement, the focus should be on *how* social movements respond to grievances by mobilizing. In switching the emphasis from why movements mobilize to how they mobilize, resource mobilization theorists have moved the emphasis away from structural factors and toward organizational ones.

Overall, RMT has concentrated on three issues:

1. Participation: Why do persons participate or not participate in movements? RMT argues that there is a rational, or cost-benefit, process of assessment. The costs and benefits need not be economic.
2. Organization: There is a difference between the organizations that make movements possible and those that serve as a resource for broader social movements that exceed a single organization.
3. Political success: As part of the rational calculation for participation, RMT theorists suggest that movements and individuals assess the "political opportunity structures" (POS) and their chance for making an impact within the established political sphere. Moreover, it is assumed that the primary motive for social movements is political rather than social or cultural.

Since its inception, RMT has been criticized on the following grounds:

1. Ideological indifference: It has been argued that RMT is "indifferent to the political or ideological content of a movement" and that it is "applied in an almost mechanistic way to organisations of widely different political and ideological scope, without incorporating these factors within the workings of the model" (Dalton et al. 1990:10).
2. Over-rationalizing: RMT has also been criticized for over-emphasizing economic, rational calculation, in terms of either personal interest in participating or the chances of institutional political impact.
3. Overemphasizing the political: RMT has been criticized for neglecting or subordinating social and cultural factors, such as identity and meaning, in explaining social movements. RMT has been further criticized for restricting itself to the political domain and thereby ignoring the possibility of a more systemic critique of what underlies politics, such as capitalism, modernity, and culture (see Melucci 1996).

Many of the most astute criticisms of RMT have come from Europe, where a different approach to studying movements was developing at the same time: new social movement theory.

The European School: New Social Movements Approach

In the 1970s and 1980s, European sociologists and philosophers began to write about what they provisionally called "new social movements" (NSMs). Those figures include Alain Touraine (1981, 1983), Alberto Melucci (1980, 1985, 1989), Claus Offe (1985), Jurgen Habermas (1976, 1989), and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985). The European

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experience of 1968 challenged theories of change based on class conflicts arising within the process of production. The long-standing European tradition of class radicalism by "Old Social Movements" now faced new social movements with different actors. While Marxist commentators such as Raymond Williams wrote of the emergence of a "New Left," the term New Social Movement was more widely adopted.

The term NSM was used in part literally to refer to *new* struggles—women's, students', environmental, and anti-nuclear—and in part to refer to the emergence of new struggles organized around new grievances and changed aspirations.

In contrast to the American RMT approach, the NSM approach looked for structural reasons to explain why non-traditional social movement actors rather than workers and peasants led the struggles. Unlike their American counterparts, European theorists assumed that the change in practices and actors corresponded to a change in the grievances themselves. The resulting focus on the systemic and political nature of *why movements mobilized* meant less attention to the specific organizational and mobilization processes themselves.

Very different understandings of social movements arise when one asks *why* social movements emerge rather than simply *how* they operate. The emphasis on system and cause ultimately corresponds to a radically different vision of the role of "expert" knowledge and the role of theory itself.

Beginning in the late 1970s, debates arose over how new these social movements really were. The debates in turn produced exchanges between various European and American sociologists throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Ultimately, there emerged a "convergence" between these schools.

Criticisms of NSM theory target three features:

1) An over-emphasis on macro social theory.
2) A lack of attention to empirical complexities and to micro-level factors, such as individual motivation.
3) An excessive stress on what was new rather than on what continued.

The Europeans were aware of the shifts to new constituencies and new forms of action. The new groups challenged modern forms of political organization and experimented with decentralized, directly democratic forms of organization. Those organizations often sought to shape culture and way of life more than laws and macro institutions. Yet unlike their North American counterparts, the European propensity to explain collective action in macro, political, and social terms often left them unable to explain why particular movements emerged at particular times. Their analysis failed to account for the particularities of the situation within which a movement arose.

Interactions between North American and European Social Movement Research

In the late 1980s, there was more engagement between American and European theorists. While New Social Movement theorists continued to do research and write on social movements, in many ways the subsequent developments in their work can be understood to be largely reactions to criticisms of the limitations of each approach and to greater appreciation of the value of the other approach. Still, many who had written about NSMs did not limit themselves to research on social movements, and others studied movements but did not participate in the subfield being created. The field has continued to develop, and an array of categories, methods, and concepts has developed, including theories of framing, political opportunity structures, and collective identity. There remains an important difference between those interested in movements in themselves and those interested in movements as keys to antagonisms in society and in processes of social change.

Consequently, the study of social movements takes place both within a self-conscious field that recognizes itself as "Social Movement Studies" and in such other fields as political theory, feminist theory, cultural studies, and geography. These other fields do not always use the categories and concepts that have become dominant in the literature of social movement studies.

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New Directions

During the past decade social movement studies has broadened. More recent social movement approaches emphasize emotions at both the macro, causal level and the micro level of collective action (see Goodwin 2001; Jasper 2003); see networks as the new paradigm (see Diani 2000; Diani and McAdam 2003); or focus on self-organization and complexity approaches (see Chesters and Welsh 2006, 2011; Escobar 2008). There have also been focuses on conceptions of embodiment and experience (see McDonald 2006), on cultural perspectives that draw on movement narratives and story telling (see Polleta 2006; Johnston 2009), and on developments in social and political theory.

There have also been new focuses on resistance to the globalization of neo-liberal capitalism, the promotion of "social justice," and concern with climate change. Some researchers have also challenged the theories of knowledge on which social movement studies rests. There is now work on the specificities of local and indigenous knowledges and on the implications of them for understanding the "global." There have also been attempts to develop "knowledge-practices" (see Casas-Cortés et al. 2008) that bridge academic and movement domains (see Sen et al. 2004; Graeber and Shukaitis 2007).

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Graeme Chesters

Socialization

Socialization is a common and recurring process that persons experience in various social domains throughout their lives. It is most evident during transitions, when individuals assume a new role and identity and must learn how to interact and behave in their new role. Socialization teaches individuals what is important in a particular setting as well as how to think and behave (see Ashforth, Sluss, and Harrison 2007).

During childhood children are socialized to learn the basic values and skills that are necessary to function in a particular community, religion, school, organized sports team, and society in general (see Ashforth et al. 2007). Religious socialization is the primary means through which individuals acquire their worldviews. The three main agents of religious socialization are one's family, peers, and the institutional church. Research has found the most important agent of religious socialization is the family. Marie Cornwall found that religious belief and commitment is influenced by religious socialization and personal community relationships (1987). She concluded that one's integration into a religious community is highly dependent upon religious socialization processes. In addition to its influence on the development of a religious world view, Cornwall also noted that religious socialization is also important "because it channels individuals into a social world that maintains one's subjective reality" (Cornwall 1987: 54).

During adulthood adults are socialized to learn more context-specific skills such as those associated with a particular occupation or organization. *Organizational socialization* "is the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member" (Louis 1980: 229–230). It involves the "introductory events and activities by which individuals come to know and make sense out of their newfound work experiences" (Katz 1980: 88). New hires must learn new attitudes, behaviors, and ways of thinking to become effective members of an organization (see Klein and Weaver: 2000). Organizational socialization is a transition that "thrusts one from a state of certainty to uncertainty; from knowing to not knowing; from the familiar to the unfamiliar" (Van Maanen 1977: 16). Learning is the "heart" of socialization (see Ashforth et al. 2007).

Organizational socialization transforms newcomers into contributing and effective members of an organization (see Ashforth et al. 2007). The outcomes of socialization have generally been categorized as "proximal adjustment outcomes" as well as more "distal socialization outcomes." Proximal indicators of newcomer adjustment include learning, role clarity, task mastery, self-efficacy, social acceptance and integration, and person-job (PJ) and person-organization (PO) fit perceptions (see Saks and Gruman 2012). Again, learning is at the core of socialization. The primary areas of socialization content or learning include the task, role, group, and organization domains (see Ostroff and Kozlowski 1992).

Distal socialization outcomes consist of job attitudes such as satisfaction and organizational commitment, and behaviors such as turnover and job performance. Proximal adjustment outcomes are related to distal socialization outcomes and mediate the relationship between socialization

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