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SOCIAL MOVEMENT SECTORS AND SYSTEMIC CONSTRAINT:  
TOWARD A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS\*

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Toward a Structural Analysis of Social Movements\*

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## I. Introduction.

Cross national comparisons indicate that nations differ in the overall amount of social movement activity that is supported. For instance, it is often suggested that the United States provide more fertile soil for the growth of social movements than do other nations. Moreover, over time societies differ in the amount of social movement activity that they support. Cycles of mobilization for quite disparate causes seem to occur. This total amount of social movement activity is the social movement sector.

In this article we will identify structural constraints that determine and limit the social movement sector. Our thesis is twofold: that to understand the course of social movements we have to understand them as a configuration and within a determining environment. Thus we have to look at the totality of movements in a society, rather than isolated movements, and try to identify the elements of social structure that shape this totality of movements (the movement sector). What we are proposing is a set of terms or conceptual tools for extending the analysis of social movements and making it more precise.

We will define the social movement sector, identify its dimensions, and discuss its determinants. Major determinants include the economic base, conjunctions of the business cycle and structural change, and the political and ideological system. Since the object of analysis is sectors within societies our method must be comparative and historical.

## II. The Movement Sector Defined

The social movement sector is the configuration of social movements, the structure of antagonistic, competing and/or cooperating movements which in turn is part of a larger structure of action (political action, in a very broad sense) that may include parties, state bureaucracies, the media,

pressure groups, churches, and a variety of other organizational factors in a society. Configuration refers both to the amount and structural relations of social movement activity and the orientation, or goals, of action.

Another definition of the sector is provided by the resource mobilization perspective of McCarthy and Zald (1977). They define the sector as the sum of all social movement industries in the society. A social movement industry is the congeries of movement organizations oriented toward a similar social change goal. Our definition of the sector is more inclusive and less "economistic" than McCarthy and Zald's, since it includes all action oriented to social movement goals, rather than the action generated by movement organizations. It is important to note that if there is only one social movement in a society, the sector would be coterminous with the movement and countermovement.

In what societies can we identify a social movement sector? Such a sector of activity only appears in societies that have a distinct political system. Primitive societies rarely have social movements unless they have been integrated into the political or economic system of more developed societies; once such contact takes place, rebellions, millenarian cults and so on, occur frequently. Traditional societies with distinct political systems have sporadic movements - the rise of Islam is one such example. But often such movements remain unstable eruptions - a permanent sector does not emerge. Movements are especially weak in societies in which class relations are highly personalized. A sector of movements is most likely to become a permanent feature of the society in capitalist societies with their distinctive separation of the state from civil society, their organization into nation states, and their large sphere of private voluntary association.

The more societies are pervaded by rational legal forms, the more life focuses on formal organizations; the more people think in terms of state and economy, and the more they believe that human action constructs the social system - the more a movement sector becomes a permanent subsystem of the society.

### III. Dimensions of Social Movement Sectors

A brief comparison of the social movement sectors of Italy and the United States may provide some illustrations that we can use to identify key dimensions of social movement sectors, dimensions that describe the structure of these sectors in most capitalist democracies.\* Let us proceed with a thumbnail sketch of the SMS of these two societies. We begin with Italy since it is more coherent and hence easier to describe. The entire sector is highly politicized. By this term we mean a variety of characteristics: action takes place to alter, influence, and/or react to the Italian state; the state is defined as the element of the status quo and the main instrument of change; the movements of the sector are defined on a left/right basis (as Barnes [1977] points out, this is also the case for "the party space"); there are few - essentially no - religious movements or cults and only a limited number of lifestyle/personal identity movements. The structural underpinnings of this condition are complex - we will discuss them later.

This is quite a different picture of Italian society than the one presented by Banfield (1958) and Almond and Verba (1963) who stress the passive and alienated features of Italian political culture. We are suggesting an alternative view of Italian society, namely a society so highly mobilized by parties, unions, corporatist groups and the church, that there is

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\*The first author, Garner, has conducted research in Italy during 1978.

relatively little space left for a differentiated movement sector. Of course, the two images are not really contradictory (corporatist mobilization may in fact be a cause of passivity) and in any case, Italy and particularly Northern Italy, is no longer the same society that it was when the earlier studies were done. In short, the social movement sector appears relatively small because so much activity is encapsulated in party-related political forms; the number of organizations in the SMS is small, and the number of unorganized currents is also relatively small; much of the sector overlaps the institutions of cultural life, universities and the media, probably because these are the institutions in which people are most weakly integrated into the organs of party and corporate life. The range of issues addressed by the SMS is largely secular and political.

On the other hand, we have the SMS in the US: In comparison to Italy it is strikingly non-political. There are a large number of groups that are organized around religious and life style issues, that seem to mobilize around issues that have nothing to do with the state; the vast majority of the 400 to 500 cults (comprising a couple million adults) seem to be largely outside the political system in the usual sense of the term. Even groups that have to deal with political organizations seem to do so only in a transitory or tactical way. The sector as a whole seems to correlate poorly with a right/left political dimension. Many of the movements are localistic and spontaneous (i.e., not articulated with larger organizations), whether they are cults, lifestyle currents, neighborhood movements, and so on.

So in one country we have a relatively structured, highly politicized SMS, that exists largely within the institutionalized political subsystem. In the other country, we have a sprawling and diverse SMS with a low degree of political action and often only the most tenuous ties to the state or to

other political institutions. What we hope to do is to sharpen our understanding of the determinants of these sectors while avoiding essentially tautological statements (e.g., Italy is a more politicized society, the US is localistic and decentralized; in the US civil society is generally more important than the state, etc.) although we think these statements are probably true.

Let us use these two short sketches to identify what we think are important dimensions of the SMS. We repeat that what we are trying to characterize here are features of social movement-action as a whole in a society. Some of these features are derivable from individual social movements but others are global features and not reducible to characteristics of individual movements.

One dimension is size, in terms of the number of organizations and the number of participants, both in and out of 'the formal organizations.' We are mainly interested in size relative to other sectors of activity, the more institutionalized ones (political parties, churches, etc.) and we are interested in the size of the sector compared to its size in other countries and over time.\*

A second dimension of the sector is its degree of organization - roughly speaking the ratio of membership in formal organizations to all types of participation. In some societies even social movements rapidly take on the form of formal organizations and in others they don't. This characteristic is important. It gets at issues that Piven is concerned with when she examines loosely organized, quasi-spontaneous, poor people's actions. It also brings out the difference between dissent and organization which is crucial for understanding currents of opposition in the socialist states.

\*There are problems in measurement here, since social movement activity does not preclude other kinds of activity.



What type of form is taken on by those movements that do coalesce into organizations is also a characteristic of the movement sector as a whole, and not merely a characteristic of individual movements.

The next dimension of the SMS to be considered is its social location. There are some obvious structural variables here - class, region, ethnicity - and so on - locations of volatility in the social structure. Another way of charting social location is by the institutions in and around which social movements emerge. We think of these as "weak link" institutions, institutions in which basic societal tensions or contradictions appear. In the last few decades (we are tempted to say, since the early 19th century with its nationalist youth movements) the universities and high schools have been a major institutional site for a variety of reasons: because here social psychological problems ("youth") intersect class phenomena (the volatile petite-bourgeoisie) and both in turn intersect contradictions of capitalism (the tension between advanced training and actual job prospects, whether those of unemployment or alienated labor). Burawoy has identified the contradictions that precipitate movement action in the university of a developing nation (to wit, Zambia) in an article that contributes to the concept of "weak link" institutions, of locations in the institutional structure where social movements erupt.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Piven has identified the welfare system as a weak link institution, (Piven, 1976), and Hirsch has commented on the shift from the workplace to the community as a "weak link" in advanced capitalism. (Hirsch, 1979).

Related to the location of social movements is the dimension of alignment with a left-right political spectrum (Barnes, 1977). Such alignment is related in turn to the extent to which the movement sector is politicized at all. Note that one could have a highly politicized, strongly left-right aligned movement sector that did not "adhere" to the political institutions but to some other set of institutions (like the educational ones). We will see shortly that this may happen in those societies in which it is difficult to enter the political arena. Nevertheless, the sector may be politically aligned, and may be defined in relation to existing political actors (parties, interest groups) including the state or parts of the state itself.

Another dimension of the SMS is its autonomy from other organizations/ and sectors (especially the political system), not only in terms of member overlap but also in terms of strategies and structural linkages.

A final important dimension of the SMS is the character of its change over time. In some societies the SM sector's size, organizational structure and contents (its issues and ideological foci) vary markedly over time and seem sensitive to economic changes and social control pressures. In others, even though action and movement organization may fluctuate, the sector maintains its integrity. This can most clearly be seen by comparing Italy and the US in the 1950's. This was a period of relative depoliticization in both countries but in Italy the traditions and sentiments underlying the SMS were not disrupted (although perhaps decreasing organizational activity) while in the US they were. In other words, the Cold War and accompanying social control produced a depoliticization of society in the US but not in Italy. In part these differences are results of the role of mass left wing parties in Italy which are absent in the US.

To illustrate this dimension of change over time we will trace through a set of changes in an actual movement configuration, that of the post-war US. We will treat the phenomenon somewhat discontinuously -- by decade -- when in fact it should be viewed more continuously.

Late 1940s to 1950s:

- slowing rate of movement formation;
- becalming, sectarianism and shrinkage of left movements;
- replacement of movements by less politicized forms: juvenile delinquency, cultural and life style phenomena like the Beats;
- right movements have increasing effect on political system, left movements lose their effect; "center of gravity" shifts to the right.

1960s to early 1970s:

- very rapid increase in number;
- expanding social bases; institutional bases especially in universities;
- reduced sectarianism and effort to build "popular front" broad-based groups;
- politicization of non-political phenomena and their association with movements (women, homosexuals);
- tactics of changing laws, government policy;
- center of gravity shifts to the left.

1970s:

- some decline, becalming and sectarianism;
- localistic and corporatistic forms (community organizing);
- re-emergence of the right and "shift to the right."

What interests us here are the overall shifts (the relative weight of the left and the right and the way in which these weights are related to each other), the patterns of social movement organization and tactics (including their propensity to form coalitions and their modes of competition), the social and institutional bases of the movements, and their effects. These variables are not reducible to characteristics of individual movement organizations but are characteristics of a larger whole or system composed of the totality of movements within a structure of political action.

These are the types of variables that we want to explain. We want to identify the structural constraints, the structural factors external to social movements, that shape this configuration. However, in an over-determined system it is difficult to rigidly separate external constraints from the object of analysis itself - a determining factor shaping the SMS may be the prior action of social movements (and thus, not strictly speaking, an "external" constraint).

In the next section we identify the major types of constraints.

#### IV. Systemic Constraints

By systemic constraints we mean those characteristics of the environment of social movements that shape and limit the possibilities for social movements. These constraints to a large extent exist apart from the volition of individuals; some, but certainly not all, may be instrumental, i.e. based on deliberate policy decisions that are translated into elements of the social structure.

We have organized our discussion of systemic constraints into the following sections:

- (1) the patterning of productive activities and associated class relationships and processes that we refer to as the structure or base;

(2) the cyclical phenomena that overlap structural changes and produce a patterning we call conjunctural factors.

(3) the political and ideological system.

(1) The Base

Our first category we refer to as the base of productive activities and its corresponding social relationships. By this we mean the structure of the economy -- patterns of ownership, size and type of productive enterprises, relations between a public and a private sector, nature of work relations and management within enterprises, forms of the labor market, types of employment and occupation, wage scales and income distribution, and the political associations concerned with production. We will also consider parts of the system of "reproduction of the relations of production," that is to say, the articulation of the family, community, and socialization process with the mode of production (Althusser, 1971).

We will not identify all the features of the base but only a sampling of those that we believe are the most important constraints on social movements.

A. Class Structure: Conflict, Stressed Positions, Changing Positions and Contradictory Positions.

A classic method of movement analysis is to identify the social base of a particular movement. Expanding this method to the analysis of a whole configuration of movements, we can point out how the system of class positions in a society shapes (some would even say, determines) the configuration of social movements. The configuration of social movements changes as new classes appear and other classes decline or lose their positions of dominance.

1. The social bases of movement sectors.

Classes do not rise and decline as separate entities any more than do movements. As the class structure of society changes so does the social movement sector.

There are many studies of the social base of single movements or related types of movements: for example, the working class has supported a variety of left wing movements (Hobsbawm, Abendroth); the declining traditional petite-bourgeoisie has given rise to a status group politics (Gusfield) and has supported fascist and authoritarian movements; smallholders (in certain respects, a special kind of petite-bourgeoisie) have been extensively involved in movements (Heberle, Stinchcombe, Hofstadter, Vann Woodward); the new stratum of employed technical and professional workers was associated with the New Left of the 1960's (Mallet, Gorz).

The analyses that interest us most are those that examine how a change in the productive system is associated not just with one class and its accompanying movement but with a new set of classes and their inter-related movements.

For example, the emergence of capitalist agriculture in the 20th century in the Po Valley generated both leftwing movements of agricultural laborers and the fascist movement supported by the agro-capitalists; the origins of Italian fascism were in paramilitary groups which attacked the organizations of the laborers in that region. A new organization of production generated a set of movements -- more precisely, movements and counter movements (Cardoza).

For a rather different example we might cite the way in which the Italian Communist Party developed a base after World War II in the traditional petite-bourgeoisie in those regions (Tuscany, Emilia Romagna) where it has a strong base in the industrial working class and a non-owning rural population.

(Here we are dealing with a party rather than a movement, but a party with many movement characteristics.) The configuration of the base - the interaction of classes in a particular economy - generates a corresponding political configuration of class coalitions. In regions where the working class is strong, the petite-bourgeois middle strata ("ceti medi") often support the Italian Communist Party (PCI) -- which in turn can consolidate its hold on local government and provide further incentives to the ceti medi to support the PCI; where the working class is weak -- especially in the South and the rural areas of the Veneto, and the PCI (or left coalitions) has little power, the ceti medi support the Christian Democrats (DC), often even the right wing of the DC.

Thus there is no simple relationship of a single class to a single political position; the political action of any given class is contingent on the class structure as a whole and the political action of other classes.

## 2. Contradictory class positions

So far we have discussed the relationship of classes to social movements (and political action generally) as though class positions were relatively clearly identifiable. But it is important to recognize that class position is not unambiguous and that some positions may be particularly ambiguous and contradictory (Wright, NLR). Middle strata are especially likely to be in contradictory positions and thus it is not surprising that these strata have shown a high level of volatility, movement action and often variable or even unpredictable political behavior.

At the level of the individual, a contradictory class position (as defined by Wright) may mean high levels of cross pressure, or role strain. At the level of the class, movement action may be volatile.

We are particularly interested in seeing contradictory class position as a structural feature of a whole system. A society with a large number of contradictory class positions may be prone to instability and movement volatility. Since advanced capitalism seems to generate large blocs of contradictory positions (like the employed petite-bourgeoisie mentioned earlier) its patterns of movement activity may be more unstable and spasmodic than the movement activity of the late nineteenth century (which was characterized by what now seem the relatively predictable actions of the expanding proletariat and the declining traditional petite-bourgeoisie).

B. The Structure of the Economy: The Dual Economy and the Social Movement Sector

Instead of conceptualizing the base as a structure of class relations we can think of it in more conventional terms, as the organization of the economy. The organization of the economy shapes social movements (as it in fact shapes the whole sphere of political action).

We will focus on the economy of the United States (and other advanced capitalist countries). The economy has two private sectors: a monopoly sector of very large enterprises (some of which are actually monopolies, while others are oligopolies) and a competitive sector of small capital. In a number of Western European countries (England, France, Italy) the monopoly sector also depends on large amounts of state investment; in the United States it is more substantially private. In any case, the monopoly sector is the sector of strong unionization (although not all monopoly enterprises are strongly unionized). Unions and employers in the monopoly sector have had the understanding that productivity increases can occur as long as presently-employed workers will be protected from technological layoffs (O'Connor). The large corporations can use technological innovations to



increase output without hiring more workers. The social costs of this pattern of uneven development are borne by the workers of the competitive sector, when the specific industries are not expanding, and by unemployed youth and others in the "reserve army of labor." Ultimately, the state (i.e. taxpayers) has to pay some of the costs in the form of public assistance, police protection, and other measures aimed at the problems of the mass of unemployed, unemployable, and marginally employed people.

This particular configuration of the economy in turn generates a particular configuration of social movements. The working class is divided into a stably-employed unionized part and an un- and/or marginally-employed part, with objectively different interests. The "embourgeoisement" of the former is not just a mind-set but corresponds to the patterns of economic organization, including union strength, skill level, state investment, etc. The privileged sector of the working class thus opts for continued corporatist union action at the workplace. As citizens and taxpayers, privileged workers take a somewhat dim view of the demands of the unprivileged sector for welfare, although they do support measures like the minimum wage. In short, they adhere to union corporatism and are relatively unlikely to engage in social movements outside the established political organizations.

The unprivileged sector of the working class behaves in a diametrically opposite way. It is prone to localistic, violent and weakly-organized actions, such as the ghetto riots of the 1960's or the clashes between groups of unemployed men in Naples in the spring of 1978. Since one of its characteristics is that its links with production are weak, many of its actions do not take place at the workplace but at other social sites, such as the neighborhoods or the high schools. The pattern is precisely the one described by Piven and Cloward -- spasmodic action, volatility, little stable organization, little national organization, often high levels of violence; unlike Piven

and Cloward, we do not see these characteristics as virtues but only as the results of desperation.

These actions (when they are not purely destructive lashing out, little distinguishable from crime) are frequently like those of the pre-industrial urban mob, that is, violent pleas to the state to carry out some type of short term remedial program (Hobsbawm). Thus they raise the costs of the state and the taxpayers and may give rise to reactionary sentiments, if not reactionary movements.

There is considerable national variation within this overall pattern.

One source of variation is the overlap of the dual economy with major lines of cleavage, such as race, ethnicity, age and sex. In many Northern European countries the lower half of the working class is substantially composed of foreign workers; thus unemployment and riots can be "exported" to the home countries of these workers -- as John Berger remarks, unemployment is one of Switzerland's most valuable exports. There is correspondingly little social movement activity within the country. When guest workers are absorbed into the monopoly sector (as for instance in German auto plants) they have been relatively well integrated into the union structure and so far have not constituted an independent movement base.

A second common pattern of the dual economy is a division by region so that one geographical area has a disproportionate share of the "lower working-class." For example, in Italy it has traditionally been the south; within Yugoslavia, Serbia and Macedonia as opposed to Croatia and Slovenia. This geographical division in turn gives rise to a variety of problems and corresponding social movements. For instance, in Yugoslavia, the Croatian nationalist stirrings of 1971 were fueled by Croatian resentment of having to pay the costs of developing the South. In other cases, migration has brought "emarginati" into the more developed metropolitan areas.

A third possible pattern is the overlap of race/ethnicity and the dual economy so that blacks and Latinos are disproportionately in the lower half. Thus, movements of this class-fraction are often also ethnic or even "nationalist" movements, while the corporatist actions of the privileged sector become "institutionally racist."

The dual economy often also corresponds to age and sex divisions, since youth and women are disproportionately un- and sub-employed. Thus there is overlap with movements of "students" and women.

A second important variable in the effect of the dual economy on social movements is the role of the state and the major parties. They may try to remedy the imbalances, setting off movements in the privileged regions or ethnic groups to hold on to their relative advantages. The state and/or parties may also create quasi-movements, or "professional" movements among the poor to co-opt them as in the various War on Poverty agencies (Helfgott).

### C. The Base as a System of Limits

The economic base generates the social movement sector not only by producing a pattern of classes and class-connected interest groups with their grievances; the economic base also shapes the social movement sector by constituting a system of limits for social movement action. For example, the Portuguese economy acted as a limit for the leftward shift and the upsurge of left movements following the revolution of 1974. This limit was manifested in the high rate of inflation that followed the successes of left movements; the structural limit was translated into political action on the one hand by the voting behavior of middle strata and the Northern small-peasant proprietors and on the other hand by International Monetary Fund pressures for austerity. A similar example is provided by Jamaica: the leftward shift undertaken by Manley (in a "creeping revolution") ran into the

limiting factor of Jamaica's economy; once again the limiting situation was translated into the experience of an economic downturn, IMF pressures and consequent voting behavior.<sup>2</sup>

What the limiting effect of the economy means for movements is that the "real alternatives" that they can propose and pursue (if they come to power) may not correspond to the position of their larger support base and/or their own militants. For example, the PCI moved rightward on economic and international issues in the 1970's, losing some support from its militants. As it clearly lost its opportunity to enter the government (after 1978) it has been able to return to a position of stiffer economic opposition. It is now further from a situation of actually participating in the direction of the Italian economy, with its strong potential for an investment strike by capital.

As resource mobilization theorists have stressed, the tactics and other behaviors of movements in the SMS are thus not simply reflections of the underlying sentiment-support base but also reflect the structural possibilities of the system.

#### D. The Embedding of National Structure in the Global Political Economy.

The discussion above makes explicit that the orientation of the sector is also shaped by the global political economy. In many cases, military and paramilitary intervention supplement economic pressures. In the vicissitudes of national liberation movements in Africa or the problems of the left in Latin America, we do not need to look for an invisible hand of structural constraint; the hands of the large powers are all too visible.

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<sup>2</sup>Although we are primarily analyzing capitalist societies, it will be interesting to observe similar economic limiting processes at work in Poland, where they will probably "cool down" the new movement sector.

Or, to take another example, the strategy of the PCI in Italy was largely set by the decisions made at Teheran and Yalta and on the battlefields: Once Italy was clearly in the Western sphere of influence, the PCI was under great pressure to take the Via Italiana to socialism, the "Italian way" of participation within the framework of bourgeois democracy.

E. The Economic Base and the Reproduction of the Relations of Production: the Articulation of Two Sub-systems.

Accompanying the base there must be a system for reproducing and perpetuating the relations of production. In part, this system consists of a political and ideological superstructure (which we will examine later) but in part also of more homely institutions like the community, the family, consumption, behavior and the school. The concept of a system of reproduction of the relations of production (RRP) is fully developed in Althusser and we will not define it further.

1. Life style choice

The RRP can be very closely linked to the system of production. For example, in the company town or in the cities of early industrial capitalism (like Manchester or the New England mill towns) the conditions of community and family life are set directly by the conditions of production. Housing, schooling, consumption, even procreation and recreation exist only to fill the industrialists' need for a labor force. (In a slightly different way, production and RRP are closely linked in societies like feudalism and Hindu caste society in which class position dictates the terms of everyday life, down to minutiae of clothing and food, with no room for free choice or personal taste.)

An important feature of advanced capitalism is the relatively high degree of autonomy of production from RRP. It reaches its greatest degree of autonomy in the consumer society in which "the customer is king"; the possibility of a free play of taste, whim, impulse and choice has become a major legitimating formula for advanced capitalism (L.B.Garner). The ideology of "everyone can be a small businessman" -- i.e., realize himself in the sphere of production -- no longer holds; it has been replaced by the promise of choice of richly varied life styles.

This relatively large gap between production and RRP is manifested in the large number of available consumer goods, relatively large amounts of leisure time, physical separation of the workplace and other spheres of life, and a high degree of free choice in life styles (including patterns of family life). Thus life style, consumption, family life (in a broad sense of "family"), and community life not only take up a large part of each individual's time, but also become psychologically weighty areas of choice.

This gap between production and RRP means that there is a large space for movements that deal with community problems, with life style choices, and with self-definition. This gap has been particularly characteristic of American capitalism and has permitted the florid development of identity, life style, moralistic and community movements. These movements (from theosophy to Gay Liberation) are movements that appear to lack an economic base but that are in fact made possible by the loose articulation between production and RRP. In this sense, they are a product of the structure of advanced capitalism.

## 2. Social networks and communities

A second important feature of the articulation of production and the RRP is that not only are stable class life styles being replaced by free choice, but also that social networks and class communities (Linenwebber) are loosening up. Especially in the United States, the social networks that in the past or in more stable societies assured a continuity of class and political identification and participation (of the kind found by Portes in the Chilean working class) are weak. The weakening of such social networks may also be related to migration and to the existence of a large number of contradictory class positions. This breakdown or weakening of social networks also creates possibilities for movements of "self definition" or life style choice.

## 3. "Weak-link" institutions

As we noted above, "weak link" institutions are those where conflicts or contradictions appear. A third element of the articulation of production with RRP is that conflicts in the productive system may be shifted to institutions of the RRP.

In the late nineteenth century, the system of production itself was still clearly a socially weak link in capitalism. The workplace was often the site of disorder -- strikes, riots, etc. Class conflict could be clearly seen as class conflict because it took place at the point of production. By World War II, a series of social inventions (e.g., scientific management, assembly lines and other technological innovations, corporatist unions) had strengthened the "link" of production. System stress shifted to other points, particularly to the state and to certain institutions in the RRP -- especially the schools, as the sites of selection or labeling for class position

(Coleman, Stinchcombe, Cicourel and Kitsuse, Bowles and Gintis, etc.).

The schools have had to bear the burden of multiple contradictory functions: selection as a process must go on while at the same time the school has to perpetuate an ideology of upward mobility for many, if not for all; the school also has to cope with the problems of adolescence and in recent years has become more and more of a "parking lot" in which people are kept out of the overcrowded labor market. Under conditions of mass youth unemployment (especially in Italy and England) even the selection function has broken down. Thus, the school is typically a weak link institution and many social movements start there or are acted out there: the lunch counter sit-ins, the anti-war movement, May '68 in France, the destructively anti-authoritarian actions of the Italian "autonomi," etc.

#### F. The Base: Summary Hypotheses

1. The more the economic base takes the form of a dual economy, the more:

- a. poor people's movements become distinct phenomena.
- b. the harder it is to build unified movements of all the subordinate classes and strata.
- c. all movements take on the form of corporatist interest groups with the upper working class organized into defensive trade unions, and the lower working class organized into ethnic pressure groups and/or "poor people's" uprisings.

2. The more autonomy there is in the RRP from the relations of production (via suburbanization, marketing, and a consumer ideology):



- a. the more identity and life-style movements will emerge (e.g., gay liberation, "pro-choice" and "Right to Life," feminism, the Moral Majority, etc.)
  - b. the more movements will be residence or life-style based, rather than workplace based, a development that coincides with those discussed in #1 above (Hirsch).
  - c. the weaker reinforcing overlapping social networks will become, coinciding with the disintegration of traditional working class culture (Hirsch, Linenwebber).
  - d. the more the "weak-link" institutions, the points at which conflict occurs, shift from the workplace to the institutions of the RRP. The educational system bears special stress because it is increasingly a selection site in which assignment to one or the other part of the dual labor market occurs.
3. The more contradictory class positions there are in the society the larger the number of movements, the less clear their class bases, and the more volatile the sector as a whole.
4. The structure of the social movement sector is not a product of class support bases that are independent of each other, but of a structure of interrelated classes. For example, class conflict generates a polarized social movement sector.
5. The limits to political action imposed by an economic system force movement goals (and tactics) away from the sentiments of the support base.

(2) The Conjunction of Business Cycles and Structural Change

In this section we will consider how the social movement sector is shaped by the process of economic crisis and resolution. In considering this process we have to be concerned with two distinct factors: the cyclical or oscillating behavior of the business cycle and the secular irreversible trend of structural change that is manifested in long-term periods of crisis and crisis resolution. The overlap of these two types of crisis (the cyclical and the structural) produces certain types of changes in the social movement sector.

A. The Effects of the Business Cycle: Phases of Conflict Over Surplus Value

If we are to accept the classical argument about the business cycle representing phases of conflict over surplus value, expressed in real income, unemployment rates, and (mediated through the State) the social wage (or social service infrastructure) then we can suggest the following propositions about movements.

1. As the effects of a boom phase -- characterized by high real income, low unemployment and (after World War II) a high "social wage" -- reduces profit margins, we can expect:

- a. a shift rightward in the SMS, acting as a vanguard for elite pressures to the right.
- b. an increasingly defensive posture in the left sections of the SMS.
- c. a general reduction in movement activity.

This phase can be seen in the 1920's with the rise of fascism in Europe and a general decline in the SMS in the United States.

This phase is also quite clear during the late 1940's, representing a restraining of labor vis a vis capital after World War II: The rightward shift in the SMS is relatively slight in this case; on the other hand the shrinkage, becalming, defensive posture and eventual dismantlement of the left is marked as is the general shrinkage of the sector as a whole.

Similarly, the 70's and 80's represent a period of reversing the effects of the boom of the 60's, this time with a more marked resurgence of the right.\*

2. The effects of a bust (lower real income, high unemployment) first discipline labor but as profit margins rise and the economy strengthens, movements develop to capture more of this newly expanding pie. Classically, these are labor movements (as they were in Europe -- especially Italy and France -- during the 60's) but in a society structured like the U.S. they include movements of "minorities" and citizen interest groups (as effects of the dual economy and the relative autonomy of the system of reproducing the relations of production).

This situation existed in the late 1930's and in the 1960's, periods that superficially seem different (a bust phase and a boom phase) but that both represent efforts by subordinate groups to "come back" after a period of imposed restraint (the early 30's and the 50's).

There are two distinct processes at work here: a consciously created set of movements and countermovements and a less consciously guided set

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\*It is difficult to separate changes in the SM Sector generated by internal business cycles from political and social movement events. The "right" movement of the early 50's was fueled by the growth of the cold war. The right movement of the 70's was fueled by the left and counter-culture movements of the 60's. The movements of the later period are a response not only to the current economic situation but also to movements, institutions, and actions of the state generated in prior phases of the accumulation process.

of responses by classes to phases of the economy. It is important not to conceive of movement cycles in an entirely instrumental fashion (e.g., fascism created by capitalists to stop communism) but also as political responses to class situations (e.g., fascism as a petite-bourgeois response to victories of the organized proletariat in the immediate post World War I period).

These cyclical recurrent phases must be examined together with processes that produce the kind of structure whose effects we investigated in the preceding section. Together they produce a complicated dynamic in the SMS.

#### B. Long-term Crises and Their Resolution:

Instead of looking only at recurrent phenomena (implied by "business cycle") we need to look also at how the larger non-recurrent patterns of crisis and resolution affects social movements. Crisis in capitalism induces new phases of resolution with reorganization of the mode of production and the political system (Wright, Hobsbawm, S. Amin).

Distinct phases of capitalism have had their corresponding phases of social movements. (Tilly).

##### 1. Phases of capitalism

There is a large body of literature that indicates that each phase of capitalism had had its characteristic technologically-advanced industries (for example, first textiles, then railroads, then automobiles and other metal processing, then petro-chemicals and electronics); its characteristic leading nation-states and a corresponding structure of the world economy (first Britain, then the expansion of a variety of imperial

powers with colonies, then the neo-colonialism or "imperialism without colonies" headed by the United States); its characteristic forms of capitalist enterprise (the small competitive firm, the oligopoly and monopoly, the multinational); and its characteristic forms of capital-state relations (from laissez-faire, to support and protectionism, to fascism and New Deal politics, to a Keynesian policy that carries the systems to the brink of state capitalism) (Mandel, Hobsbawm, Wright). Each phase of technological dynamism and expansion is followed by a period of stagnation; the stagnation and crisis is resolved by a re-organization of industry, by new forms of geographical expansion, by new forms of support from the state, and by new technologies. These resolving mechanisms in turn create new problems, setting the stage for new crises.

## 2. Center and periphery

Distinct phases of capitalism have also had distinct effects in different regions of the world (Wallerstein). Particularly in the periphery and semi-periphery the intrusion of capitalist social relationships set off millenarian movements in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the period of classical imperial expansion (Worsley, Lanternari, Hobsbawm). In some of these regions (Brazil, Southern Italy), this process was accompanied by social banditry as well (Hobsbawm). After World War II, the millenarian movements declined and were replaced by more secular nationalist movements (Worsley). The peripheral areas do not simply go through the same stages of modernization as a center, just at later date; they have a different line of development, including different social movement patterns, because of their particular history of integration on unfavorable terms into the world economy (Wallerstein, etc.).

3. Phases of capitalism and major social movement phases:

(i) early industrial capitalism (1780-1730).

- Bourgeoisie is still engaged in conflicts with the landed aristocracy
- Petite-bourgeois radicalism (Jacobinism, Jeffersonianism)
- In Britain, Luddite movements by artisans and agricultural workers against mechanization
- In Britain, beginnings of working class movements

(ii) 1848-1870: the last bourgeois revolutions: American Civil War, the unification of Italy, emancipation of the serfs in Russia

(iii) emergence of monopoly capitalism: 1870's-1914

- "labor wars" in emerging monopoly industries in the more developed countries
- movements of farmers against railroads and other monopoly interests
- emergence of socialist parties
- extension of suffrage; coalitions of petite-bourgeois and workers succeed in extending voting rights and other elements of democracy (Thebourn, NLR)
- millenarian movements in the periphery as these areas are hit by imperial expansion.

## (iv) interwar period (period of stagnation)

- working class movements grow but take on more institutionalized forms: labor unions, mass socialist parties, Comintern
- emergence of fascist movements with a petite-bourgeois mass base, hoping to deal with the long term decline and the short term crises of this stratum
- politicization of movements in the periphery; beginnings of nationalist movements in colonial areas
- emergence of lifestyle movements on a mass scale, especially in the United States (previously these had been currents confined to a small cultural elite - like Romanticism).

## (v) advanced capitalism (post World War II- 1968)

- important effect of nationalist movements in the periphery
- containment of working class movements: "economic miracle" in Western Europe; Cold War in the United States
- life style movements continue to expand in the "consumer society."

Each phase also has its characteristic social movements. These are important ingredients in the precipitation of crises (for instance, worker's movements may raise labor costs, putting a squeeze on profits; national liberation movements may lead to the dissolution of colonial empires and consequent economic problems in the metropolises) but also in their resolution because they are one of several mechanisms for translating socio-economic strains into new policies of the state (thus movements of the unemployed and movements of union expansion were a factor in bringing about New Deal policies).

Let us examine<sup>a</sup> few examples of these distinct phases of social movement configurations. The period during which monopoly capitalism emerged (1870's-1914) was also a period of "labor wars," one of open class conflict that often took place at the point of production; we have already commented on these movements in the context of the expansion of the working class and again in the context of how the workplace was a "weak link" institution in which new social relations were being imposed and resisted. This period was also the period of farmers' movements in the United States as farmers responded to the squeeze put on them by railroads and the national and international agricultural markets.

Similarly, another phase of capitalism, the crises phase of 1917-1939, had a distinct set of accompanying social movements; the fascist movements of the petite-bourgeoisie in decline (with some support from rising agro-capitalists and industrialists) and largely defensive movements of the industrial working class. These movements were important factors in the "outcome" of this period: World War II, the reorganization of the world economy, and increased state intervention in national economies. This example suggests some of the value of examining the SMS as opposed to each movement separately. The outcome of state intervention that appears throughout the western world in this period is primarily neither a product of working class pressure for an increased social wage (as some might interpret some aspects of the New Deal) nor of fascism (i.e., of increased regulation of the economy for the benefit of corporate capital with the backing of the petite-bourgeoisie); rather, the outcome is a structural effect of the economic downswing and the entire configuration of social movement activity (movements and countermovements) generated by the downswing.



### (3) The Political and Ideological System

We use the term "political system" in a more or less commonsensical way. In advanced capitalism the political system has some degree of autonomy (a relative autonomy, compared to feudalism, for example).

There is no sharp boundary between "social movements" and other political action; political systems differ in the extent to which political action is organized into social movements, into parties, and into organizations of the state apparatus. One of the contributions of resource mobilization theory has been to strike down the distinction between social movements ("bizarre, irrational, marginal, and separate") and other forms of political organization, like parties, government agencies, or pressure groups ("rational, institutionalized"); RM theory has shown us that the patterns of strategy and organization are quite similar and that in fact movements are only one type of organizational action. We accept this approach even when we treat some parts of the political system as external constraints on social movements. The political and ideological system is a major determinant of the shape of the SMS. The nature of the political system viewed as an external constraint can be used to explain the dimension of the SMS that we referred to as "the degree of formal organization of social movements" and the predominant forms of such organization. The political system presents certain constraints on movement strategy and tactics, manifested in patterns of movement organization.

Beyond this issue of strategy lies the fact that the state is the major instrument of coercion in the society. In so far as many social movements seek to impose a vision on a whole society, on a population that cannot always be persuaded as individuals, social movements must use the state.

#### A. Centralization and Decentralization

The extent to which a political system is centralized or decentralized shapes social movements by presenting different targets for social movement activities. Centralization has a spatial dimension (i.e., local to national), and a functional dimension (i.e., relative autonomy and role of executive, legislative and judicial institutions).

In a highly centralized system local movements can win few victories. As long as budgets are set nationally, prefects are centrally appointed, laws are applied nationally, and parties operate as disciplined national organizations rather than as collections of local notables -- there is little point of purely local movements. France is a case in point.

On the other hand, in the federal system of the United States, laws and regulations are set at the state and local level, local units have rather large fiscal and regulatory power, party policy is made by negotiation between local powerholders; thus local movements can win victories. "Grassrooting the system" (Perlman) is a possibility in the United States (although an increasingly unlikely one because of the national economy) but would make little sense in France.

Italy represents an interesting intermediate case, although closer to the French than the American situation. The abortion movement in Italy illustrates the complexity of the situation. The decision to allow abortion was made nationally, in parliament, along party lines; unlike the United States no local or regional laws were made, nor was there a breach of party stands by individual legislators. Thus, the movement to liberalize abortion had to be a national one. However, the new legislation has to be implemented locally, in hospitals; there is already evidence that there will be considerable variation within Italy with poor women in conservative regions virtually denied

while the better-off and those in more modernized areas will be able to obtain them. Thus, we can expect more local movement activity around this issue in the future, although generally still under the umbrella of the national women's organizations.

Not only electoral politics, party structure and administration may be centralized but also the ideological apparatus. For example, TV, radio, and educational institutions may be central institutions. Where they are centralized they are a possible target for national movements -- especially movements constituted as parties. For instance, in Italy the left (especially the PCI and PSI) won a victory when it got Channel 2, a "left" government channel distinct from the more right DC-oriented Channel 1. Similarly, movements or parties may attempt to capture or influence the ministry of education in societies in which the educational apparatus is centralized. These national targets are not available to movements in the United States; however, local institutions (like the schools or local radio stations) may be easier to influence.

Centralization and decentralization may also be understood functionally in terms of the powers of political institutions over each other. For example, specific acts of legislation may make courts more or less amenable as avenues for social movement action. Nelkin and Pollak (1980) show that the anti-nuclear power movement was much more successful in Germany than in France because the relevant legislation allowed the courts to intervene in substantive matters.

Because the capitalist economy is national (if not international) in scope, societies with a highly decentralized political system experience a curious structural stress. There is an element of structural tension (if not individual social psychological tension) between the national economy and the proliferation of local, community, neighborhood, and

"grassroots" movements, which are thus often futile. The clearest example of such futility is the issue of local disinvestment. When local movements succeed in putting limits on the accumulation process (e.g., by raising corporate taxes, blocking rate hikes, imposing hiring policies, unionizing plants, changing utility rate structures in such a way as to raise costs to business, etc.), capital disinvests and "moves south." (This process is also happening at an international level, showing the contradiction between the international economy and political organization into nation-states.) Of course, there are limits to disinvestment because capital is not totally flexible, given investment in plants. In a more unitary state like Italy, large capital has relatively little reason to move around geographically within the country (although it may flee abroad) since it operates within a national political system of taxation, unionization, rate structures, etc. (This is less true of small capital which locates in cities like Naples to tap low-wage labor and special favors from local politicians.)

B. Legal Constraints on Social Movements: Civil Liberties and Social Control

An obvious constraining feature of the political system is the extent to which the state permits the existence of social movements and limits their actions, particularly their right to recruit and organize publicly, their right to organize as parties or factions within parties, their right to launch media of opinion, and their right to engage in certain tactics (demonstrations, strikes of various types, etc.).

There is a broad spectrum of civil liberties in terms of the strength and efficacy of sanctions, and in terms of the targets of restriction of liberties. It is more useful to think of a range or spectrum than of a simple

dichotomy: liberal-totalitarian. For example, within the clearly repressive end of the range, Fascist Italy was nevertheless much "looser" than Nazi Germany. In the latter, every type of opposition party or movement was crushed, while in the former, some opposition organization continued to exist. For instance, in the spring of 1943, widespread strikes against piecework rates were organized by the PCI and the spontaneous efforts of workers throughout Northern Italy -- unthinkable in Germany.

Not only does the nature and efficacy of sanctions vary but also their target, an important factor in shifting the weight of social movements to the left or the right. The right to organize may be partially or completely restricted for certain types of movements. For example, the BRD's berufsverbot (the denial of government jobs to people of vaguely subversive leanings) is in practice applied far more vigorously against the left (Communist party members but also pacifists and even left wing socialists) than against the right. In other cases, laws may explicitly restrict certain types of movements. In Italy for instance, the reconstitution of a fascist party is specifically illegal, although in practice these laws have not been very vigorously applied; the MSI is known to be fascist in program and even historical continuity yet is a recognized party, and members of more extreme groups (like Ordine Nuovo) have been charged but acquitted. Still, the Scelba law and its more recent variants do put a damper on fascist movements and shrink the "space" available to the far right.

In the absence of all or most civil liberties, movements may take the form of currents of opinion that are hardly movements except in a very abstract or intellectual sense. Such has been the case with "dissent" in Eastern Europe and the beginnings of the women's movement in pre-1974 Portugal, exemplified by the "three Marias." Such movements then tend to be confined to a small cultural elite and have little ability to communicate with the large mass.

In other cases of restricted civil liberties movements may become clandestine or may try to attach themselves to a powerful and partially autonomous institution (like the Catholic Church in Chile).

Particularly in less developed societies, the absence of democracy often produced folk cultures of opposition or banditry (like the Greek "bandits" who fought the Turks or the Southern Italians who opposed northern capital through banditry) or even crime (like that of British lower classes in the nineteenth century). Absenteeism and low productivity are the responses of workers who are not allowed to strike.

C. The Relation of the Private and Public Sectors: Politicization, Co-optation, Clientalism, and "Manageable Movements"

1. Politicization of institutions

Movements are strongly constrained by the extensiveness of the public and private sectors, although there are no simple formulae to spell out the effects. On the one hand, in societies in which there is an extensive public sector, there is also more legitimacy for subjecting institutions to political scrutiny and action. Society tends to be more politicized. Italy is a good example of such a situation. The major TV and radio stations are government-run (although a number of private stations also exist) and thus are assumed to represent particular political positions. There is a large amount of state investment (about 60%) and thus investment policies are a matter of political discussion.

The United States, on the other hand, is a society with an exceptionally small public sector. Consequently, matters like media policy or investment patterns are difficult to make part of public discussion. Desires to alter them have difficulty operating directly through the political system.

Instead, either they have to act as private pressure groups directed at the networks or corporations, or they have to engage in a prior action of legitimating government intervention in the private sector. For example, in Italy, TV programming for the two government channels is a possible topic of public political debate; in the United States it is a matter either of purely private voluntary group action or it can be politically influenced only after an extension or more stringent application of government regulatory powers. Thus the tactics and the legitimating formula for action in the two systems have to be different. (note that this dimension is to some degree related to centralization, in that the politically more centralized capitalist states like France and Italy also have relatively large public sectors.)

## 2. Clientalism, co-optation, and "manageable movements"

The extensiveness of the state sector is also expressed in the state's propensity to launch quasi-movements and counter movements. Some capitalist states (like the Nazi and Fascist states) were highly activist, creating a large structure of youth groups and corporatist groups. Even where independent movements, parties or unions are not restricted or banned, these state-sponsored structures may drain resources from them.

The state may make the decision to support particular movements, entering into relations of clientalism or co-optation with them. For example, in the 1960's the American government was ready to aid a variety of poor people's movements and groups (Jenkins and Perrow) and even to create its own co-optive quasi-movements (Helfgott). The result is frequently to create movement professionals (McCarthy and Zald) and to confine these movements to relatively narrow ends.

Italian politics involves a very elaborate structure of such clientalistic groups, many of them created or nurtured by the DC. When the DC is in power, this corporatist structure is largely passive and clientalistic, receiving favors. When the DC is out of power locally, this structure is activated like a dead man switch to fight for its old handouts, undermining efforts at reforms for a more universalistic and progressive system of services that the left (PCI or coalitions of Communists, Socialists and smaller left groups) tries to launch. The PCI has responded by building up its own structure of groups, with a support base in the stable working class -- and in its Red Belt strongholds, also some petite-bourgeois. It has been less eager and able to organize among the "emarginati," the poor.

Left movements tend to press for extension of the public sector (more regulation of industry, more public services, etc.) but such expansion within the framework of capitalism often does not result in the transitional reforms sought by the left (Garner and Garner). Rather, the result is either a streamlining of the operations of capital (Garner, Kolko) and/or an extension of a structure of corporatist clientalism, including the generation of manageable quasi-movements, which become an important element in the social movement sector.

#### D. Party Structure

Party structure is probably the single most important variable for understanding the pattern of social movements. Movements can only be understood as one part of a range of options that also includes political parties. Movements compete with parties. Movements infiltrate parties. Parties spin off movements, either deliberately or in the process of



factionalizing. Movements appear within parties. Movements become parties. Both are organizational forms for pursuing political ends, so it is not surprising that they are so closely intertwined.

The difference -- insofar as there is a difference at all -- seems to lie in the use of "party" to mean an organization that has a method of gaining some degree of power over the state apparatus (whether by elections or revolution) while "movements" seem more oriented toward civil society. (But even this distinction is problematical -- the Armed Forces Movement of Portugal in 1974 appeared in the heart of the state coercive apparatus itself). We generally will use "party" to mean an organization that competes in elections, realizing that there are also parties that are solely revolutionary and parties that control a state apparatus.

We might almost say -- party:movement :: church : sect. The former (party, church) are more institutionalized. There are many ways in which party structure affects movements.

#### 1. Ease of starting parties

Where launching a new party is relatively difficult for constitutional reasons -- e.g., the number of signatures required to get on a ballot, the single member districts that effectively rule out minority parties, illegality, etc. -- movements are less likely to become parties (Duverger). A good illustrative contrast is provided by the United States where movements rarely become parties and 4th Republic France with a proliferation of parties, many of which were movement-like. Even where legal constraints on minority parties do not exist, tradition and/or patronage may close off "space" for parties outside of the major established ones.

Rephrased into resource mobilization terms -- there is no point in pursuing an electoral strategy if the payoffs aren't worth the difficulties

of becoming a party and mounting a campaign.

When movements become parties their structure often changes. For example, as the PCI became increasingly oriented to electoral politics in the late 1950's, it shifted from a cell structure (for penetrating organizations of civil society) to a section structure, the typical structure of Italian electoral parties.

## 2. Organization of parties

The nature of the existing parties impinges on movements. Where, as in the United States, the parties are largely congeries of interest groups with little national discipline or a party line, it makes good sense for a movement to expend effort on becoming an interest group within a party. This strategy may allow it to have some influence on party stands and ultimately on national policy in "its area of specialization" without making too many compromises. This situation tends to induce many movements organized to act as intra-party interest groups each with limited specialized (and thus usually corporatist) goals. Movements may even become lobbylike with staffs of movement-professionals and large peripheries of mailing-list supporters who are occasionally mobilized.

On the other hand, where parties are strongly centralized national organization (note overlap with the centralization variable) with party discipline and a party line (like the PCI and the PCF), movements are less likely to enter the party as interest groups. The movements find the parties impermeable. In these situations the relationship even becomes reversed: instead of the parties being composed of movements and interest groups, the parties deliberately create quasi-movements to attract particular constituencies. Instead of the constituencies creating movements to exert pressure on the parties, the parties create interest groups to woo

constituencies -- for instance the youth groups of the PCI and the PCF.

Of course, several of these processes may go on at once. The Italian women's movement illustrates some of the possible complexities. In its organized form (as opposed to its larger general sentiment base) it has two major organizations, the UDI and the MLD. The UDI (Unione delle Donne Italiane) is close to the PCI but autonomous from it; it is not a front or puppet group but a group with some overlap in membership and with similar pragmatic stands and a strong orientation to political and economic rights. On the other hand, the MLD is more explicitly feminist, more concerned with issues of men-women relationships, identity and role, sexuality, etc. It is not close to any of the parties (with the possible exception of the small Radical Party) and weak in terms of any direct influence on political and economic decisions.

Particular mechanisms of party organization shape the relationship of parties to movements. For example, the existence of primaries tends to weaken party discipline. A strong hold on patronage jobs, even in the absence of ideological discipline, strengthens party unity and makes a party less open to movements (Wilson).

Because Americans are accustomed to a very loose party structure, they tend to see disciplined parties as authoritarian and to see party-affiliated groups as fronts or puppet groups. Europeans in turn see American parties as deceptively shapeless. Because the United States parties are not committed to anything as a party, they are at the mercy of the more powerful of the interest groups of which they are composed. For instance, the overall direction of the Republican party tends to be set by capital; some concessions on special issues may be made to specialized groups (pro or anti-abortion, Israel lobby, or whatever).

The undisciplined nature of American parties makes them hospitable to social movements. Lacking a single decisive comprehensive ideological vision of the world (such as is approximated even by the more pragmatic of the Euro-communist parties or by Mrs. Thatcher's Conservatives), they can absorb and lend support to single issue movements, and promote these goals once the party is in power. A good example is the success that the Right to Life movement has achieved in getting Republicans to support its cause.

The more disciplined parties may however spin off movements, factions that rebel against the party line (Zald and Ash, 1966); again the analogy to the church/sect is suggestive. E.g., parts of the French and Italian left are spin-offs from the Communist parties.

Here is a brief outline of some of the possibilities of movement-party relationships, with examples:

1. Movements become parties:

Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans, clubs with an  
ideology of support for the French Revolution →  
Democratic Party

Farmers' movements → Populists

European socialist movements → Socialist parties

2. Movements become interest groups within parties:

Women's movement in the 1972 Democratic party

3. Movements pressure parties externally:

Italian women's movement pressures PCI

4. Parties deliberately generate movement-like organizations

which may or may not become autonomous:

Youth groups of the Communist parties

Socialists → League for Industrial Democracy → origins

of SDS

Communist Party → Unemployed Councils in early 1930's

5. Parties organize a bunch of existing movements into a front:

Vietnamese Communist Party as guiding organization of the

broader National Liberation Front

6. Parties factionalize, giving rise to movements:

Communist parties break away from Socialist parties after

the Russian Revolution

Trotskyist parties and movements

7. Parties infiltrate movements (CP in union drives)

#### V. Epilogue: The American and Italian Social Movement Sectors

##### Reappraised

We return to the comparative material to illustrate our discussion of systemic constraints: A comparison of the Italian and American social movement sectors will show how the determining factors produce different outcomes.

The United States is characterized by a dual economy in which there is a strong super-imposition of ethnicity and labor market position. The reproduction of the relations of production is rather "distant" from the system of production, with a high degree of suburbanization, a long period of emphasis on consumption, a geographical dispersion of working class communities, and a general weakness of working class cultural institutions. The political system is decentralized and focused on two major parties neither of which is unambiguously class-based.

Italy is likewise characterized by a dual economy but one organized along regional (and to some degree age lines) rather than ethnic lines.

The economic and cultural trends that distance the system of reproduction of the relations of production from production itself have been underway for a shorter time period than in the United States; at the same time, the industrial working class has not only been ethnically homogeneous but also has a long standing cultural tradition. The political system is still centralized and characterized by nearly thirty-five years of national domination by a single center-right party (the DC), an equally long period of governmental exclusion of the other major party (the PCI), and a fairly size number of smaller parties which can only exercise leverage as "swing parties" and coalition partners.

Another crucial set of differences is relative size, strength of the economies, and international position.

So far we have emphasized the differences. The similarities (aside from the obvious fact that both are capitalist democracies) come from the current economic crisis.

What are the outcomes for social movements? In the United States we find a multiplicity of movements many of them concerned with "lifestyle" (i.e., RRP) issues, operating either outside of the political system or acting as pressure groups within the major parties. Movements do not strongly define themselves with respect to class base and are only haphazardly left-right aligned.

In Italy, on the other hand, we find a smaller number of movements (partly because movements can more easily turn into parties, partly because the diversity of life style concerns has emerged later). They are more clearly aligned along a left-right axis and are more integrally tied to definable class bases. The political system is far more clearly the tactical focus of the movements and they are more likely to be nationally organized than American movements.

This type of analysis suggests some predictions for the future. The most likely outcome is convergence of the characteristics of the U.S. and Italian social movement sectors. Why?

First, the current crisis -- the shared conjunctural economic situation -- creates similar pressures in both. More specifically, we can expect more movements in the United States to define the situation as one of economic problems (i.e., to move at least slightly toward a class model of problems), to identify Washington as the source of problems (i.e., to take a more secularized, political and national view of problems), and to develop more politically-oriented tactics. The strong right-wing political thrust of the Moral Majority is an example of this potential shift. In this respect, we can expect a "Europeanization" of American social movement behavior, but with more popularly-based right wing movements and a continued interest in life style issues.

On the other hand, short of a complete economic collapse, we can expect the distancing of the RRP from the system of production to continue in Italy as changing consumer and media habits generate a degree of Americanization. Shifts in concern from clearly class issues to life-style issues are most strongly heralded by the Radical Party with its emphasis not only on civil liberties but also on demands for decriminalization of all abortions (defeated in a referendum in May, 1981), abolition of hunting, and similar "American-style" questions; these demands have been accompanied by "American-style" tactics like mass petition drives and the attempts to hold referenda.

Another pressure towards "Americanization" is the growing overlap of youth and a weak labor market position: this feature of the Italian economy has helped to create volatile and violent youth movements, increasingly detached from a working class base (that had still been connected to them in the "hot autumn" of 1969).

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