Chapter 7

The Political Opportunity Structure of New Social Movements: Its Impact on Their Mobilization

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The crucial contention of the so-called political process approach to social movements is that social processes impinge indirectly, via a restructuring of existing power relations, on social protest (McAdam 1982). This contention has received considerable support from Skocpol's (1979) analysis of social revolutions. As she has shown, social revolutions are typically triggered by a political crisis that weakens the control exercised by the political system on the population. Similarly, the analysis of a century of collective violence in France, Germany, and Italy by Tilly et al. (1975) has indicated that the rhythm of collective violence did not so much depend on structural transformations of society, but was directly linked to shifts in the struggle for political power. More recently, the political context has also been shown to be of considerable importance for the mobilization and the impact of different types of new social movements. Thus, in what has probably been the first systematic study of the impact of the political context on the fate of a new social movement, Kitschelt (1986) has shown how the impact of the antinuclear movement varied according to specific characteristics of the political context of the countries he studied.

For the systematic analysis of the political context that mediates structural conflicts given as latent political potentials, the notion of "political opportunity structure" has become fashionable. First introduced by Eisinger (1973), it has been elaborated by Tarrow (1983, 1989b). As originally defined by Tarrow (1983, p. 28), the concept has three dimensions: the degree of openness or closure of formal political access, the degree of stability or instability of political alignments, and the availability and strategic posture of potential alliance partners. In his more recent conceptualization, Tarrow (1989b, p. 35) adds a fourth element: political conflicts within and among elites. While the

first of these four definitional elements concerns the institutional structure of political systems, the others are concerned with the configuration of power among the relevant actors within such a system. Just how the latter three elements are related to each other remains, however, rather unclear in Tarrow's presentation.[1]

The concept of the political opportunity structure (POS) needs some clarification and specification in order to be useful for the analysis of the development of social movements. First, I propose to restrict the notion to those aspects of a political system that determine movement development independently of the purposive action of the actors involved.[2] This does not imply that the political opportunity structure is constant; it may shift over time as a result of factors that are not under the control of the actors involved or as a result of the cumulative consequences of their purposive actions. The point is that the actors cannot anticipate such shifts at the time when they engage in collective action, which means that they have to take the political opportunity structure as a given in their short-term strategic calculations.

Second, within the POS domain, I propose to distinguish three broad sets of properties of a political system: its formal institutional structure, its informal procedures and prevailing strategies with regard to challengers, and the configuration of power relevant for the confrontation with the challengers. The first two sets of properties provide the general setting for the mobilization of collective action, and they constrain the relevant configurations of power. Together with the general setting, the relevant configuration of power specifies the strategies of the "authorities" or the "members of the system" with regard to the mobilization of the "challengers."[3] In combination with the general setting, these strategies in turn define (a) the extent to which challenging collective actions will be facilitated or repressed by the "members of the system," (b) the chances of success such actions may have, and (c) the chances of success if no such actions take place, which may be either positive if the government is reform-oriented, or negative if the government in power is hostile to the movement (Koopmans 1990a). In other words, the country-specific mix of facilitation/repression and chances of success/chances of reform is, at least in part, the result of strategic calculations of the authorities. It is not exclusively determined by such strategic calculations, however, since the general setting also restricts this country-specific mix in a way that is independent of the concrete strategies devised by the authorities. Finally, this country-specific mix determines the set of strategic options available for the mobilization of the "challengers." It provides the crucial link between the POS and the challengers' decision to mobilize or not, their choice of the form

of mobilization, the sequence of events to be organized, and the addressee of their campaign. Figure 1 presents a graphic summary of this argument. As Koopmans (1990a) points out, the way the country-specific conditions enter into the challengers' strategic calculations depends on the type of movement in question.

I am aware of the fact that both types of strategies—those of the authorities and those of the challengers—are to some extent mutually interdependent. This interdependence, however, does not enter into the present discussion because the focus is on aspects of the political context that have to be taken as given by the challenging actors. The mutually interdependent aspects of the political context belong to what I propose to call the interaction context of a specific challenge. The interaction context follows its own logic, which will not be treated here. Leaving mutual interdependence aside, the conceptualization of the political opportunity structure and its effects on the development of social movements in general is still a formidable task. In this essay, I shall not deal with the impact of political opportunity structure on social movements in general, but rather focus on its effects on a particular class of social movements in a particular region of the world society in a given period: the new social movements (NSMs) as they have manifested themselves in Western Europe and North America since the early seventies. Circumscribed in such a way, the task asks for concepts characterizing the variations in time and across countries of the relatively stable properties of the political context that have been relevant for the recent mobilization of new social movements in the West. I shall propose such concepts for the general institutional structure of the state, for the informal procedures and prevailing strategies to deal with challengers, and for the relevant configurations of power in the party system and the union system. The distinctions I introduce are simple and schematic ones, designed to capture the essence of what in reality are much more complex structures. I shall discuss the general concepts and present some hypotheses concerning the impact of the various aspects of the political opportunity structure on the mobilization of new social movements. The hypotheses are specified for four Western European countries—France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.[4]

The Formal Institutional Structure of the State

In his attempt to conceptualize political opportunity structure, Kitschelt (1986) makes a useful distinction between "political input structures" and "political output structures." His distinction is less useful than it could have
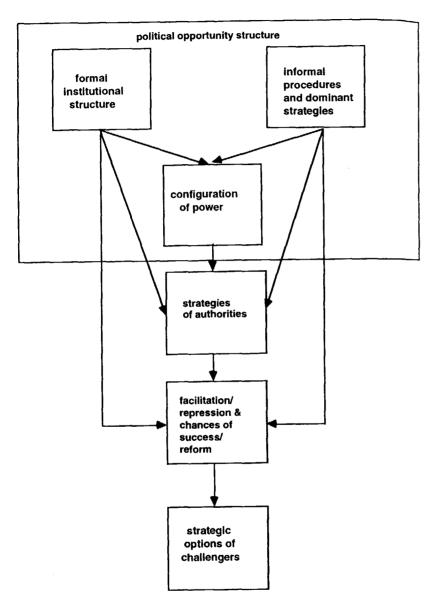
Figure 1. Conceptual outline of the general argument

been, however, because he uses it as a summary term applying to the institutional structure as well as to the actual configuration of power. In restricting the term to the formal institutional structure of the political system, I adopt the conceptual distinctions made by Kitschelt: with respect to the input side,

a political system can be more or less open; with respect to the output side, it can be more or less strong. Openness implies formal access for outsiders; strength implies the capacity to get things done. At this point, I shall consider only access to the institutions of the state. Formal access to the party system will be treated in the context of the discussion of the configuration of power in that particular part of the overall system.

The degree of formal access to the state is, first, a function of the degree of its (territorial) centralization. The greater the degree of decentralization, the greater is the degree of formal access. Decentralization implies multiple points of access. In a federal system, such as those of Germany, Switzerland, and the United States, there are multiple points of relevant access on the national, regional, and local levels. In centralized systems, such as those of France, the Netherlands, and Sweden, there are virtually no access points on the regional level, and the local ones are insignificant. Second, the degree of formal access is a function of the degree of (functional) concentration of state power. The greater the degree of separation of power between the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary—that is, the more elaborate the checks and balances—the greater the degree of formal access. In political systems with a strong legislature and an equally strong judiciary, such as those of Germany and the United States, there are more points of access than in systems with an all-powerful executive, as in the case of France and, to some extent, the Netherlands. Third, formal access is a function of the coherence of the public administration. The greater the degree of coherence, internal coordination, and professionalization of the public administration, the more limited is the formal access. Fragmentation, lack of internal coordination, and lack of professionalization multiply the points of access. France again provides the prime example of a highly coherent administration, whereas the United States and Switzerland constitute the typical cases of lack of such coherence. The Netherlands and Germany probably are intermediary cases in this regard. Finally, formal access is a function of the degree to which direct democratic procedures are institutionalized. From the point of view of challengers, the most important direct democratic procedure is the popular initiative, which allows them to put an issue on the agenda of the political system and to ask for a vote of the whole electorate on the subject. Such procedures primarily exist in Switzerland, and in several states of the United States.[5] The procedures of compulsory and optional referenda give challengers an additional opportunity to intervene, but are of less importance because they allow intervention only after a decision has been taken by the political elite. Elaborate

procedures of this type also exist in Switzerland, but not in the other three nations under study.[6]

On the basis of these four aspects of the institutional structure, we may roughly distinguish between open and closed states: Switzerland clearly seems to have the most open state among the four countries under study, France the one most closed. Because of its federalism and its strong judiciary, Germany also tends to be quite open, while the Netherlands tends to be rather closed formally because of its centralism and strong executive.

The same aspects that determine the formal openness of the state on the input side, in fact, also determine its strength on the output side. Federal, fragmented, and incoherent states with direct democratic institutions find it particularly difficult to arrive at decisions and to impose them on society. Centralized, concentrated, and coherent states with no direct democratic access, on the other hand, have a strong capacity to act. Strong states, then, are at the same time autonomous with respect to their environment and capable of getting things done, while weak states lack not only autonomy, but also the capacity to act.[7] This greatly simplifies our classification of states according to their institutional structure: we just retain the distinction between strong states and weak ones.

From the point of view of potential challengers, a weak state provides a more favorable setting for mobilization for collective action. In order to illustrate this, I shall introduce a distinction between three types of possible success. Following the lead of Gamson (1975, pp. 28ff.) and Kitschelt (1986, pp. 66ff.), we may distinguish between procedural and substantive success. Procedural success opens new channels of participation to challengers and involves their being recognized as legitimate representatives of demands. Substantive success involves changes of policy in response to the challenge. To assess the specific chances of success of a given movement in a weak state, it is important to make an additional distinction within the category of substantive success. This type of success can either be proactive (implying the introduction of "new advantages"), or it can be reactive (implying the prevention of "new disadvantages"). In the first case, the challenging movement acquires policy-making power, in the second case it is able to exert a veto. Characteristically, procedural success and reactive substantive success are more easily available in weak states than in strong ones. Proactive success is very difficult to get in any type of state: strong states may have the capacity to act on behalf of a movement's demands, but they also have the capacity to resist any temptation to do so. Weak states may be forced to give in to a movement's demands, but they are not likely to have the capacity to implement the re-

Table 1. Chances of success for challengers in weak and strong states

Type of state	Procedural success	Substantive success	
		Reactive	Proactive
Weak	formal facilitation of access	possibility of veto	no concessions
Strong	no formal facilitation of access	no possibility of veto	no concessions

quired policy changes. This is not to say that there are no proactive outcomes of mobilization processes, but short of massive and protracted mobilizations, such outcomes are expected to be quite rare in any type of state. Table 1 summarizes this argument.

Kitschelt (1986) also introduces an additional category of success—structural impact, which implies a transformation of the political opportunity structure itself. As I have argued, the opportunity structure refers to the aspects of the political system that are relatively stable over time. In the short run, structural impact is quite impossible in the type of countries we are considering here. In the medium or long run, however, such structural impact resulting from the cumulative impact of a large number of protest events may be possible. The most far-reaching structural impact results, of course, from a social revolution. Examples of less far-reaching structural impact include the durable establishment of Green parties in a given party system and the institutionalization of the social movement sector as discussed by Roth (1988) writing about Germany.

Informal Procedures and Prevailing Strategies to Deal with Challengers

The general approach of the authorities with respect to challengers is constrained not only by the formal institutional structure, but also by informal procedures and strategies typically employed by the authorities with regard to challengers. Organizational sociologists have long been insisting on the difference between the formal and the informal side of structure. Analogously, we should be aware of the distinction between the formal institutional structure and the informal ways it is typically applied. Scharpf (1984, p. 260) has used the concept of the "dominant strategy" to characterize the informal premises of procedure, the shared implicit or explicit understandings that emerge from the political process and guide the actions of the authorities. The informal procedures and prevailing strategies with respect to chal-

lengers are either exclusive (repressive, confrontative, polarizing) or integra-
tive (facilitative, cooperative, assimilative). It is important to note that such
procedures have a long tradition in a given country. According to Scharpf,
they develop a powerful logic of their own. Efforts to change them are up
against all the "sunk costs" of institutional commitments supporting them.

Given their long tradition, informal procedures and prevailing strategies
have already had important consequences for the mobilization of the "old"
labor movement. Thus, exclusive strategies that have typically been em-
ployed in Southern European countries but were also used in the Weimar Re-
public have led to an important split between the social democrats and the
communists within the labor movement. As is argued by Gallie (1983), the
split in the French labor movement after World War I has been the result of a
particularly intransigent position of the French political elite at that time.
While the British ruling elite chose to make important concessions to the
radicalizing labor movement at the end of the war, the French ruling elite
opted for a repressive strategy in similar circumstances. Gallie explains the
difference in the reactions of the two ruling elites by earlier strategic deci-
sions in an even more distant past. This illustrates the autodynamic of domi-
nant strategies that makes for their reproduction across centuries.[8] The split
between social democrats and communists has further radicalized the labor
movement, which has again served to reinforce the dominant exclusive strat-
egy of the authorities. In all the Southern European countries, a strong com-
munist left has been excluded from power for decades. In Italy and France,
the exclusion implied the delegitimation of the Communist Party; in Greece,
Spain, and Portugal, the exclusion was the result of a long period of authori-
tarian repression (see Golden 1986). Finally, the radicalization of the labor
movement has for a long time prevented the pacification of the class struggle
in Southern Europe, which has had important consequences for the action
space available to the new social movements in these countries, as we shall
see in more detail.

Just as in the Southern European countries, the legacy in Germany is one
of exclusion and repression. While the formal institutional structure of the
Federal Republic has been completely rebuilt since World War II, the domi-
nant strategy of its ruling elite with regard to challengers from below has con-
tinued to be marked by the experience of the past. In contrast to France, how-
ever, where the exclusive strategy is associated with a strong state, the
exclusive strategy in the Federal Republic combines with a weak state, which
will result in a different overall setting for social movements in general, and
for new ones in particular.

Integrative strategies are typical for two types of countries. On the one
hand, they are the hallmark of countries with a long history of coexistence of
different religions, such as the Netherlands and Switzerland. On the other
hand, they also prevail in Catholic countries that have experienced a split be-
tween religious and laic subcultures but have not experienced a prominent
split between communists and social democrats; Austria and Belgium are the
typical examples. Moreover, integrative strategies seem to be facilitated by
the small size of a polity and its openness with regard to the world market; all
the countries mentioned are among the small Western European nation-states
(Katzenstein 1985). These countries have become known as consociational
democracies, as typical examples of "neocorporatist" policy arrangements.

Like exclusive strategies, integrative strategies are compatible with rather
different formal institutional structures. A comparison of the Netherlands
and Switzerland illustrates the point: the Netherlands has a strong unitary
state with a cabinet government comparable to that of the "Westminster
model," and with a relatively coherent bureaucracy. The Swiss state, by con-
trast, is very weak because of its federalism, its fragmentation, and its direct
democratic institutions. The crucial difference between the Netherlands and
Switzerland with regard to the state's autonomy and its capacity to act proba-
bly has its origin in the different approaches to the solution of the religious
conflicts of the two countries. Swiss federalism and Dutch pillarization can be
regarded as functionally equivalent solutions to the same problem of inte-
grating diverse cultural minorities within the same polity—with very dif-
ferent implications for the institutional structure of the state. While the ter-
ritorial differentiation chosen by the Swiss implied decentralization and
fragmentation of the state, the social differentiation in the Netherlands—
achieved by the creation of Protestant, Catholic, socialist, and conservative
pillars such that national consensus was negotiated among elites of different
pillars and within each pillar between elites and constituencies—was compat-
ible with a centralized and concentrated institutional structure (Kriesi 1990).

Combining the distinction between strong and weak states with that be-
tween exclusive and integrative dominant strategies, we thus arrive at four
distinct general settings for dealing with challengers. As Table 2 shows, each
of these general settings corresponds to one of our four countries. The com-
bination of a strong state with an exclusive dominant strategy I call a situation
of full exclusion. In such a situation, challengers can count on neither formal
nor informal access to the political system. Instead they are typically con-
fronted by strong repression. Moreover, since the state is a strong one, chal-
lengers are not likely to have any veto power nor to obtain any substantive

concessions. This situation is represented by France. At the opposite end of full exclusion, we find full procedural integration, which is characterized by the combination of a weak state with an inclusive dominant strategy. In such a situation, repression is comparatively weak and the challenger's access to the system is formally as well as informally facilitated. Given the weakness of the system, challengers cannot count on important substantive concessions but may be able to block decisions by exercising a veto. This situation is represented by Switzerland. The direct democratic institutions as well as the federalist structure of Switzerland provide for a large number of formal access points for challengers. The traditionally integrative strategy enhances the general effect of the formal structure. Germany represents one of the two intermediate cases, formalistic inclusion. In this situation, challengers can count on formal but not informal facilitation of access. Moreover, they tend to be met with strong repression. There is a possibility of veto, but no concessions can be expected. The federal structure allows for multiple points of access. Moreover, the strong position of the German judiciary provides challengers with another set of independent access points. Compared to Switzerland, however, the number of formal regional and local access points is more limited because—apart from some exceptions—the Federal Republic does not have direct democratic institutions. Moreover, the repressive legacy of the system implies that those who speak outside of the formally available channels will be confronted with strong repression. The second intermediary case, informal cooptation, is represented by the Netherlands. In such a setting, challengers do not have a lot of formal access, but they can count on informal facilitation. Such informal measures may not go as far as the overt facilitation of action campaigns of social movements, but they may imply the facilitation of their organizational infrastructure, including public recognition, consultation, and even subsidization of social movement organizations. Since the Dutch state is also quite strong, it is able to make considerable substantive concessions, and it can prevent challengers from exerting a veto— that is, from blocking a decision-making process. Concessions have actually been forthcoming in the Netherlands because of the prevailing inclusive strategies, which serve to preempt challengers. A most striking example of preemption is the way the Dutch political system dealt with the challenge of the student movement of the late sixties: while the occupation of the administration building of the University of Amsterdam—the crucial action campaign of the movement—was met with direct repression, the national legislature quickly put forward a new university bill. It took only a brief and limited occupation to get the political system to produce a bill that included the most

Table 2. The general settings for the approach of members toward challengers

| Dominant strategy | Formal institutional structure | |
	Weak state	Strong state
Exclusive	formalistic inclusion –formal, but no informal, facilitation of access; strong repression –possibility of veto, but no substantive concessions (Germany)	full exclusion –neither formal nor informal facilitation of access; strong repression –possibility of neither veto nor substantive concessions (France)
Inclusive	full procedural integration –formal and informal facilitation of access; weak repression –possibility of veto, but no substantive concessions (Switzerland)	informal cooptation –no formal, but informal, facilitation of access; weak repression –no possibility of veto, but substantive concessions (Netherlands)

far-reaching democratization of the university system in the West (Zahn 1984).

These general settings can be expected to have a country-specific impact on all challenging mobilizations, not only on those of the new social movements, with respect to the general level of mobilization, the general form and strategy of the challenging mobilizations, and the system level at which mobilizations are typically oriented. Concerning the general level of mobilization, I propose that the far-reaching facilitation of mobilization by the Swiss system—especially resulting from its direct democratic institutions—implies a particularly high level of challenging actions. For the other three systems, it is difficult to make predictions regarding the general level of mobilization. On the one hand, as I have just argued, inclusive strategies have a tendency to preempt protest. However, it also seems plausible to argue that inclusive strategies imply elaborate decision-making processes that increase the chances for challengers to intervene and to exercise a veto. A telling example is provided by the series of nondecisions of the Dutch government with regard to the stationing of Cruise missiles in the early eighties, which has given the Dutch peace movement ample opportunities to continue its antimissiles campaign. On the other hand, one may argue that repressive strategies generally raise the costs of collective action, which serves to limit its scope in a general way. However, strong repression may also stimulate collective action. As Koopmans (1990a) points out, there are at least three ways this may hap-

pen: first, repression reinforces the identity of countercultural movements, which may stimulate offensive reactions of a rather radical type on the part of these movements. Second, repression may itself become a crucial issue for the challengers. Finally, and related to the second point, repression may focus media attention on the challengers, which may enlist the support of third parties that would otherwise not have supported the movement. Such supportive mobilization, in turn, may be expected to be of a rather moderate type. The urban autonomous movement of Zurich, for example, has profited from all three of these mechanisms (Kriesi 1984). Given these considerations, I abstain from any more specific predictions concerning the general level of mobilization in the other three countries.

With regard to the general forms and strategies of action typically used by challengers in the different countries, I can be more specific. I maintain that the French context of full exclusion invites disruptive strategies on the part of the challengers. As F. L. Wilson (1987, p. 283) observes, the strength of the French state gives rise to its greatest weakness: unable to allow challengers to articulate their concerns through formal or informal channels of access, it is periodically confronted by large-scale explosions of discontent. In such moments of great discontent, the French state may be forced to make substantive proactive concessions, or to abandon a project.[9] May 1968 illustrates the first point, the massive student protest in the fall of 1986, which forced the government to abandon its university reform bill, the second one. Even if, as I argued earlier, proactive success is difficult to attain anywhere, it is most likely to be forthcoming as a reaction to great social unrest in a strong state, which, in contrast to a weak state, is more likely not only to provoke a state of crisis, but also to have the capacity to end it by making proactive concessions.

By contrast, the highly accessible Swiss system invites moderate, conventional strategies on the part of its challengers. Such a system functions like a sponge: it absorbs all kinds of protest without granting much in the way of concessions to meet the demands of the challengers. In spite of a conspicuous lack of proactive concessions, challengers may continue to mobilize in moderate ways—because procedural success is to some extent a functional equivalent of substantive success (Epple 1988), and because occasional reactive success occurs frequently enough to provide an additional incentive for continued mobilization of this type. We may expect, however, considerable variation of this general theme within Switzerland, given that the informal procedures to deal with challengers vary substantially from one region to the other. A study of Swiss protest events (Kriesi et al. 1981) revealed that political protest events in the Swiss German-speaking part of the country have in-

creasingly been met by repression since the late sixties, while a comparable tendency has not been observed in the French-speaking region. The general impression is that the authorities in the French-speaking area react to the challenges of the new social movements in a more subtle way, while the Swiss German authorities are increasingly adopting procedures reminiscent of German practices. Since the formal opportunities for access are so numerous in the Swiss political system, the authorities expect challengers to use these formal opportunities. The Swiss German authorities tend to react particularly repressively to those who do not use these opportunities.

In the general setting of informal cooptation in the Netherlands, we may also expect collective action to be moderate. The Dutch tradition of pillarized organizational structures will stimulate the growth of social movement organizations working through conventional channels that will be treated in much the same way as the religious minorities for which the system has been set up. This implies large-scale subsidization, integration in advisory bodies, and participation in the implementation of public policies. The Dutch system, however, is not as open as the Swiss one, given its lack of direct democratic channels of access and given the relative strength of the Dutch state. Therefore, the Dutch action repertoire may be expected to include a considerable amount of more radical forms of action as well. The low level of repression makes it likely that radicalization will stop short of violent action.[10]

Germany is most ambivalent with respect to the general forms and strategies of action. The relatively large number of formal access channels and the possibility of blocking political decisions through such channels invite moderate mobilization. The repressive legacy, however, may be expected to stimulate a significant number of disruptive events as well—at least more of such events than in the Netherlands or Switzerland.

With regard to the system level at which mobilization is typically oriented, I maintain that mobilization is predominantly oriented at the national level in centralized states, and at the regional or local level in decentralized states.

The Configuration of Power in the Party System

Regarding the third broad set of properties of the political opportunity structure—the configuration of power—I emphasize the configuration of power in the party system and take into account the corresponding configuration in the most relevant part of the system of interest intermediation: the union system. Compared to the party system, the union system is of only secondary

importance for the mobilization of new social movements; at most it modifies the impact of the configuration in the party system.

General Concepts and Propositions

The configuration of power in the party system refers to the distribution of power among the various parties as well as to the relations that exist between them. As Figure 1 indicates, the configuration of power in a given political system can be thought of as an element of the political opportunity structure that intervenes between the formal institutional structure and the system's general strategic legacy, on the one hand, and the country-specific mix of strategies applied to challengers, on the other hand. Itself constrained by the general systemic context, the configuration of power in turn sets more specific limits to the strategies available to the authorities with regard to given challengers.[11] It modifies the openness of access channels and the system's capacity to act, and it modulates the general strategic legacy.

The main impact the formal institutional structure has on the configuration of power within the party system is that exerted by the electoral system. As is well known, proportional representation allows easier access for challengers than plurality or majority methods. Already established parties run a greater risk of competition from challengers in proportional electoral systems than in those with plurality or majority representation. New social movements are more likely to find allies within the party system in proportional representation systems. These allies may include challenging small parties as well as large established parties that adapt their positions in response to competition from the smaller challengers. Among the four countries of interest to us, the Netherlands has by far the most far-reaching proportional representation, given that the country forms a single constituency in national elections. The German system for all practical purposes is also proportional, with a 5 percent threshold designed to keep out minor (radical) challengers. The Swiss system is also proportional; the cantons form the constituencies in national elections. Since the cantons vary greatly in size, however, the proportionality of the Swiss system differs from one canton to the other. In smaller cantons it is considerably more restrictive than the German system, while in the largest cantons it allows for more accessibility to challengers than the German one. The French two-ballot system, reintroduced by Prime Minister Chirac in 1986 after a brief interlude of proportional representation, is of the majority variety that gives challengers little opportunity to establish themselves within the party system.

Not all the established parties have been of equal significance for the mobilization of new social movements in Western Europe. NSM supporters typically belong to the electoral potential of the left (see Muller-Rommel 1989; Kriesi and van Praag 1987), since the traditional challenges of the labor movement bear a close relationship to the challenges mounted by the new social movements. This is why we have to pay particular attention to the configuration of power on the left. As I have already indicated, the configuration of power on the left has been strongly determined by the heritage of prevailing procedures and strategies to deal with challengers. This is the main impact informal practices and procedures have on the configuration of power of NSMs. The heritage of exclusive strategies has resulted in a divided left, a split between a major communist current and a social democratic/socialist one.[12] In such a situation, social democratic parties have been relatively weak in electoral terms, and they have been engaged in a contest with the communists for hegemony on the left. This contest has above all been a contest for the working-class vote, which means that the traditional class conflict between labor and capital and the concomitant Marxist ideology have always played an important role in the strategy not only of the communists, but also of the social democrats. In such a context, the fundamental dilemma of social democratic parties put forward by Przeworski and Sprague (1986) has become particularly acute. According to their reasoning, the social democrats generally have to appeal to citizens other than workers in order to get a majority at the polls, since workers do not constitute (and never have constituted) a numerical majority in their respective societies. An effective appeal to a middle-class electorate, however, is likely to limit the social democrats' capacity to get the workers' vote. In a situation where the left is divided into a social democratic tendency and an equally important communist one, the risk of losing the workers' vote to the communists is obviously very serious. In such a context, one can expect the social democrats to subordinate their support of new social movements, which characteristically have a new middle-class core, to their struggle for hegemony on the left. Following Brand (1985, p. 322), I propose that where the left is split, there will be relatively little action space for the new movements in general, and that social democratic support of NSM mobilization will be strongly conditioned by the struggle for hegemony on the left. By contrast, in a setting with an inclusive heritage, where the left has not been divided and where class conflict has been pacified by the time NSMs emerge, there will be a larger action space for these movements and the social democrats can be expected to be much more likely to support the mobilization of these new challengers. The extent

to which they will be prepared to do so depends, however, on a second set of factors.[13]

This second set of factors relates to whether the social democrats in particular participate in government or not and, if they do, what their position is. If the social democrats are in the opposition, they profit from NSM challenges directed at the government, which weaken their major opponents in the next elections. Moreover, since the NSM supporters also form an electoral potential for the left, the social democrats will appeal to them in the framework of a general strategy designed to build as broad an electoral coalition as possible. Being in the opposition, they will therefore tend to facilitate NSM mobilization. On the other hand, as the opposition, they have no way of making any material concessions to the new social movements.

If they are in the government, the social democrats not only face electoral constraints, they also operate under constraints of established policies and of pressures from dominant societal forces (industry, finance, technocracy). Given these constraints, they will have to make compromises with regard to their electoral promises. To maximize their chances for reelection, they will try to make compromises that favor the core of their electorate. In other words, they will tend to concentrate on working-class economic issues. They will, however, also try to make secondary concessions to more peripheral groups of their electorate, among them the NSM supporters, or at least they will promise reforms taking into account the NSM point of view. A social democratic government may profit from a cooperative movement that articulates limited demands in a generally acceptable way. Such a moderate movement can serve as a driving force for social democratic reform politics. In a generally integrative setting, it is possible that a social democratic government will support the organizational infrastructure of such a movement and will try to integrate it into established political channels. But even in this case, overt facilitation of NSM action campaigns by a social democratic government is unlikely because of the risk that such campaigns get out of hand (Kriesi 1989c).

The details of the strategy chosen by a social democratic governing party depend on its position in the government, too. If the social democrats govern alone, they will be more able to make concessions than if they depend on a coalition partner. If they are only a minority partner in a coalition government, they may not be able to make any concessions at all. A social democratic party in a minority position in a governing coalition, on the other hand, may feel more free to support the mobilization of new social movements.

These considerations imply decisive changes in the political opportunity

structure of new social movements, when the left becomes part of the government and when it leaves government. If the left takes power, the necessity for mobilization decreases for NSMs because of anticipated chances of reform in their favor. At the same time, their mobilization is no longer facilitated by their most powerful ally. The net result predicted is a clear-cut decrease in the mobilization of NSMs, but not necessarily of other movements that are not dependent on the support of the left.[14] Conversely, if the left resigns from government, the necessity for NSM mobilization increases because the chance of reform becomes much more limited. Moreover, mobilization of NSMs is now facilitated by their most powerful ally. The net result to be expected in this case is a clear-cut increase in the mobilization of NSMs, but not necessarily of other movements that are not dependent on the support of the left. The impact of these changes in the political opportunity structure of NSMs may not exactly coincide with the change in government. We have to allow for some measure of anticipation or delay. For example, the deterioration of a government coalition in which the left participates may already improve NSM opportunities before the effective collapse of the coalition. Similarly, prolonged coalition formation and unstable prospects of a newly formed bourgeois coalition may delay the mobilization of the left against the new government.

The general outline of the configuration of power on the left given by the two crucial dimensions discussed so far—split or unified left, left in opposition or in government—is, finally, modified by the extent to which new forces on the left have constituted themselves as new actors within the party system, and by the extent to which the traditional major parties on the left—communists and social democrats—have been open with regard to these new forces. The first type of these new forces, the New Left, emerged in the sixties. Whether the New Left has crystallized into independent new parties and the extent to which these parties have become a relevant political force have mainly been determined by the degree of openness of the existing parties on the left and by the type of electoral system. The degree of openness of the existing parties, in turn, is likely to have been a function of the institutional framework and the prevailing strategy of the system, as well as of the extent to which the new forces themselves have chosen to work through the old parties. New Left parties have generally remained rather small in electoral terms, and they have not—with few exceptions—participated in governments. In spite of their limited scope, their presence may be expected to have played an important facilitating role for NSM action campaigns. On the one hand, New Left parties appeal to the same potential as the new social movements, and to a large extent they pursue the same goals. Moreover, they gen-

erally have a close affinity to the forms of political action preferred by new social movements. This is why they suggest themselves as the ideal ally of new social movements. On the other hand, their presence has probably also indirectly facilitated NSM mobilization by putting competitive pressure on the social democrats in particular. Competition from a New Left party puts the fundamental dilemma of the social democrats in a rather different light. Since New Left parties typically appeal to the new middle class, they do not pose a serious threat to the mobilization of the working-class vote. They may, however, drain away some middle-class support from the social democrats. Challenged by a New Left competitor, the social democrats will, therefore, be likely to take some facilitative steps in the direction of NSMs.

The second of these new forces is the Green parties that have emerged since the late seventies. While the New Left and its parties have been precursors of the new social movements, the emergence of Green parties can be viewed as one of their structural impacts. The timing of the emergence of Green parties and the weight they have been able to acquire have again been a function of the openness of the existing parties on the left (including by now parties of the New Left) and of the electoral system. It is obvious that the Greens play a facilitative role with regard to the mobilization of NSMs. Less obvious, however, is the fact that their presence is also likely to have an indirect impact on the major parties of the left, which is analogous to one of the parties of the New Left. As a consequence of the increasing competition for the new middle-class vote, the social democratic party is again pressed to take a more favorable stance with regard to the mobilization of NSMs. I will discuss briefly the strategies chosen by the social democrats in the four selected countries in light of the theoretical expectations. Table 3 indicates the situation of the social democrats in the four countries in the past twenty years.

Let us first take a look at the French social democrats. Among the four countries selected, they are the only ones who have been faced by a major communist party. In the early seventies, when the communists definitely were the dominant force on the left, President Pompidou predicted that, as a result of the bipolar dynamics of the presidential system, only two political forces would survive in French politics—the Gaullists and the Communists. He has, of course, been proved wrong. By the early eighties, the Socialist Party (PS) had become the dominant force on the left.[15] To gain predominance on the left, the PS opened itself to various leftist militants in the early seventies. It has attracted important groups of militants from the socialist labor union (CFDT), the leftist party (PSU), left-wing Catholics, and the new

Table 3. Situation of the social democratic parties in the countries under study

Social democrats in government	Left divided into major communist/ social democratic parties	
	No	Yes
Yes	Germany (1970s) Netherlands (until 1977, 1981–82), Switzerland	France (1980s)
No	Germany (1980s) Netherlands (1980s)	France (1970s)

social movements. The PS gave itself an internal structure that permitted the coexistence of very diverse tendencies—that is, it attempted to create a broad coalitional movement. Moreover, it concluded an alliance with the Communists (the *programme commun*), which reinforced its organizational and ideological base as well as its prestige among the militants from different quarters. The party acquired a young and, to a certain extent, feminine profile. At that time, the PS appeared to be the best of all possible choices for NSM supporters and activists (Ladrech 1989).

The renewed party rapidly booked success, which, as Lewis and Sferza (1987) point out, made it less accessible to new social movements and other outside forces. First, to the extent that most of the outside recruitment potential in the various parts of the left were incorporated into the PS, the PS tended to turn inward and become primarily involved in internal power games. Moreover, the party's important electoral gains in the municipal elections of 1973 and 1977 meant that the most capable party leaders had to give up reconstructing the party in order to take up administrative tasks—and also that a new class of notables was created within the party. Third, the reinforcement of the party intensified its competition with the Communists. The *programme commun* was called off in late 1977, and the alliance was reduced to a simple electoral one in 1978. To prevent the Communists from exploiting possible internal divisions, the PS felt compelled to close ranks. Party decision making was recentralized, and the party concentrated on attaining an electoral majority. Given intense Communist competition, the PS had to stick to a position close to the *programme commun*, with only limited openings for the concerns of the new social movements. Such openings were more likely if an issue raised by a movement became the focus of partisan conflict between left and right, as the issue of nuclear energy did.[16] Finally, the centralization of power within the PS was enhanced by the general centralization of the French political system, and by the two-ballot system in particular. The

party's strategy in the course of the seventies has become less facilitative, although it has remained generally favorable to the new social movements.

Not soon after the PS came to power in 1981, its strategy changed again, in line with what we would have expected. The party abandoned the NSM concerns that would have imperiled its short-term management of the economy. Thus, it completely gave up its—admittedly always limited—antinuclear position (von Oppeln 1989). With respect to cultural issues, however, the PS in power has made some major concessions: it has, for example, substantially improved the status of homosexuals in France (Duyvendak 1990a). Depending on the type of NSM, the PS in power has, at its worst, followed a fully exclusive strategy, at its best one of repressive preemption. The governing PS could afford to follow such a course because it was not threatened by a Green party from the left—another result of the French electoral system. In her fine analysis of the PS strategy with regard to nuclear energy, von Oppeln (1989, p. 205) concludes that the party's strategy of early co-optation and later disappointment of the antinuclear movement contributed decisively to the weakening of the movement.[17]

The German Social Democratic Party (SPD) has traversed a trajectory exactly opposite to that of the French PS. All through the 1970s and up to 1982, the SPD was the dominant partner in a coalition with the liberal party (FDP). It has followed a strategy that comes close to full exclusion—like the French socialists in power. To understand why, we should first note that the SPD had to govern in coalition with the Liberals, which imposed a constraint on the concessions they could have made to the new social movements. Second, the generally repressive legacy prevented the governing SPD from taking a more integrative stance toward these movements. Third, the terrorist attacks during the seventies, while they were themselves in part a result of the generally repressive mood, reinforced the tendency of the governing SPD to resort to repression once again. Finally, although there was no communist competition in Germany, the SPD nevertheless was under pressure from the strong union movement to stick to the traditional goals of the labor movement.

Unlike the leadership of the French PS, however, that of the German SPD was not able to centralize the debate on the new issues and to keep internal discussions under control. Von Oppeln (1989) attributes this greater openness in part to the federal structure of the German political system. In a federal system, she argues, the number of independent leadership positions is larger than in a centralized system, which increases the opportunity of persons with new ideas to enter into leadership positions within parties. Second, she attributes the increasing openness of the SPD to NSM demands to the

fact that many members of the party's youth organization—the JUSOs—have been particularly close to NSM concerns and have introduced a number of their demands into the party's internal debate.[18] A similar dialogue with the party youth organization did not take place in the French PS. Third, the SPD has been confronted by the challenge of the vigorous Green Party, founded in 1979, which has also contributed to its greater comprehension of NSM demands. Finally, the increasing openness of the German Social Democrats toward new social movements was reinforced by the programmatic disorientation of the SPD in the final stages of the left-liberal coalition, and by its eventual breakdown in 1982. When the SPD had to join the ranks of the opposition, it adopted a more facilitative strategy with regard to the new challengers.

In line with the integrative strategy of the Dutch political system, the Dutch social democrats (PvdA) have been open to new social movements since the early seventies. As a result of the impact of the depillarization of the Dutch political system in the late sixties, the PvdA radicalized and attracted many militants of the New Left, which eventually gained control over the party (Kriesi 1989b). Significant competition from two New Left parties (the PPR and the PSP)—a result of the open electoral system—probably contributed to the PvdA's opening up as well. Since 1971 the party executive has accepted extraparliamentary activities as part of its action repertoire, and since its 1973 congress the party has officially become an "action party" (actie-partij)—that is, a party oriented not only toward participation in government, but also toward provision of services and participation in movement activities. At the same time, the PvdA also became the dominant party in a coalition government that lasted from 1973 until 1977. At first sight, this configuration seems promising for the mobilization of new social movements and for their chances to obtain substantive concessions, but the action-party principles of the PvdA had little effect during this period, precisely because the party was in power. In line with the dominant Dutch practices, its strategy was more preemptive. Moreover, the number of concessions made was also quite limited because of the government's composition. On the one hand, the government included a new left party (PPR) and a party of the center left (D'66), which were open to the demands of the new social movements. On the other hand, the Christian parties still held a strong position in the coalition. As a result of depillarization, the Christian parties went through a reorientation phase during the seventies, which contributed to a slow, contradictory, and inflexible policy-making process of the Den Uyl government. In the area of economic policy, the result was political immobility, as Braun (1989)

has shown. In the policy areas of more direct concern to NSMs, much the same may be concluded. With the move into the opposition in 1977, the PvdA came still closer to the NSMs than it already was. It joined the antinuclear power camp in 1979—after the Harrisburg accident (Cramer 1989, p. 66)— and, most importantly, it embraced the goals of the peace movement (Kriesi 1989b). Except during the PvdA's brief spell in government in 1981–82, one may describe its strategy with respect to NSMs during the eighties as one of strong facilitation. This situation changed radically after 1985. The new Christian Democratic Party has been able to unite the traditional Christian parties, to silence internal opposition, and to stabilize their electoral base. These developments seriously affected the Social Democrats' strategic position and the Social Democratic Party's chances to participate in government. The government's 1985 decision to deploy Cruise missiles signaled the final defeat of the alliance between the Social Democrats and the Dutch peace movement. When this decision did not result in the expected electoral gains for the Social Democrats in the subsequent elections in spring 1986, the Social Democrats changed strategy, almost completely dissolving their alliance with the new social movements and drawing nearer to the Christian Democrats to become acceptable as a government partner again. This example shows that there may be conditions under which even a social democratic party in the opposition may refrain from supporting new social movements.[19]

The Swiss social democrats (SP/PS) have had an ambiguous position with regard to NSMs. As part of the grand coalition that has governed Switzerland since 1959, they have shared the formal responsibility for the government policies against which the new social movements mobilize. Having always been in a clear minority position within the governing coalition, they have at the same time been opposed to the government on specific issues, including several issues of concern to NSMs. The ambiguity of the party's position is reflected by its internal division into a party left and a party right. The party left has consistently been in favor of NSM demands throughout the period under consideration; the party right, which is close to the unions and to the party's representatives in government, has consistently been skeptical of new social movements. Given the fragmented character of the Swiss party system, the specific configuration of power within the party has varied from one canton to the other. In the most developed cantons of Swiss German-speaking Switzerland, the SP has experienced a strong influx of New Left militants and has been confronted with vigorous competition from New Left parties since the early seventies. At the end of the seventies, the party left was able to take over power within the party in several cantons. As a consequence, in these

cantons—notably in Basel and Zurich—the SP became a major alliance partner of NSMs. This led to serious internal tensions with the party right, and finally to splits in both Basel and Zurich in the early eighties.[20] In French-speaking Switzerland, the PS has been challenged not as much by New Left parties as by the traditional communist party (PdT/PdA), which may explain why it has been less facilitative for NSMs in these parts of the country—and why the Swiss Green Party first developed in the French-speaking cantons (Ladner 1989).

I maintain that the NSMs have generally played a less important role in France than in the other three countries, given the situations described. The split left in France has limited them to a greater extent than elsewhere. Moreover, in France a clear decline can be witnessed in the level of NSM mobilization from 1981 onward, that is, from the moment the left came to power. Mobilization of the labor movement did also decline, but not mobilization of all the other movements. Conversely, for Germany an increase in the level of NSM mobilization took place starting in the early eighties. The left lost power in 1982, but the coalition had already started to get into difficulties before that date, and the competition from the Greens set in after 1979. No corresponding increase took place for the other movements, with the possible exception of the labor movement. In the Netherlands, the mobilization of NSMs, but not necessarily of other movements, started to increase in 1978. For Switzerland, predictions are more difficult since there has never been an explicit change in government, as there has been in the other countries. Alternatively, one might argue that the takeover of the Social Democratic Party organization by its left wing in some cantons during the late seventies may have had a clear mobilization effect on the NSMs in the regions concerned.

The Configuration of Power in the System of Interest Associations

The system of interest associations has several subsystems, each of which organizes a different category of interests. From the point of view of the political opportunity structure of new social movements, the unions constitute the most relevant subsystem. Among the parties of the left, the unions form the major organizations of the "old" labor movement. While unions are much more class-specific organizations than parties, they may nevertheless be important possible allies of new social movements. Moreover, unions often have a strong influence on the strategic position of the major parties on the left, which means that their relevance for the new social movements may be greater than appears at first sight. Other relevant parts of the system of inter-

est associations include churches and already established associations—such as various professional organizations—that operate in specific issue areas of immediate concern to NSMs. I shall limit this section to consideration of unions.

For the characterization of the structure and functioning of systems of interest intermediation, the distinction between corporatism and pluralism has assumed some prominence in political science. A corporatist union structure is highly comprehensive. It is both horizontally integrated (there is only one union system) and vertically integrated (the unions in this system are hierarchically ordered and directed from the top). In pluralist systems, by contrast, union structure is highly fragmented: there are multiple union subsystems, and they in turn are not hierarchically ordered and directed from the top. It has been suggested (Cameron 1984; Schmitter 1982; Visser 1987) that comprehensive organizational structures are a necessary precondition for the integration of unions (and business interest associations) into encompassing policy networks, as well as for the pacification of class struggle. In countries with a corporatist union structure—the Scandinavian countries, Austria, and Germany—the unions have indeed been integrated into elaborate policy arrangements, they have developed long-term policy perspectives, and they have to a large extent abandoned their strike activities. In other words, they have become responsible social partners. The obverse does not hold, however: not all countries with fragmented union structures have been unable to develop a stable social partnership. The reason is that there are different types of fragmented union systems. First, there are those in the Anglo-Saxon countries, where the union movement is split into a complex pattern of industrial, professional, and general unions—the pluralist paradigm. Second, there are the union movements of countries with a divided left, that is, a left with a major communist current next to the social democratic one. In such countries, the union movement is split along party lines, and the most important union federation has typically been under communist control. Finally, there are the union movements of countries with religious cleavages (including a cleavage between the secular and the Catholic subcultures in predominantly Catholic countries)—typical traditional consociationalism. In such countries, the union movement is split along religious lines. For our purposes, the difference between the latter two types of fragmentation is of particular interest. While a divided left prevents the unions from being integrated into stable policy networks and from abandoning traditional notions of class conflict (Golden 1986), the unions in the so-called consociational countries have been pacified and integrated in spite of their fragmentation.

A highly encompassing, corporatist union system is not very likely to facilitate the mobilization of new social movements, although it is no longer mobilizing for radical strike action. Such a union system still is a class organization "in the sense that it promotes and protects interests of workers as a class, their collective interests, and it enforces discipline on groups of workers that may be tempted by the advantages of pursuing particularistic interests" (Przeworski and Sprague 1987, p. 75). Moreover, the encompassing structure also implies a large amount of control over attempts of individual unions to support the mobilization of NSMs, which are generally of no direct interest for the preservation of the collective interests of workers as a class. In countries with such a union system, social democrats could pursue middle-class strategies at a tolerable or even negligible cost. But, as Przeworski and Sprague note, "that very same partner which took from the parties most of the burden of organizing workers as a class imposed constraints on the degree to which these parties could freely pursue their electoral opportunities" (1987, p. 119). Such union systems tend to exert pressure on the social democrats to give priority to the traditional labor class concerns, which means that the social democrats are less able to make concessions to, or to facilitate the mobilization of, NSMs than they otherwise could have been. Germany is an example of this.

Unions in systems that are fragmented along party lines and that are dominated by an ideology of traditional class struggle at first sight do not make likely candidates for facilitation of NSM mobilization. The major, communist-controlled union federation (CFT) cannot be expected to support NSMs. Under such conditions, however, there is considerable competition among unions. This may lead some minoritarian unions to appeal to segments of the new middle class that tend to be neglected by the dominant, communist-controlled union federation. The CFDT in France provides an example. Support from this union for NSMs may be forthcoming, as long as new social movements themselves do not directly compete with unions. Under conditions of strong class struggle, it is possible that NSMs will also couch their appeals in terms of the traditional conflict. If such is the case, the unions will be likely to opt for outright repressive strategies. The events of May 1968 in France were an early example.[21]

Countries with union systems that are fragmented along religious lines, but are nevertheless integrated into policy networks and pacified, present the most favorable case from the point of view of challenging new social movements. Not only has the class struggle been pacified in these countries, but the fragmentation of the union system makes for competition among unions.

The presence of confessional unions has traditionally diluted the class ideology, and the socialist unions have never been able to represent the whole working class. Under such circumstances, the competition is not couched in class terms. The socialist unions are free to adopt a new middle-class strategy in their competition for members, since they do not face a trade-off with a competitor that mobilizes as a class organization. This is the case in the Netherlands and Switzerland. In both countries, one would, therefore, expect the unions to have become major allies of the NSMs that facilitate their mobilization. In the Netherlands, this has in fact been true, at least with regard to the peace movement, which has received substantial support from the unions. In Switzerland, union support of new social movements has been much less forthcoming. Unions have never mobilized overtly against these movements. There have even been some unions, such as the unions of public employees, that have supported specific NSM action campaigns. There have also been several instances, however, where the unions have put pressure on the social democrats to keep their distance with regard to NSMs. This pressure combined with the intransigence of the right-wing minority of the party has, in some instances, led to a split in the cantonal Social Democratic Party, and to the creation of new democratic socialist parties.

Elaboration of the General Argument

The argument presented so far does not take into account differences between various new social movements with regard to their dependence on political opportunity structure. It is likely, however, that not all NSMs depend to the same extent on POS factors, and it is likely that they react differently to changes in the opportunity structure. I would like to make a distinction between "conjunctural" movements, which are heavily dependent on the POS and strongly react to changes in it, and "linear" movements, which are much less affected by such factors.[22]

The extent to which a movement's trajectory depends on the political opportunity structure is a function of its general orientation, of the level of development of its organizational infrastructure, and of the structure of the problem it is dealing with. First, I maintain that subcultural movements will be less influenced by POS factors than countercultural or instrumental movements.[23] Subcultural movements, such as that of homosexuals, aim at the (re)production of a collective identity that is primarily constituted in within-group interaction. Their predominantly internal orientation means that they are not very susceptible to changes in the political opportunity structure.

Countercultural movements, such as the urban autonomous movement, are also identity oriented, but they constitute their identity mainly in conflictual interactions with authorities or third parties. In other words, they react strongly to changes in the political opportunity structure. Similarly, instrumental movements that seek to obtain specific collective goods or to prevent specific collective "bads" are likely to be heavily dependent on the opportunity structure. Within the broad category of instrumental movements, however, dependence on the POS is expected to vary in accordance with the level of development of their organizational infrastructure. Instrumental movements, such as the ecology movement, that have developed a stable organizational infrastructure do not depend to the same extent on external support by allies as others with fragile and ad hoc organizational structures. Therefore, they will probably be less affected by changes in the configuration of power. Finally, instrumental movements dealing with a highly differentiated and complex problem structure, such as the ecology movement or the solidarity movement,[24] will be less dependent on aspects of the POS than movements with a highly focused problem structure, such as the peace movement or the antinuclear movement. Complex problem structures allow for substitution of goals, for shifts in the system level at which demands are addressed, and for long-term campaigning. By contrast, highly focused problems increase a movement's dependence on the POS, especially when the problem is itself linked to specific political decisions, such as was the case with the antinuclear missiles campaign. While I argue that certain movements react more strongly to changes in the POS than others, I am not able to specify which one of the conjunctural movements will react most. The type of movement that will mobilize most intensely depends on additional factors—some of them concerning the POS on levels of the political system other than the national one.

Except for Switzerland, where some regional aspects of the POS have been introduced, the general argument has been restricted to the national POS level. I start from the general idea that the national POS level still constitutes the major point of reference for the evolution of NSMs in a given country. But we have to allow for the fact that in some instances, the sub- or supranational opportunity structure is at least as relevant for the mobilization of a specific conjunctural movement as the national one. The subnational opportunity structure is particularly relevant for strictly local or regional movements, such as urban autonomous movements or—among the movements outside the scope of NSMs—regional movements. The international POS plays a crucial role for movements, such as the peace movement or the Soli-

darity movement, that react to aspects of international relations. I propose that the subnational POS is highly relevant in federalist countries, but not in centralized ones. In federalist states, a change in a subnational opportunity structure may trigger an action campaign, even if the national opportunity structure remains stable. I further propose that the international opportunity structure is of less relevance for neutral countries, and for countries with no colonial past. Countries that are part of international alliances or involved in international conflicts and countries that have a colonial past are more likely to react strongly with regard to events on the international level and to events in their former colonies. I suggest that, in such countries, changes in the international POS, when they coincide with changes in the national POS that contribute to the mobilization of new social movements in general, may give rise to action campaigns of conjunctural movements that react strongly to the international POS in particular. Finally, we should also allow for factors determining the kind of conjunctural movement likely to mobilize that do not directly depend on changes in the POS on any level. That is, we should also take into consideration processes of international diffusion with regard to the mobilization of NSMs. Successful mobilization of a given NSM in one country may trigger the mobilization of a corresponding movement in a neighboring country. I maintain, however, that, secondarily, the POS has an impact even in this case: processes of diffusion are supposed to occur in particular if the national POS in the country where the imitating movement starts to mobilize is undergoing an important change in favor of the NSMs. If there is no such change in a given neighboring country, we would not expect any diffusion effects. In addition, there are also the so-called suddenly imposed grievances, catastrophes such as the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl nuclear accidents or the war in the Middle East, that give rise to conjunctural mobilizations (Walsh 1981). Again, I would like to suggest that the extent to which such catastrophes give rise to mobilizations in a given country is also a function of the specific POS at the moment the catastrophe occurs.

To conclude this section, I should draw the reader's attention to the fact that I have not offered any hypotheses about the course of the events once the mobilization of NSMs has reacted with regard to a change in the POS as a result of a change in government. The basic idea is that the initial change in the level of mobilization caused by a crucial change in the POS will establish a specific interaction context that will follow its own autodynamic course. Karstedt-Henke (1980), Tarrow (1989a, 1989b), and Koopmans (1990b) have presented some theoretical arguments about how such interaction contexts may develop.

Conclusion

In this essay I have elaborated the notion that politics matter, even in the field of new social movements. In stressing the importance of conventional politics for movement politics, I have implicitly taken issue with the mainstream of NSM analyses in Western Europe; aspects of social and cultural change are central to understanding the evolution of their mobilization. In my view, social and cultural change become relevant for the mobilization of social movements only to the extent that they are mediated by politics. In focusing on politics I do not deny the relevance of other factors for the explanation of the origins and development of social movements in general, and of NSMs in particular. I maintain, however, that the visible series of collective action that constitutes the organized, sustained, self-conscious challenge to existing authorities is best understood, if it is related to formal political institutions, to informal political practices and procedures and to what happens in arenas of conventional party and interest group politics.

In addition to the literature cited at the outset, there is some new empirical evidence that supports this view. In a research project studying the development of five NSMs in the four countries I have discussed, we have started to test the ideas presented here. A first empirical analysis based on newspaper data about protest events is presented in Kriesi et al. (1992). The differences found with regard to the mobilization patterns of social movements in the four countries largely confirm the hypotheses elaborated here. The French pattern of mobilization, indeed, turns out to be the most centralized, the least formally organized, and the most radical. As a result of their overall radicalism and lack of formal organization, the French movements also mobilize a comparatively small number of people in moderate forms. Thus, the French pattern of mobilization mirrors the situation of full exclusion characterizing the political opportunity structure of social movements in France. The Swiss pattern, by contrast, is the most decentralized and the most moderate, mobilizing comparatively the largest number of people. Moreover, formalized social movement organizations operating through conventional channels are very strong in Switzerland, reflecting the characteristics of full procedural integration prevailing in this case. The Dutch and German patterns correspond to the contradictory situations social movements are confronted within these countries. Integrative strategies coupled with a strong state result in a centralized, but otherwise hybrid, mobilization pattern in the Netherlands. This pattern combines strong, formalized, and fully integrated social movement organizations mobilizing comparatively large numbers of people in rather

conventional forms; there is a moderate, nonviolent radicalism among those protesting in the streets. Formalistic inclusion in Germany, finally, results in an equally hybrid but nevertheless distinct pattern that combines a largely decentralized mobilization of the majority of protesters by relatively moderate, but little formally organized, means with a far-reaching radicalization of a small violent minority. With respect to the evolution of the mobilization of new social movements in particular, we have tested the impact of the configuration of power in the party system and found some of the expected differences. Most significantly, the left's loss of power in Germany and its access to power in France indeed resulted in contrasting developments of the mobilization of new social movements in the two countries in the early eighties: the predicted decline in mobilization in France contrasts with the predicted increase in Germany. Case studies of the four countries using the framework presented here and studies comparing them in more detail will follow.

The invisible side of social movements, activities that do not become public and are not reported in the newspapers, is probably less related to POS factors. To stress the overt challenge of social movements is not to deny that movements have a less visible side as well. Since it does not treat the latent side of social movements at all, the theory presented here obviously is only a partial one. In my view, however, the crucial element of a social movement is its overt challenge to authorities—the series of action campaigns constituted in interaction with the authorities that defines a social movement in Tilly's (1984) terms.

My argument presumes that the most relevant level of the political opportunity structure is the national one. The other levels have entered into my discussion only in a subsidiary way. This raises the question of whether the theoretical argument is not only partial, but also no longer pertinent for the explanation of the evolution of contemporary movements mobilizing in a world that is increasingly determined by international politics. The international POS certainly is becoming more relevant for movement politics as well. Changes in the international POS now have important structural effects on the national POS. Thus, the breakdown of the formerly communist states in Eastern Europe and the end of the division between East and West introduce fundamental changes in the political opportunity structure of NSMs in the countries with a traditionally divided left: the end of the division between East and West implies the end of the divided left in these countries in the not too distant future. In this case, it is still the national POS that ultimately determines the mobilization of NSMs, although it is a national POS of an entirely different makeup. The relevance of the national POS may, however, decline in

an even more fundamental way if the nation-state loses its prominence in conventional politics in a unified or regionalized Europe. There are strong indications of the decline of the nation-state, but they should not be exaggerated because they do not yet challenge the crucial importance of the national-level political opportunity structure for the mobilization of new social movements.

Notes

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1. Tarrow does not use the four elements consistently. After having introduced the fourth element in his revised version of "Struggling to Reform," he drops it again (1989b, p. 82), and in his book on Italy (1989a, pp. 22ff.), he drops the element of the "alliance structure" in favor of the "conflict between elites."

2. This definition has already been introduced by Duyvendak and Koopmans (1989, pp. 15–16). See also Rucht (1989).

3. I adopt here the simple distinction between "members" and "challengers" as it has been made by Tilly (1978). While it is not always possible to neatly separate members from challengers, I stick to this distinction to simplify the exposition. I shall frequently refer to the members in terms of "authorities"—that is, the two terms are used interchangeably.

4. These four countries are included in a comparative project on the development of new social movements in the eighties. The team that is currently working on this project includes Jan Willem Duyvendak and Ruud Koopmans from the University of Amsterdam as well as Marco G. Giugni, Florence Passy, and the author from the University of Geneva.

5. There are also direct democratic procedures ("Volksbegehren") in several member states of the Federal Republic (Jung 1990).

6. The French referenda are a prerogative of the president and give little latitude for the mobilization of challengers.

7. Zysman (1983, p. 298) also notes these two sides of the notion of the strength of the state.

8. A mechanism that is responsible for this autodynamic is political socialization. Thus, Gallie points out that Clemenceau, the French leader at the end of World War I, started his political career in 1871, that is, at the time of the repression of the Commune of Paris. Clemenceau was seventy-six years old when he became prime minister in 1917.

9. In other words, the French state may be forced to "learn" in such moments. As Fach and Simonis (1987) point out, the strength of the French state implies another major weakness: its very strength prevents it from learning from its own mistakes. Paradoxically, not having to learn turns out to be an important weakness: the French state is able to continue political programs that are highly ineffective or very dangerous—as in the case of the nuclear power program.

10. This characterization of the Dutch situation was suggested to me by Jan Willem Duyvendak and Ruud Koopmans.

11. The configuration of power is, of course, also a function of the cleavage structure of a given society (see Lipset and Rokkan 1967). I acknowledge this determinant factor, but I want to restrict attention here to the interrelationships among the elements of the political system.

12. The terms *social democratic* and *socialist* are used synonymously here.

13. The structure of the union system also plays a role in this context: a strong union system may exert pressure on the social democrats to give priority to traditional labor concerns, even if they do not face a serious trade-off in electoral terms.

14. The exception is the labor movement, which also has a greater incentive to mobilize under these circumstances.

15. On the right, the Gaullists soon had to contend with a second major conservative force, the UDF, not to mention the rise of the racist, right-wing party (Front National).

16. Up to 1981, the PS's critique of nuclear energy was integrated into the general attacks of the opposition party against the conservative government. However, the direct influence of radical opponents of nuclear energy was successfully blocked within intraparty discussions (von Oppeln 1989). The party demanded a rather moderate "two-year moratorium on nuclear development to reassess its problems" in both the 1978 and 1981 elections (Ladrech 1989).

17. Ladrech (1989, p. 275) reaches a similar conclusion. He points out that the attractiveness of the PS in the first half of the 1970s contributed to "an overall positive regard for institutional politics" within the NSMs—and, that is, implicitly to a weakening of the NSM sector as a whole.

18. One should add, however, that relations between the party and the JUSOs were rather strained during the seventies. In 1977, for example, the whole JUSO leadership was dismissed by the head of the SPD. The internal dialogue with the JUSOs became more open only in the eighties.

19. This point, too, was suggested to me by Jan Willem Duyvendak and Ruud Koopmans.

20. In both cases, it was the traditionalists who left the party or distanced themselves from the party's position, which was generally supportive of NSMs. The situation in Basel is described by Schmid (1986), that in Zurich by Kriesi (1984). In Zurich, the tensions within the party were greatly intensified by the mobilization of the urban autonomous movement at the beginning of the eighties. This is another instance of a structural impact of a NSM campaign.

21. In this case, the movement in question was the student movement, which is more a precursor than an example of the NSMs. See also Tarrow (1989a), who discusses Italy in the late sixties.

22. See Giugni and Kriesi (1990), who use this distinction for the description of the evolution of the various Swiss movements in particular. For a general discussion of the differential dependence of NSMs on aspects of the political opportunity structure, see also Duyvendak (1990b).

23. The distinction between these three types of movements has been introduced by Koopmans (1990a).

24. The solidarity movement as we define it encompasses all the mobilizations that are concerned with international solidarity. Included in this highly complex field are: humanitarian aid, support of political refugees in Western Europe, support of political prisoners elsewhere, antiracism and antiapartheid movements, and support of or opposition to regimes of particular Third World countries, such as Nicaragua or Chile.

Chapter 8

Opposition Movements and Opposition Parties: Equal Partners or Dependent Relations in the Struggle for Power and Reform?

Diarmuid Maguire

Political Parties and Protest Movements

In capitalist democracies, political parties must work within both state institutions and civil society in order to maintain or increase their power. They have to operate within the institutional frameworks that shape state policy and through the social networks that help establish political consensus. Otherwise, they risk the possibility of political impotence and electoral defeat. Similarly, protest movements need to mobilize civil society and, at the same time, influence political institutions. Mass mobilization keeps a movement alive, while political influence gives it some relevance. In this way, political parties and protest movements operate on the same terrain; they often cross each other's paths, and they may form alliances that can affect their respective destinies. Political interactions between movements and parties are particularly prevalent when parties are in opposition and are building social coalitions for electoral purposes.

In a number of analyses of new social movements, it is claimed that there is an increasing disjuncture between the autonomous world of protest movements and the political institutions that they challenge. Alberto Melucci, for example, has argued that the "emerging forms of collective action differ from the conventional modes of organization and operate increasingly outside the established parameters of the political systems" (1989, p. 56). The new movements, according to Melucci, are formed in the dense undergrowth of "submerged networks" in which collective identities are negotiated and cultural symbols are produced. They surface to challenge authorities on specific issues, thereby acting "as 'revealers' by exposing that which is hidden or excluded by the decision-making process" (1989, p. 175). When