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

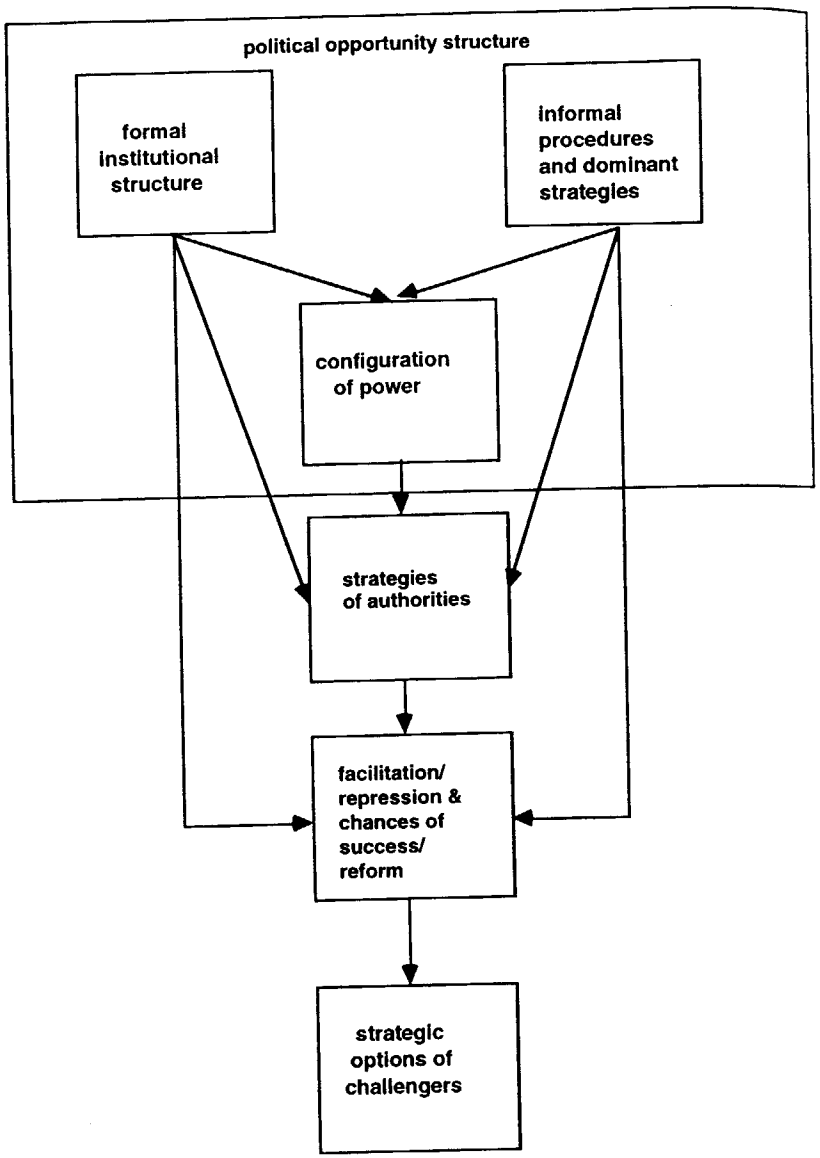

Figure 1. Conceptual outline of the general argument

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 required 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.

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

		Substantive success	
Type of state	**Procedural 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

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 integrative (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 employed in Southern European countries but were also used in the Weimar Republic 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 decisions in an even more distant past. This illustrates the autodynamic of dominant 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 strategy of the authorities. In all the Southern European countries, a strong communist 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 authoritarian 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 dominant strategy of its ruling elite with regard to challengers from below has continued to be marked by the experience of the past. In contrast to France, however, 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 between 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 contrast, 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 probably 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 integrating diverse cultural minorities within the same polity—with very different implications for the institutional structure of the state. While the territorial 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 compatible with a centralized and concentrated institutional structure (Kriesi 1990).

Combining the distinction between strong and weak states with that between 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 combination 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 confronted by strong repression. Moreover, since the state is a strong one, challengers 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**

	Formal institutional structure	
Dominant strategy	**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 increasingly 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