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# **Collective Identities and Social Movements**

**Hugo Stokke and Marit Tjomsland**

**R 1996: 1**

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## Summary

This report gives an overview of theories and approaches to the study of social identities, drawing on recent literature in the field. It argues that the study of social identities should be linked to the social outlets for identity, be they movements, associations, networks and the like. Starting with an account of late modernity, it introduces social movements as an outgrowth of late modernity's rising dissatisfaction with organised politics and with the revitalisation and new social movements approaches are analysed and found wanting in various respects. This leads into a discussion of the politics of identity and its inclusionary and exclusionary facets and the mix of identities typical of modern society. Group identities are contrasted to individual identities and the importance of social position and narrative tradition are highlighted for identities. The report concludes with three suggestions for further research.

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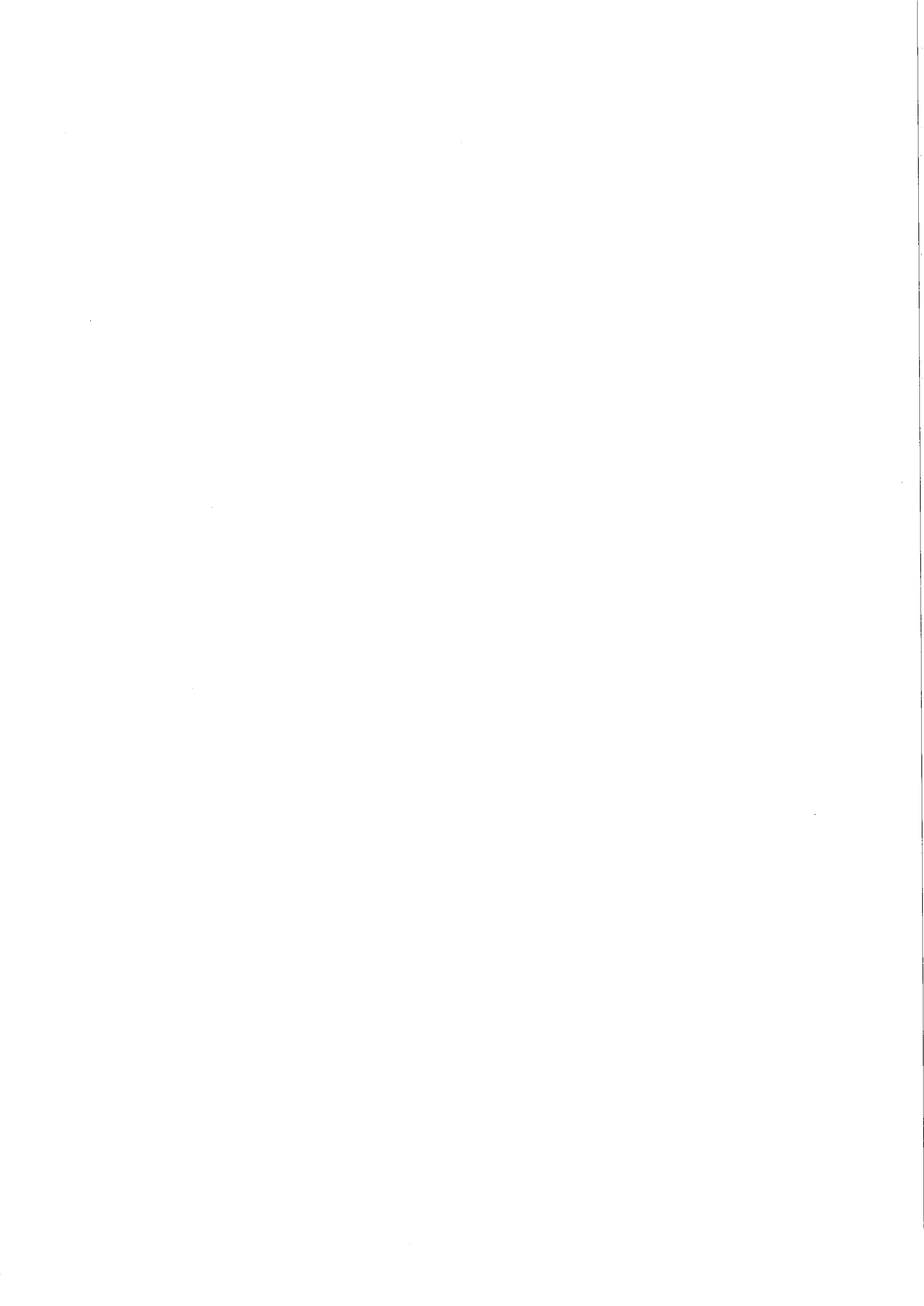
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## Preface

This report has its origin in an interest on the part of the Chr. Michelsen Institute to explore new fields of research. A proposal was submitted to the research staff meeting in December 1993, suggesting four such areas for research. The proposal, entitled "States under Dual Pressures - From Above and Below: Widening or Narrowing the Scope for State Action" was written in response to suggestions from the Board of the Institute to consider new fields of research, particularly with reference to the emergent research programme Advanced Research on the Europeanisation of the State (ARENA). The decision was made to do a study on social identities. The report was written in summer - early autumn 1994 and was submitted to the Board and the Research Director of the Institute. As the contents may be of interest to ongoing research at the Institute and elsewhere, the authors and others at the Institute thought it a good idea to make the report more accessible by having it published in the Report series. Only minor changes have been made from the previous report.

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# 1 Introduction

Our main argument in what follows is that changes in social identities will have to be analysed in close relation to social movements. We argue that in order to make social identities more tangible and thus more appropriate for analysis, it should be studied in relation to the organisational outlet for such identities, in movements, associations, networks and other kinds of collective ventures. Our point of departure is that social movements are a genuinely modern phenomenon that are inextricably linked to the general process of modernisation in Europe. We do therefore start by examining some central features of modernity as they are observed in the literature. As modernity matures, the social basis for association changes accordingly. New types of social movements appear advocating other issues than previous movements. Political participation may seek these modes of expression rather than the formalised, institutionalised world of parties and interest organisations. The paper tries to outline how these social changes are reflected in the theoretical literature on social movements. Theoretical differences in approach in the US and in Europe are described, corresponding to different intellectual traditions as well as different historical experiences on the two continents. The Resource Mobilisation (RM) approach and the New Social Movements (NSM) approach are current theories that by and large correspond to US and European traditions and experiences, intellectually as well as historically.

Two features characterising the European approach are first, the emphasis put on identity and culture and secondly, on civil society. We devote considerable discussion to the elucidation of these concepts as we will argue that they give important pointers toward the research agenda we would like to pursue.

An important consideration is the extent to which social movements respond to the different and changing social environments within Europe and outside and secondly, between West and East Europe. A look at what may be changing bases of identity may give an idea about what kinds of movements are emerging or may emerge in the future. Religious, ethnic, regional and national identities may not only be expressed in various types of movements, these movements may even under certain circumstances claim self-determination. We try to explore some of these trends by using the concepts of categorical and relational identities.

On the basis of the discussion of theories and approaches, we conclude by proposing some promising areas of research and we hope that the following review may provide the researcher with some of the necessary tools with which to make further explorations. We would suggest three. First, more research is needed on the concept and reality of citizenship in multicultural societies; second, more inclusive theories of social movements are needed to correct for some of the current biases and thereby to embrace the full range of social

movements in the current world, and thirdly, more research is needed on how identities come about and what controls they may be subjected to.

## 2 Theories of modernity

The task of analyzing processes of change as complex as those we currently face in Europe calls for theoretical approaches of corresponding complexity. In our opinion, an analytical framework based on theories of modernity may offer the required complexity. Questions concerning the nature and consequences of modernity were essential to sociology already at its very creation, and the relationship between social science and modern society has since then remained so close that the history of sociology may be read as a reflection of the history of modernity. In order to properly deal with theories of modernity it is useful to keep in mind that both the theories and the societies should be understood in their proper historical context.

Late European nineteenth century society still behaved largely in accordance with the classical Enlightenment principles of modernity, and the early sociologists all based their analyses on these principles of rationality, objectivity, secularisation, and progress. Their concrete perceptions of the consequences of modernity varied significantly, however. Emile Durkheim, for instance, had high and distinctly optimistic hopes for the modern era, which he, due to its large capacity for adaptation and development, saw as a superior form of social organisation. Max Weber was more pessimistic about the consequences of modernity, which he predicted would be dominated by inhuman large-scale bureaucracies; he did, however, agree with Durkheim that the modern mode of organisation due to its capacity for ordered adaptation and change is superior to others. Karl Marx deviated from his two colleagues in that he did not see the modern society of his time as an end in itself, but merely as a means to reach a post-capitalist - but hardly post-modern - socialist society. Thus, the influence of the Enlightenment ideas is evident in all these sociologists' theories - as well as in their methodological approaches, which are characterised by orderly, systematic, and basically one-dimensional and uni-directional analyses of the contemporary modern societies.

When turning to the contemporary scene of theories of modernity, it is clear that the classical Enlightenment perception of modernity has lost much of its momentum. The tendency of contemporary society to be perceived as increasingly chaotic and irrational rather than ordered and rational - some of the current changes in Europe illustrate this tendency fairly well - must take much of the blame for the decline of the popularity of the Enlightenment ideas (Mestrovic, 1994). They do, however, still have prominent defenders, of whom Ernest Gellner is one. In his recent work he reconfirmed his strong and long-standing conviction that modern society is indeed orderly and rational, and that the social world is comprehensible to any researcher willing to accept rationality and objectivity as the imperative principles for scientific activity (Gellner 1992).

Gellner and his like-minded are representatives of the vast and diverse field called modern social science, which is a paradigm founded on the assumption that cumulation of objective, scientific knowledge about the social world is indeed possible (Rosenau 1992:169). This paradigm is being rejected by an increasing number of social scientists, among whom the post-modernists constitute a limited, but significant group. Taking as a point of departure the assumption that the social world is by nature "fragmented, disrupted, disordered and interrupted" (ibid.:170), and thus inclined to rapid and irrational changes, postmodernist social scientists avoid Gellner and others' problem of explaining how apparently chaotic and uncontrollable social processes can be expressions of an orderly, systematic, and rational social world. The postmodernists' problem is a rather different one, though closely related to their world view and its consequences for social scientific activity: Their deconstructivist approach, which implies rejection of the principles of modern science down to its perceptions of linear time and predictable space, logically leads to a rejection of the very concept of knowledge (ibid.:171-172). While proficient at drawing intriguingly fragmented pictures of contemporary society, postmodernist social science therefore has in itself a rather limited ability to contribute to the body of autonomous social scientific work - a fact that a number of the adherents of this tradition recognizes when claiming that their only possible objective is indeed limited to criticism and deconstruction of the alleged findings of modern social science.

Eager defenders of the classical Enlightenment ideas like Ernest Gellner and equally eager offenders of the very notion of social scientific knowledge like the postmodernists are best understood in terms of being the "extremists" of contemporary social science, and their theories should be read as fundamentalist acceptances or rejections of the Enlightenment heritage. However, a third approach can be found, emphasizing that modernity combines features of both order and chaos.

As a non-postmodernist relativist, Antony Giddens has developed a theory of modernity which represents a quite different - and, we believe, in our context more constructive - interpretation of contemporary modern society than those so far discussed. He argues that even though modernity is based on the classical Enlightenment belief in human reason and rationality, the irrationality and chaos that currently appears to dominate our world should be understood as inherent consequences of modernity rather than as expressions of the post modern - he calls the period they signify late modernity. This period has, according to Giddens, taken on quite a different appearance than the early modern period of Durkheim and Weber; it is characterised by much greater complexity and impenetrability. Put differently, contemporary modernity is multi-dimensional on the level of institutions, and each of the single dimensions focused on by the early sociologists (industrialism by Durkheim, rationalisation by Weber, capitalism by Marx) plays a part in this late modern totality of dimensions (Giddens 1990:12).

Giddens uses a discontinuist institutional approach to modern society - he assumes that modern institutions are distinct from all types of traditional order, and that it is through studies of the uniqueness of these institutions that one

may grasp what modernity and its consequences actually are. Some preconditions are, according to Giddens, fundamental for the existence of modern social institutions. One of these is the separation of time and space, which makes possible the "empty" modern perception of time as independent from what happens during it (ibid.:18). Such an "emptying of time" is a precondition for the "emptying of space", meaning the separation of the concept of space from the idea of place in the meaning of a locale, and both these "emptying" operations are necessary parts of the modern condition. Hence, while a pre-modern time-concept like "sunset" will be linked to both season and place, "seven o'clock" is an abstract expression of time which permits planning and ordering of events over indefinite distances. Thus, this separation permits the time-space "zoning" of social life which is a precondition for the modern mode of social organisation.

Closely connected to the time-space separation is the disembedding of social systems, which lifts social relations out of local contexts of interaction and restructures them across indefinite spans of time-space (ibid.:21). There are several disembedding mechanisms. One of them is symbolic tokens, such as money, which makes possible interchange independently of the actual individuals or groups involved at any time. At least equally important are, however, what Giddens names the expert systems, which are systems of technical accomplishment or professional expertise organising a main part of the late modern social environment (ibid.:26).

According to Giddens, the modern separation of time and space and disembedding of social systems have as consequences a mode of social organisation where the individual to a large extent is unable to control the preconditions for his or her own way of life. The large degree of generalised trust in the social system which this lack of individual control implies, is what enables modern society to develop in so complex ways. However, the back side of this coin, namely the high level of generalised risk involved in such a social form, is by many perceived as an even more central characteristic of late modernity (see for instance Beck:1993), and this is what makes modernity an unusually vulnerable form of social organisation, since the high level of complexity results in a situation where large-scale breakdown is a highly probable outcome if individual trust in the system is withdrawn.

While vulnerability is modern social organisation's weak spot, its great capacity for change is its main advantage. Giddens actually identifies dynamic change as modernity's most central characteristic, along with its globalising nature. The latter comes about because of the "stretching" of relations between local and distant events which is a consequence of the time-space distancing that may well be seen as an integrated part of the general dynamic nature of modernity.

However, this inherent dynamism of the modern mode of social organisation has accelerated the pace and scope of change as modern society has matured, and it is this acceleration of change which has led to the increasing number of unintended consequences of modernity which today tend to appear to us as irrational chaos. Thus, the current state of disillusionment with rationality, science, the future, and most other things which many social scientists today

choose to term post modern, is actually the inherent and unavoidable consequence of the initial Enlightenment illusion on which modernity is built, namely that human reason can produce certain knowledge, and thereby control the consequences of human action. Rather than being beyond modernity, the current state is therefore actually thoroughly modern in nature, it is "modernity coming to understand itself" (Giddens 1990:48).

In spite of great differences, the theories of modernity so far discussed resemble each other on one point: they all, in one way or another, recognize the dynamic nature of their object of research. This dynamism - the possibly most generally recognized aspect of modernity - characterises all modern institutions, and not the least the political institutions.

The democratic form of government has come to constitute the modern mode of political organisation par excellence, particularly in our part of the world. Its relatively great adaptability to change, together with its emphasis on the classical Enlightenment perception of individual freedom and autonomy, probably explains much of its popularity.

Unlike most earlier forms of government - and like most other modern institutions - democracy depends on trust from the individual members of society in order to function. Significant parts of the current development in Europe may be seen as indications that trust in the democratic system is declining: In the "old" European democracies, we see distrust expressed in declining participation in elections as well as in the revitalisation of non-democratic ideologies. In Eastern Europe, where modern democracy tends to have a rather shorter, or even non-existent, history, large sections of the population seem indifferent or outright opposed to the (re)establishment of democratic rule, due to the lack of trust in politics and politicians in general. This withdrawal of trust in modern parliamentary democratic institutions may be approached in terms of the increasing number of unintended consequences of the late modern period. The inability of contemporary governments to control an increasingly uncontrollable society is easily perceived by the electorate as political incompetence and contempt for those who brought them to power. One should, however, be careful with interpreting the withdrawal of trust as a sign of political apathy. Contemporary political history actually suggests the contrary: political activity in Europe is as high as ever, but it is absorbed by other kinds of political channels than the classical numerical one; in the late modern period, Europeans decreasingly trust conventional politicians, and increasingly work politically in social movements rather than in political parties (Dalton and Kuechler 1990).

Social movements are distinctive of modern society - in that sense, they are thoroughly modern phenomena. Furthermore, social movements have in the modern era developed into more advanced forms than previously known; they have become intrinsic parts of the modern system. Their progress during the modern era is without doubt related to their unique qualities as agents for change. Or, in Giddens' words, "social movements provide glimpses of possible futures and are in some part vehicles for their realisation" (ibid.:161). Therefore, understanding current political changes in Europe means



understanding contemporary European social movements. A large body of social movement theory is available to help us with that task.

## 3 Social Movements

### 3.1 The evolution of social movement theory

Interest in social movements constituted a central element of the early sociological occupation with modern society. In spite of significant differences, the first traditional social movement theoreticians (Rucht 1991:24) had one thing in common: They regarded social movements as anomalies, as caused by grievances existing in society, and thus as pathological social phenomena. At the turn of the century, the group psychology approach, developed by among others Emile Durkheim and Sigmund Freud, was very influential. Empirically, it focused on expressions of collective behaviour events like mass hysteria and "mob"-like crowds. The research was founded on the assumption that crowd-behaviour is basically irrational, and the aim was to find means to control or prevent such dangerous and destructive forces in society.

The Marxist approach to social movements deviated from the view generally held by the traditional social movement theoreticians because it did not perceive the existing social order as the ideal, and because it regarded a social movement - the labour movement - as the constructive driving force in the struggle for socialism. Due to the enormous practical political impact of the labour movement in Europe in this century, the historical-materialist approach exerted considerable influence on the European perception of social movements. One consequence of this was that the social sciences to a large extent came to regard the labour movement as the prototypical modern social movement, and another consequence was that social movement activity in Europe from the early stage was understood in terms of materialist, class-based politics and philosophy.

While Marxism tends to see social movements as such as both positive and natural aspects of modern society, and is more interested in analyzing and evaluating the different movements' messages than in explaining why they come about, the school of Max Weber - the other significant early theoretical tradition in the field of social movement research in Europe - regards them with more suspicion. While agreeing with Marx that the division between labour and capital was the main conflict-line in modern society, Weber saw significant problems related to the social movements which this conflict had brought to the centre of society. Because he feared their destructive powers, he tended to prefer social movements in their mature, institutionalised forms - forms which became readily available for study as the labour movement in the interwar period consolidated its central institutional political positions throughout Europe. In the same way as the labour movement maintained its political position in the postwar period, the inheritance from Marx and Weber continued

to dominate European theoretical approaches to social movements until the late Sixties.

In the United States, the situation was quite different. There, the socialist movement never had any significant influence, and it was the group psychology approach rather than Marxism that came to inspire American social science in the first half of the century. From this source, two theoretical schools with distinctly different focuses emerged. The symbolic interactionist school associated with Herbert Blumer saw social movements in more positive terms than was otherwise common, as this school, through its individual-oriented, social-psychological approach focused on the potential social creativity in the new forms of symbolic interaction within such movements. The structural functionalist school, of which Talcott Parsons was a founder, drew on Emile Durkheim and the early European group-psychology approach as well as on Max Weber in their focus on macro-level structural strains caused by social imbalances during the process of modernisation as reasons for the occurrence of social movements. In spite of significant differences, these two schools later came to merge in the collective behaviour approach, which dominated American research on social movements until the late Sixties (Smelser 1962).

Occurring more or less simultaneously in Europe and the US, the so-called new social movements of the Sixties did only marginally follow the acknowledged patterns of the "old" social movements. The exact ways in which they were perceived to break with the social movement tradition did, however, vary considerably between the European and American social scientific milieux - understandably, since their existing bodies of theory developed on the basis of the "old" social movements were so different. In Europe, the theoretical response to the new social movements quite simply carries their name, while the theories developed in the US constitute the Resource Mobilisation Approach.

The European New Social Movements Approach has as its point of departure a perception of the new social movements as qualitatively very different from the "old" movements. The difference lies both in the values propounded by the movements, their action forms, and their constituencies.

New social movements theory draws on traditional social movement theory in that it focuses on grievances and aspirations caused by social modernisation as explanations of the rise of movements. However, the new movements are results of new kinds of grievances and aspirations, which, according to the theory, unlike the old ones result in a focus on non-material values (or post-material in Inglehart's (1990) terms). This occupation with non-material issues is perceived as a fundamental element of the new social movements, and has earned them labels like "post materialist", or even "post modern" (Eyerman and Jamison 1991).

The action-forms of the new social movements are also interpreted as signs of their qualitative newness. Their small-scale, de-centralised, un-hierarchical style reflects their conscious distancing from the political establishment, but is also related to the fact that such action forms suit the typically one-issue new social movements (in contrast to holistic "old" movements purporting to have

one all-embracing solution), focusing on clearly defined themes like gay rights, anti nuclear power, or environmental issues.

This lack of a single master-narrative guiding the activities of the different new social movements points toward another of their characteristics highlighted by new social movements theory: Rather than working for revolution or other large scale social change, the new movements aim at producing or reconfirming particular collective identities, and at establishing and consolidating group culture (Rucht 1991). This concern with group identity and culture is an indication of the high degree of self-reflexivity which, according to new social movements theory, typifies the members of these movements, who furthermore tend to originate from quite different constituencies than the members of the "old" movements: New social movements recruit from the new middle classes, and from groups more than normally exposed to the negative consequences of modernisation. These constituencies' main motivation for joining is, according to the theory, satisfaction of endangered (non-material) needs, which is sought through compensation for loss or disturbance of identity.

The American Resource Mobilisation Approach regards the new social movements from quite a different angle. It is similar to the traditional social movement theory in that it focuses on collective action as the significant expression of social movements, but unlike this theoretical school - and also unlike the new social movements approach - it finds grievances to be insufficient conditions for collective action, since grievances will exist in all societies. Instead, the approach emphasises availability of resources and opportunities as the essential preconditions for collective action. Thus, compared to the earlier discussed approaches to analyzing social movements, resource mobilisation theory turns the question upside down, in that it focuses on opportunities for rather than reasons for creating social movements. The resource mobilisation approach furthermore deviates from the earlier American theoretical tradition in that it does not perceive collective action as negative, deviant behaviour; rather, it seeks to identify the "objective" interests of the participants in social movements.

The rational actor is a central concept for the resource mobilisation approach, since its understanding of participation in social movements builds on an assumption of individual rational estimation of the costs and benefits involved in this kind of activity. For this line of thinking, the organisation of social movements - if, how, and to which degree they are organised - is of central importance. Good organisation is perceived as a main resource, supposed to both decrease the individual costs of participation, help recruitment to the movement, and generally increase the chances of success in reaching the movement's aims. Moreover, the likelihood that the movement will succeed, following the principles of rational choice, will be an imperative collective incentive for participation in the movement. According to Charles Tilly, one of the central figures within the resource mobilisation approach, the analysis of collective action has five big components: interest, organisation, mobilisation, opportunity, and collective action itself (Tilly 1978:7). These components suggest the overall organisational focus of the approach, and the

degree to which it differs from the identity- and culture-focused European new social movements approach in its understanding of their common objects of research: the new social movements.

While the resource mobilisation approach analyzes rather well the mobilisation-phase of social movements, it is less useful when it comes to explaining "irrational" collective behaviour like suicidal projects in the name of a movement or participation in high-risk movements generally. As a tool for analyzing emerging social movements in contemporary Europe, it has several weaknesses. Firstly, some of the movements which have made themselves most notable lately, like nationalist, fascist, and sectarian movements, can only with difficulty be understood in terms of rationally calculating individual actors. In fact, the RM approach does not theoretically and methodologically differentiate strongly between routinized political activity and the sort of non-routinized political activity normally associated with social movements.

Turning to new social movements theory, the geographical closeness of this approach to the object of research cannot hide the fact that its emphasis on the qualitative "newness" of contemporary movements in our connection makes it an awkward tool. Social movements which are "new" in the approach's sense constitute only a limited part of the total range of current social movements. A fair share of this totality appears to be "neo-old" if anything, since the movements may be said to revive ideas of holism, nationalism, and, to an extent, materialism, and as they tend to recruit from the constituencies of the "old" social movements rather than from those of the new. Thus, the new social movements approach describes well the reflection of the late modern social complexity and fragmentation in the ad hoc-type, one-issue directedness of the new social movements. It does, however, seem unable to deal constructively with the recently occurring movements which do not follow the pattern of the new social movements.

The problems of the new social movements approach may be related to the great emphasis it places on the qualitative differences between "new" and "old" movements. It has lately been claimed by others (see for instance Calhoun 1993c) that this division is not only exaggerated, but actually analytically false. According to this line of argument, the "new" aspects of the new social movements are due mainly to their quantitative, not qualitative, newness, and these "new" aspects could also be found in "old" social movements, when they were at a similar stage of development. In any case, the new social movements approach seems to be rather severely handicapped when it comes to dealing with social movements on a more general level, and may therefore be only of limited use for us.

### **3.2 Recent contributions to social movement theory**

When measured against the analytical needs of a study of processes of social transformation in contemporary Europe, the theoretical approaches discussed so far seem to have in common a simplistic and one-sided way of perceiving their object of study, whether their emphasis is on social grievances, rational actors or post-materialist identities. Seen from a different angle, this may

suggest that the current late modern European social form - unlike previous social forms - is characterised by a lack of one overarching empirical tendency. Put differently, what may be typical for contemporary European social movements is exactly their lack of a typical character - and, perhaps, their sheer multitude, since social movements flourish like never before in Europe.

This late modern multiplicity of social movements calls for theories of a new level of complexity; it requires theories which simultaneously can explain militant neo-nazi groups and animal rights movements. However, the new social movements- and resource mobilisation approaches have continued to dominate the research done on social movements until now (see for instance Morris&Mueller 1992), and the current empirical situation is most often attempted fitted into these somewhat one-sided theoretical frameworks.

Some attempts at filling this theoretical void through developing a "third generation" theoretical synthesis have nonetheless been made. Most of them seem to have in common a preference for the European new social movements approach rather than the American resource mobilisation tradition as a source of inspiration, a preference made clear not the least by their commonly large emphasis on the concept of identity. Apart from that, they approach the theme rather differently. We will examine two of them here.

### 3.2.1 *The cognitive approach*

With what they call a cognitive approach to social movements (Eyerman & Jamison 1991), Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison attempt to straighten out what they see as a biased relationship between the social sciences and social movements. While most sociological approaches to social movements do "perhaps unwittingly serve to bring them under political control" (ibid.:2), their cognitive approach seeks to avoid this disloyalty to the objects of research by studying the movements on their own terms. They are entirely clear about the reason for their concern: As former American student activists they identify with the new social movements trend, and therefore find it natural to study social movements in terms of positive contributions to society rather than as undesired liabilities. Hence, they distance themselves clearly from their American group psychology and collective behaviour-inspired theoretical heritage. As they do not focus on social grievances as sources of social movements, they do, however, on this particular question, lean more towards the resource mobilisation-approach than the new social movements approach.

According to Eyerman and Jamison, their choice of using a historically and politically informed interpretation of a social theory of knowledge as basis for their approach enables them to move beyond the biased, partial, and insufficient ways which have dominated social science's understanding of social movements. Furthermore, this theoretical foundation allows them to treat movements processually, a possibility which is central to them, since they understand social movements basically as activities by which individuals create new kinds of social identities. Hence, they abandon the resource mobilisation approach's occupation with rational actors, and draw instead on the European

tradition's focus on identity (re)construction as a main purpose of social movements.

With such an understanding of social movements as their points of departure, human action obviously becomes a central issue. Eyerman and Jamison link action to their theoretical framework through the concept of cognitive praxis. Because it emphasises the creative role of consciousness and cognition in both individual and collective action, they place this concept centrally in their theory; they do, however, limit the vast empirical field it defines substantially by identifying only the cognitive praxis that transforms groups of individuals into social movements, and which give the movements their particular consciousness, as their main interest.

Hence, social movements are to Eyerman and Jamison (as they are to Giddens) first and foremost carriers of new ideas and new identities. They produce new thoughts, and also new ways of organising these thoughts socially. The exact ways in which this is done by each movement constitute its dimensions of cognitive praxis - the concepts, ideas and intellectual activities which give them a cognitive identity. The movements' collective knowledge, then, is not only the specific issues which they are created around, but also the general world-view assumptions which are shared by the members of a movement. The movement intellectuals - intellectuals who are "produced" by the social movements, but who at the same time play an essential part in the production of a movement's cognitive praxis - are core actors in this process of production. The central role given to these intellectuals by Eyerman and Jamison fits the main objective of their approach, which is to study the processes by which new ideas are formulated by movements and then adopted by the surrounding society.

Social movements are cognitive praxes shaped both by external and internal political processes; therefore, they must be understood in relation to their historical and social contexts. Following this line of thought, Eyerman and Jamison makes a clear distinction between what they call "modern" and "postmodern" social movements. While the modern social movements were results of the modern era, and therefore carried this period's holistic ideas and materialist concerns within their cognitive praxes, the postmodern social movements - which dominate the contemporary movement-arena - are characterised by the non-materialist, particular-issue concerns of postmodern society, according to Eyerman and Jamison, and thereby they again show new social movements theory to be a central source of inspiration for their work.

The cognitive approach to social movements is presented as a comparative approach, both in relation to historical periods, and in relation to political cultures. It is interesting for us that this means by implication that the approach is applicable to all kinds of social movements. Eyerman and Jamison's reading of social movements as results of processes of interaction centering on the articulation of a collective identity immediately appears sufficiently general to be suitable for this implied use. Hence, if the assumptions of Eyerman and Jamison are sound, they may indeed, as they claim, be able to add to the knowledge about both the process of articulating a movement identity (cognitive praxis), about the actors taking part in this process, (movement

intellectuals), and about the contexts of articulation (political cultures and institutions) (ibid.:4).

However, several aspects of the cognitive approach to social movements give reason to be somewhat cautious about applying it to a study of processes of social transformation in contemporary Europe. Concentrating on its advantages first, its main contribution when seen in relation to the new social movements approach - by which it clearly is strongly inspired - seems to be the shift in focus from seeing social movements as products of social wrongs to seeing them as natural parts of (post)modern society, whose presence do not have to be justified. As we remember, this was also Marx' attitude, and thus hardly a new one; nevertheless, it is refreshing in new social movements theory-inspired contexts. Secondly, the approach's occupation with social movements as agents for knowledge production rather than as social phenomena in themselves is interesting. By this shift in focus, they turn social movements into means of study rather than into aims of study, and thereby they seem to free them from some of the empirical specificity which restricts the scope of the new social movement approach so much.

The question still remains, however, of whether this freeing of the object of research from empirical specificity has taken place to a sufficient degree. The legacy of new social movements theory is still very present in Eyerman and Jamison's work. Their analytical approach may probably be applied in studies of most kinds of social movements. However, the fact remains that it is best suited for studies of "nice", progressive social movements of the kind that Eyerman and Jamison identify with; their focus on social movement contributions, and their emphasis on the role of social movement intellectuals, do suggest that this is the case.

Hence, it is not clear to which extent the cognitive approach to social movements is generally applicable. Eyerman and Jamison definitely think that it is, but there is reason to believe that even though they explicitly claim not to state "that all social movements are "progressive""(ibid.:4), and thus implicitly claim that their approach may cover all kinds of social movements, they have developed a theory which suits "progressive" movements primarily. This is illustrated by their chosen example of the American civil rights movement and more recently, in their extensive study of the American student movement of the Sixties.

Their colleague Klaus Eder is perhaps less self-deceiving when stating that "not every form of protest is a social movement. Fascist movements, for example, are forms of collective mobilization, but they are not social movements. They may indirectly contribute to the modernization of society; but this is not their explicit goal - on the contrary. Social movements are those directly and intentionally related to modernization from the seventeenth century on" (Eder 1993:107). At least he is clearer about his way of understanding social movements. The divergence between the definitions of social movements of Eyerman and Jamison on the one hand and Eder on the other, as well as the former's apparent problems with relating to their own formal definition in practice, may be seen as consequences of the general and longstanding problem within social movements research of not having a



commonly agreed upon definition, or even understanding, of the nature of the object of research. This problem has been underlying throughout this presentation of social movement theory, and emphasises the need to be clear about the use of concepts when dealing with social movements. Indeed it may appear that the term social movement itself is intimately linked to the idea of social progress and advancement and to the general modernisation of society. As we shall see, some of these assumptions also colour the work of Cohen and Arato.

### 3.2.2 *Social movements and civil society*

Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato see it as their main task in their voluminous *Civil Society and Political Theory* (1992) to revive the concept of civil society and to make it applicable for analysis of contemporary society. Their objectives are partly a renewal or a refocusing of political theory and partly establishing the parameters for a particular political programme. The latter objective can be seen from their statement that "what we have in mind, above all, is a self-understanding that abandons revolutionary dreams in favor of radical reform that is not necessarily and primarily oriented to the state. We shall define as "self-limiting radicalism" projects for the defense and democratization of civil society that accept structural differentiation and acknowledge the integrity of political and economic systems" (493). Their "working definition" of civil society understands it as "a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication" (ix), the latter linked to the presence of a public sphere. More specifically, civil society consists of the following components: "(1) Plurality: families, informal groups, and voluntary associations whose plurality and autonomy allow for a variety of forms of life; (2) Publicity: institutions of culture and communication; (3) Privacy: a domain of individual self-development and moral choice; and (4) Legality: structures of general laws and basic rights needed to demarcate plurality, privacy, and publicity from at least the state and tendentially, the economy" (346).

In brief, "civil society refers to the structures of socialization, association, and organized forms of communication of the lifeworld to the extent that these are institutionalized or are in the process of being institutionalized" (x). These structures are guaranteed and protected by legal rights that fend off intrusions from the state, in particular.

Their concept of civil society and their political programme take it for granted that in contemporary society radicalism does not any longer mean the total overthrow and dissolution of the economic and political systems. The notion of the functional differentiation of society into economy and state as separate sub-systems with a high degree of autonomy is in their opinion beyond dispute. Opposed to these functional systems is the notion of a life-world, a concept rooted in the phenomenological tradition of sociology, associated with Schutz and Luckmann and ultimately derived from Husserl. This concept is

also central to Jürgen Habermas' *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* (1981) and is there linked to the danger of "the colonisation of the lifeworld" by the economic and political systems, to the idea that both systems can be said to encroach upon the lifeworld or the institutions of civil society. Civil society can thus be said to have a defensive role vis a vis the two systems. However, if that were the whole story, it would be an unwarranted simplification. In addition to civil society, Cohen and Arato introduce the concepts of economic and political society that function as buffers or alternatively as conveyor belts into the economic and political systems. As already mentioned, a similar role may be assigned to the public sphere. Their point is that it is wrong to think of civil society purely in a defensive way as something being encroached upon; civil society may be thought of as the source of excursions into political and economic society and also as the source for a vital public sphere. It would be a more fruitful approach to deepen and democratize the institutions of civil society and influence the institutions of economic and political society than to seal off civil society from any unwanted external intrusions.

With these definitions in mind, their objections against the predominant approaches within social movement theory can be more easily understood. Their objection against the collective behaviour approach is that its concept of collective behaviour, i.e. of non-institutionalised behaviour, is seen as an indication of the breakdown of the norms and institutions of civil society. The approach's theoretical heritage in mass society theory (Kornhauser, Heberle) precludes it from seeing non-institutionalised behaviour as parallel to, and not contrary to, institutionalised behaviour. Despite their putative adherence to pluralism, the approach cannot on its account examine the relation between collective action and the modernisation of civil society. Of course, this was also, as we have seen, the main complaint of the resource mobilisation approach in its emphasis on the rationality of collective conflict and its rejection of the dichotomy between the two types of behaviour.

For the resource mobilisation approach, there is no fundamental dichotomy at all as collective action per se involves the rational pursuit of interests by groups responding organisationally to changes in resources and to changes in opportunities. Nonetheless, what is missing in the approach is an examination of the social preconditions that make these changes in resources and opportunities conducive for mobilisation and organisation. The work of Charles Tilly exemplifies a higher awareness of civil society than that of others within the RM approach as he makes civil society the terrain of collective action, but not, as Cohen and Arato argue, the target of collective action. Tilly introduces two types of collective action, "reactive" and "pro-active" corresponding to "defensive" or "offensive" types of mobilisation, respectively. The former would typically involve defensive mobilisation by communal groups against threats from the outside, whether that be state makers bent on gaining control over the population and its resources or the national economy disregarding local needs or interests. The latter would involve gaining control over power and resources where they did not previously exist, for example at the national level and would imply a higher degree of organisation. Whether defensive or offensive, collective action is seen by Tilly as responses to changes in power

relations. These responses have shifted over time from communal bases of action toward associational bases of action and in the process gained in autonomy. But, as Cohen and Arato argue, this shift in the basis of collective action is itself not explained, only its consequences for types of collective action. Cohen and Arato's point is of course that this shift signifies the emergence of modern civil society as the new terrain for collective action. What is missing from Tilly's account is what they call "the politics of identity" which seeks to describe changes in identity within civil society and secondly, the tendency of Tilly to conflate what they call "the politics of inclusion" with power. Both these faults are due to Tilly's penchant for conceiving of collective action in state - society terms, as defenses against state encroachment or attempts at state conquest.

Their alternative thesis is that in contemporary social movements, a dualistic politics of identity and influence operates, aimed at both civil and political society. Whereas contemporary movements combine both defensive and offensive types as per Tilly's terminology, a new feature is that they no longer protect preexisting traditions from outside interference, but instead create spaces for the creation of new identities and solidarities. In brief, "autonomous, voluntary, and indigenous associations within civil society using and expanding public discourse and public spaces for discourse are the differentia specifica of contemporary social movements" (507). The RM approach is not so much wrong as it is one-sided and monistic due to its insistence on the criterion of success as being to bring an excluded (or challenging) group into the polity. Accordingly, the programme is as follows: "It is therefore incumbent on the theorist to view civil society as the target as well as the terrain of collective action, to look into the processes by which collective actors create the identities and solidarities they defend, to assess the relations between social adversaries and the stakes of their conflicts, to analyze the politics of influence exercised by actors in civil society on those in political society, and to analyze the structural and cultural developments that contribute to the heightened self-reflection of actors" (509).

The emphasis given to "the politics of identity" puts Cohen and Arato within the orbit of the concerns of the new social movements approach which as they observe, focus primarily on issues of social norms and collective identity. However, they are as aware of the opposite pitfall to that of the RM approach: obsessive focus on inclusion into the polity is but a mirror image of the politics of identity if it implies a "retreat to autonomy", abandonment of outward struggle for the inner retreat of communal, sectarian life. This pure identity model is akin to "the status of powerless consumers of change by withdrawing into countercultures or refusing innovations that threaten existing privileges or the cultural integrity of groups" (513). Resistance to change is but a mirror-image of adaptations to it. Indeed, what is required is a dualistic social theory that takes as its point of departure the dual face and dual organisational logic of contemporary social movements. That theory accepts, as we have noted above, the system-lifeworld distinction in order to account for both the defensive and offensive aspects of contemporary movements. The elements would include the politics of identity, relating to cultural norms, individual and

collective identities and social roles; the politics of inclusion, targeting political institutions to gain recognition for new members of political society and to achieve benefits therefrom; the politics of influence, altering the terms of political discourse to make room for new need-interpretations, new identities and new norms; and finally, the politics of reform, aiming at the democratisation of political society (participative democracy) and economic society (industrial democracy). As they argue, "while the democratisation of civil society and the defense of its autonomy from economic and administrative "colonisation" can be seen as the goal of the new movements, the creation of "sensors" within political and economic institutions (institutional reform) and the democratisation of political society (the politics of influence and inclusion), which would open these institutions to the new identities and egalitarian norms articulated on the terrain of civil society, are the means to securing this goal" (526).

While this programme would seem to correspond with Habermas' theory of communicative action, he is nonetheless faulted for seeing the new social movements as basically reactive, as "tendentially antimodern communalist projects of dedifferentiation and withdrawal", as involving "only an anti-institutional, cultural politics". This view would be correct if the politics of identity were the primary characteristic of the new social movements, but this would be to commit oneself to an opposite one-sidedness to that of the proponents of the RM-approach. Be that as it may, this dissension would seem again to raise the question of what is new about the new social movements, bearing in mind that identities by definition have to be particular, if not immutable. Cohen and Arato argue that it is the "emphatic thematisation" of the dualism that puts the new in new social movements, one effect of which appears to be that a movement ceases to be a movement once it crosses the boundaries of system and lifeworld and thereby replicate the organisational structures of its adversaries, following the stage model propounded by Claus Offe (1990) among others. In this setting, organisational maintenance becomes an end in itself whereas in civil society it does not. Even though this dualism is emphatically thematised, it does appear that too a strong an emphasis on the politics of inclusion would seem to obliterate the rationale of the new social movements. Remaining then is the mix of identity and influence politics, and it is a moot choice which one will predominate at any particular time. However, it can be argued that influence without inclusion is ineffectual so that a movement that limits itself to influence would need to seek alliances inside political society to secure legislative approval for its objectives. Even if legislation is indeed adopted, there may be limits to what legislation may achieve in view of the autonomous operations of functional systems and other highly organised sectors of society.

Moreover, the potential for regression cannot be ruled out. As Habermas has observed with reference to Cohen and Arato's work: "Erstens kann sich eine vitale Bürgergesellschaft nur in Kontext einer freiheitlichen politischen Kultur und entsprechender Sozialisationsmuster sowie auf der Basis einer unversehrten Privatsphäre herausbilden - sie kann sich nur in einer schon rationalisierten Lebenswelt entfalten. Sonst entstehen populistische

Bewegungen, die die verhärteten Traditionsbestände einer von kapitalistischen Modernisierung gefährdeten Lebenswelt blind verteidigen. Diese sind in den Formen ihrer Mobilisierung ebenso modern wie in ihren Zielsetzungen antidemokratisch" (Habermas 1992: 449). In other words, civil society can be colonised from within resulting in both regression and anti-democratisation. A politics of identity may not only mean withdrawal to sectarian autonomy, it may also be outwardly exclusionary, thus crowding out other actors and groups within civil society. This possibility is as far as we can see not adequately acknowledged by Cohen and Arato who tend to think of the politics of identity as primarily inwardly directed and not outwardly in the sense of the imposition of categorical identities to the exclusion of others.

As we saw with the cognitive approach of Eyerman and Jamison, Cohen and Arato assume an underlying theory of modernisation and progression which open up room for the definition of new identities as happened in the context of the new social movements from the 60's onwards. They also accept the theory of functional differentiation that give the new social movements its self-limiting role in the sense that they do not aim at comprehensive institutional reform. If that was indeed their aim they would cease to be social movements per se and enter the terrain of political society as interest groups or political parties. If institutional reform is outside the orbit of the new social movements, it would seem their core feature is tied up with notions of identity. As identities are particular, a strong emphasis on identity formation would seem to produce particularist politics, as Habermas argued. This conclusion is, however, contingent upon the acceptance of the system-lifeworld dichotomy as developed by, inter alia, Parsons, Luhmann and Habermas. And, as Calhoun (1993a) has pointed out, Cohen and Arato's reading of civil society is selective, overlooking the tradition of the Scottish moralists (Ferguson, Smith) who saw civil society as encompassing all non-state capacities for social organisation, including private economic enterprise. The French tradition of Montesquieu, Rousseau and Toqueville all stressed the political aspects of civil society and the capacities of autonomous actors to enter into social relations and social networks in order to form intermediate associations and mediating institutions. Both these traditions underline the inclusionary aspects of civil society and the creation and modification of social institutions and both traditions do not operate with notions of system integration so common to newer sociological theory, including the collective behaviour approach. In that respect they may be closer to the resource mobilisation approach.

Despite their self-imposed restrictions, Cohen and Arato have given us some concepts to build further upon. These are the concepts of the politics of identity and the politics of inclusion. To that we now turn.

## 4 The politics of identity and inclusion

### 4.1 Identity formation and citizenship

As we have said above, identities are particular; they distinguish an individual or collectivity from another individual or collectivity. Identities are moreover multiple; the authors of this paper may have shared racial (white) and national (Norwegian) identities, but not a shared gender identity. Thirdly, identities may be innate or socially constructed or there may be mixes where one feature predominates. While racial and gender are innate, they are never entirely so as they tend to be socially reinforced. On the other hand, national identities are clearly socially constructed, though history abounds with examples of attempts to give national identities innate status. Though the concern with identities appear to be universal in the modern age, identities are not as they are constituted by the notion of difference. In this section, we will look at identity formation in connection with citizenship and the role of citizens. As we will argue, citizenship belongs under the rubric of the politics of inclusion, independently of whether citizenship is defined as the legal status of membership in a political community or as virtuous activity in the sense of participating fully in the affairs of the political community. This is so because citizenship confers upon individuals the opportunity to participate in national affairs whether or not citizens make use of this opportunity or not. Nobody would seriously propose that citizenship should be removed from those who, say, do not vote in national or local elections, even though voting is often voiced in terms of a duty of citizens rather than a right, the important distinction being that a right is not lost by choosing not to act upon it.

A more interesting question would be whether citizenship also constitutes an identity of a particular inclusionary kind. However, this claim has been disputed by, among cultural pluralists, who argue that members of certain groups should be incorporated into the political community not only as individuals, but also as members of particular groups, and that their rights should also reflect their status as group members. This notion of "differentiated citizenship" would appear to fly in the face of those who consider citizenship a matter of treating people as individuals with equal rights under the law. This notion, propounded by Iris Martin Young (1989), is argued as follows, "In a society where some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, insisting that as citizens persons should leave behind their particular affiliations and experiences to adopt a general point of view serves only to reinforce the privilege; for the perspective and interests of the privileged will tend to dominate this unified public, marginalizing or silencing those of other groups" (257). She gives two reasons for why equality requires affirming rather than

ignoring group differences. For one, culturally excluded groups are at a disadvantage in the political system, a situation to be remedied by providing "institutionalized means for the explicit recognition and representation of oppressed groups" (259). Secondly, excluded groups have distinctive needs that can only be met through policies that are sensitive to group differences. The criterion for inclusion into the special consideration-category is that of oppression. In our words, the politics of identity plus the politics of inclusion equals the politics of difference, Young's own term for justifiable policies adequate to the context of contemporary multi-cultural society.

This complex relationship between citizenship, identity and difference is a distinctive feature of modernity. While the pre-modern period recognised difference as differences in social standing and status, the modern period is indeed characterised by the recognition of difference as a necessary component in the politics of inclusion (Kymlicka and Norman 1994, Kymlicka 1995). The common complaint against liberalism is that liberal theory operates with a concept of equality that does not accept special considerations for groups, and that the liberal state should be neutral in matters of identity (as for example the American state in questions of religious denominations). However, liberals have countered that the criteria for inclusion as disadvantaged are ultimately indeterminate. Indeed, in the current US context, the only truly non-disadvantaged group may be said to be the relatively affluent, relatively young, heterosexual males, thus possibly inducing them to claim special consideration as a minority in their own right. One possible consequence of the politics of difference may be that in the scramble for special considerations, the wider purpose of citizenship to forge a common identity is left aside, as Schlesinger (1992) observes of current trends in American society. Another consequence may be, as we have hinted to in the case of white males, that every group would strategically position themselves so as to claim minority or disadvantaged status. Of course, the further subdivisions of identities proceed, the less likely it is that any identity can claim majority status.

A key word in this context is recognition, as identities are never claimed without seeking recognition for these identities from the wider community (Calhoun 1994: 20ff.). The absence of such recognition has adverse effects on self-recognition. Identity politics are political because they involve struggles seeking not only recognition, but also on occasion power and the target is most frequently, as we saw above, not civil society, but organisations outside, in particular the state. Identity politics have also to do with refusing or rejecting identities imposed or fixed from others on the outside. Consequently and inspired by deconstructionist approaches, identity claims have been criticised as being repressive per se. The new social movements are an example of an attempt to escape from social conformity in their emphases on liberation and lifestyles. But, as we have observed above, there is a tendency to use as the principle of selection "nice", vaguely leftist movements, forgetting that identity politics has as much to do with religious fundamentalism, ethnic resentment towards strangers, nationalism and similar "less nice" collective phenomena (Merkl and Weinberg 1993; Juergensmeyer 1993).

New social movements can be faulted for drawing too sharp boundaries between individual self-fulfilment and the demands of society, thus encouraging what Charles Taylor (1992a: 17ff., 1992b) calls a kind of "soft relativism", meaning that all identity claims to recognition have the same standing without further judgement. This would have the perhaps unintended effect of strengthening individualism and substituting tolerance for mutual respect and acceptance. Emphasis on the aspect of choice (of lifestyle) and difference (from other individuals or groups) obscures that claims for recognition, respect and legitimacy would need some form of common framework on the basis of which different claims can be assessed and judged. As Calhoun points out (1994: 25f.), claims for recognition are directed at the polity and at the state, thus engaging with the prevalent norms and values of those institutions and secondly, claims stand a better chance of recognition if internal group divisions can be kept to a minimum, for example that the gay community as a community is not further subdivided by gender and by race, each claiming a unique identity.

While multiple, fragmentary identities may be bad for concerted collective action, the imposition of categorical identities (White 1992) may be as bad for those individuals belonging to the category. What may be called in-group essentialism, i.e. that one singular identity predominates to the detriment of others, settles the tension between a singular, unitary identity as against divided and cross-cutting identities in favour of the former and assigns fixity and settled accomplishment to what is an on-going project. The liberal critique of in-group essentialism would be that granting recognition to the claims of the group (external rights) would be to deny the rights of individuals inside the group to dissension (internal rights). One set of rights (collective) would, on the liberal account, be clearly incompatible with another set of rights (individual). The trade-off is real and unavoidable.

The claims for recognition can be met in various ways. Kymlicka and Morgan (1994: 372ff.) mention special representation rights and multicultural rights as examples of recognition that would be inclusionary. Whereas the former would secure for the concerned groups a place in political society, the latter would secure similar space for cultural expression in civil society. None of these special considerations would go against an inclusionary, integrative definition of citizenship stressing opportunity to participate in the political affairs of the country. However, the third example of recognition, self-government rights, would seem to pose problems for this political definition of citizenship as these rights would neither be integrative or inclusionary. As they argue, "while both representation and multicultural rights take the larger political community for granted, demands for self-government reflect a desire to weaken the bonds with the larger community and, indeed, question its very nature, authority, and permanence. If democracy is the rule of the people, group self-determination raises the question of who the "people really are" (1994: 375). This question raises problems for the idea of a "differentiated citizenship" as well as for a "common citizenship" less susceptible to accommodating claims to recognition of difference. As they rightly observe, agreement on questions of political and social justice along the



lines suggested by John Rawls did not keep Norway from seceding from Sweden in 1905 nor may it keep Quebec within the Canadian federation. The penultimate question for a theory of citizenship is for them, "how can we construct a common identity in a country where people not only belong to separate political communities but also belong in different ways - that is, some are incorporated as individuals and others through membership in a group?" (1994: 377). That raises the question of national identity as independent or contingent upon ethnic identity, a topic to which we now turn.

## 4.2 Ethnic and national identities

In this section the central question is whether national identity follows from ethnic identity or whether the former constitutes a type of identity which is distinctly different from the latter. A great deal of the literature on nations and nationalism can be grouped according to their standpoint on this question (Calhoun 1993b). Hobsbawm takes a clear stand when he argues that "the basic characteristic of the modern nation and everything connected with it is its modernity" (1990:14). Disregarding the tautology of the definition, Hobsbawm sees nationhood as a phenomenon belonging to modernity and not as a continuation of an ethnic community stretching back into promordial<sup>\*</sup> times. An indication of its belonging to modernity would be to see it as inherently linked to the concepts of statehood and popular sovereignty. Nationhood is in this sense a product of statehood and not the other way around and the modern concept of citizenship with individual rights centred on the state a natural outgrowth of this process.

Modernization theory built on this idea with its concepts of "state-building" and "nation-building" as the natural precursors of individual, state-centered rights. As the emphasis was on incorporation in territorial and cultural terms, local and ethnic identities were merged or fused into a higher entity. This aspect is evident from Gellner's stress upon "the crystallization of new units, suitable for the conditions now prevailing, though admittedly using as their raw material the cultural, historical and other heritances from the pre-nationalist past" (1983: 49). This is also evident from Haas' explanation, drawing upon Tönnies's famous distinction between "gemeinschaft" and "gesellschaft", "as social life has been transformed by industrialization and social mobilization into something resembling a modern Gesellschaft based on interest calculation, the nation and nationalism continue to provide the integrative cement that gives the appearance of modernity" (1964: 465). In a later review, Haas stresses the legal-rational aspect of nationalism, "Nationalism is the convergence of territorial and political loyalty irrespective of competing foci of affiliation, such as kinship, profession, religion, economic interest, race or even language. Nationalism is "modern" because it stresses the individual's search for identity with strangers in an impersonal world, a world no longer animated by corporate identities...Nation-building, infusing a sense of national identity, depends, in my argument, on the victory of the legal-rational form over its potential competitors" (1986: 710f.) A rational society would be one that orders itself on

the basis of reciprocal exchange relations among its members guided by a common norm of fairness.

From these strongly functionalist accounts of nationalism and modernity it can be inferred that as long as nationalism is tinged with ethnicity it is bad for modernity while its absence is a good thing. The paradigmatically opposite cases of this admixture would be Germany as an illustration of the former and France of the latter. French nationalism is construed according to a founding myth, in which the political aspects of the founding and the idea of citizenship is accentuated. In the German case, nationalism grew out of a myth of a pre-existing ethnic identity and citizenship came to be seen as an outgrowth of membership of the ethnic group. While immigration and the granting of legal residency may be as difficult in both countries, it has been easier to obtain citizenship in France than in Germany (Brubaker 1993). As other theorists have pointed out (Hagtvet and Rokkan 1981: 147), late centre-building within culturally highly homogenous territories is a historical trajectory shared by Germany and Italy, both of which succumbed to fascism/nazism in this century and which sets them apart from other forms of authoritarian regimes (Spain, Portugal) as well as from those countries which did not succumb to one or the other brand of authoritarianism. In other words, nations based on ethnical homogeneity would seem, perhaps paradoxically, to be more volatile entities than nations founded on the ideas of sovereignty and Enlightenment opposition to tradition.

The alternative account, stressing ethnic continuity, should not be seen as presupposing a notion of ethnic homogeneity. As argued by Barth (1969) and others, ethnic identity formation is more a matter of self-ascription than it is of "objective" ascription by others. In opposition to the primordialist school, emphasizing emotional ties to family and kinship, Barth underlines the instrumental aspects of ethnic identity formation. Social organisation of ethnic identity does not arise out of shared cultural characteristics; cultural identity is the product, not the precondition, of the social organisation of ethnic groups. Barth, by turning primordialism on its head, highlights the instrumental, situational and adaptative aspects of group formation in that social relevant factors are more diagnostic for membership than any overt, "objective" differences generated by other factors, relating to primary group membership.

The ethnic continuity thesis has been argued most strongly in recent scholarship by Smith (1986, 1991), "modern nations and nationalism have only extended and deepened the meanings and scope of older ethnic concepts and structures. Nationalism has certainly universalized these structures and ideals, but modern "civic" nations have not in practice really transcended ethnicity or ethnic sentiments" (1986: 216). To believe otherwise, he goes on to argue, is to engage in a Western mirage, reality-as-wish. Continuity is not identity; the crucial moment is the transformation of an ethnies into a nation, but, unlike the modernists, nations retain an ethnic core after this transformation. This argument is supported by Connor's concept of "ethnonationalism" (1994). In a seminal article, "Nation-building or nation-destroying?", published originally in 1972, Connor attacks a set of assumptions that he argues to have guided or even dominated American "modernist" scholarship on this topic. These

assumptions include, inter alia, confusing the concepts of state and nation, underestimating the emotional power of ethnic nationalism while overestimating the influence of materialism and rationalism upon human affairs, assuming that greater contact among groups will lead to greater commonality and that assimilation is a uni-directional process. Last, but not least, there is the tendency to extrapolate from American and First World experiences to the study of Third World countries by advocating these experiences as models of the future for the non-European countries.

The modernist counter-argument would be that there are at any time more ethnies about than there are nations and that this must be seen as an indication of ethnic identity not being a sufficient factor for the rationalist-industrialist nation-building project. The primordialists would then argue to the contrary that if the above hypothesis is true, then research should be concentrated on those specific factors involved in the transformation from ethnies to nations. Smith suggests that this can be done by tracing "a genealogy of nations" combining cultural and structural variables (1986: 209-226). In his later work, he differentiates between the Western conception of national identity, which is associated with citizenship and an Eastern (covering East Europe and Asia) in which national identity is defined by membership in a community of common descent.

### **4.3 Categorical and relational identities**

These civic and ethnic models of national identity account for the two major alternatives in the contemporary world. Following Will Kymlicka, we may call these models "political membership" and "cultural membership", respectively (Kymlicka 1989: chs.7-8). What is common to both, is the notion, as we noted above, of categorical identities. Calhoun (1993b: 230) refers to Ekeh (1990) who has noted a tendency in social anthropology to speak of ethnic group instead of tribe. This would have the effect of substituting a categorical identity for a relational one, of playing down kin relations in favour of the concept of individual equivalence. Put differently, holding citizenship would be an example of a categorical identity as you (normally) can hold only one and thereby distinguish yourself from those who are not citizens of your country, but of others, whereas family membership can only be conceived as a relational identity. Ethnic group membership, as Barth conceives of it, would be another example of categorical identity as the group is constituted by its borders to other groups and not by its internal relations (as would a family). Nations are similarly constituted in the international systems of states as individually equivalent independent of acreage and population size by the prevailing international law doctrine of "juridical statehood" (Jackson 1990). It is thus typical of modernity to apply the idea of individuation to nations as much as to individuals, viewing both as autonomous and self-determining entities (Bloom 1990). Just as individuals can claim self-determination, so do nations at the risk, however, of begging the question of what the "self" in self-determination is.

One of the insights of Anderson is his idea of the nation as a categorical identity, i.e. as the imagined community, "imagined because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in their minds of each lives the image of their communion...it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (1991: 6f.) Inequality and exploitation are concepts signifying vertical structures, and the absence of comradeship cutting across relative positions on these structures. Anderson's evocative metaphor of the nation as "a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time" parallels Giddens' defining feature of modernity as the emptying of time and space and the disembedding of social relationships. Anderson devotes considerable attention to devices of categorisation such as censuses, maps and museums and to print capitalism as a medium that connects individuals across time and space.

Both "political" and "cultural" definitions of membership, despite their differences, stress categorical identities and, according to Calhoun, "underestimate the importance of the institutions, networks and movements that knit people together across lines of diversity internal to nations and states" (1993a: 388), i.e. the problems of social integration. There is thus a need to join the discussion of the idea of the nation and the idea of social integration by joining the concepts of categorical and relational identities to understand the two senses in which political communities are constituted: "The first is the bounded nature of all political communities, and the embeddedness of all claims to constitute a distinct and autonomous political community in relationships of contraposition to other such communities or claimants. The second is the web of relationships that constitutes a people (or nation) as a social collectivity existing independently of common subjection to the rule of a particular state" (1993a: 390). The second sense of community is of course what we have discussed above under the rubric of civil society. The link or the join would be the extent to which there is a space for public discourse and intermediate associations.

Nationalism would then be malevolent to the extent it claims national identity as categorical and fixed and trumps other identities, whether they be gender, class, or region, and to the extent it monopolises the legitimate sources of identity. Calhoun finds that one reason why nationalism appears to be a successor ideology of communism in the post-communist countries is their shared feature of suppressing space for the articulation of alternative identities. To internal conformity can be added the external projection of resentment (Greenfeld 1992). But it need not be the case that nationalism only takes malevolent forms, and Tamir (1993) has been bold enough to argue how nationalism can be combined with respect for personal autonomy and cultural diversity. The point of this discussion has been to show some of the uses of the concept of identity, its fixity vs. its fluidity. We would like to round up this section by presenting a figure taken from Tilly (1978: 63), based on White, which captures the basic two dimensions. It may be said that the greatest invention of social science is the 2 x 2 table and we see no reason to dispute

that here. We also would agree with Tilly's comment that the figure gives "a powerful distillate of the most insipid wines in the sociological cellar - group taxonomies" (1978: 62). The important thing for us is that it provides a heuristic device for identifying types of collective action and social movements according to the two concepts of identity we have been concerned with. One dimension is the category: people sharing some particular feature which set them apart from others, say citizenship in a particular country. The other dimension is the network: people linked together by direct or indirect bonds. These dimensions correspond to categorical identity and relational identity, respectively. The extent of categorical identity is measured by catness on the y axis and the extent of relational identity by netness on the x axis. For any social science analysis both categories and actors are needed, and the combination of both, i.e. catness and netness, yields catnet or the group. A set of individuals is a group to the extent it comprises both a category and a network. The degree of organisation can be measured diagonally on the xy-axis as a function of catness and netness. High degree of organisation is a function of high catness and high netness.

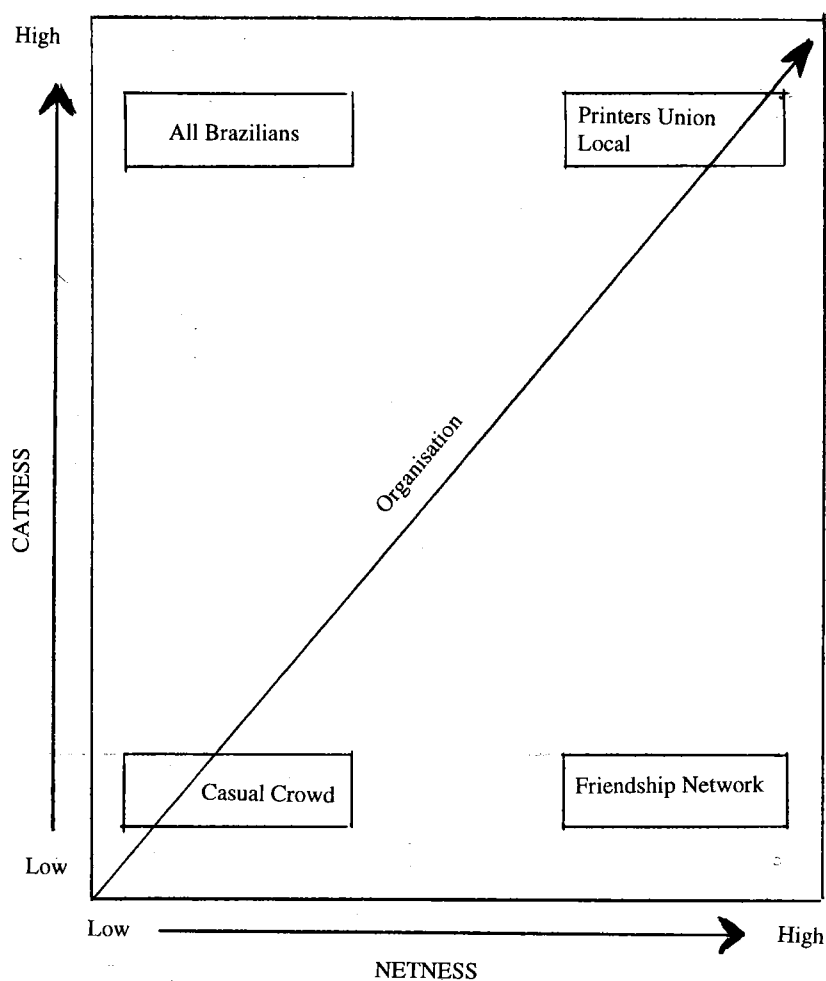


Figure 1: Components of Organisation (Tilly 1978: 63)

Looking at the four combinations of catness and netness we would find the crowd in the lower left-hand box, characterised by low scores on both dimensions. The crowd was the typical study object of the collective behaviour approach, the epitome of non-institutionalised, non-routinised behaviour. In the lower right-hand box we would find friendship networks or, following the terminology we have been using here, the institutions of civil society. They would typically provide for a high degree of relational identity, but a low degree of categorical identity. Cohen and Arato's proposal for the democratisation of civil society would then imply a strengthening of relational identities. Coming to the upper left-hand box, we find "all Brazilians", or, as we would say, the "imagined community". Strong on catness, but low on netness, this would be a defining feature of national identity. In the upper right-hand box, we find the Printers Union Local, the union studied by Lipset, Trow and Coleman (1956). The study tested the famous thesis of Robert Michels (1949) on "the iron law of oligarchy" and found that the union had both distinct, compelling identities and extensive, absorbing interpersonal networks. High scores on both dimensions would yield a high degree of organisation. In this box, we would find the social movement organisations studied by the proponents of the resource mobilisation approach. The accent would be on inclusiveness: how much time, energy and network interaction are expended and engaged in by group members. To use our terminology, these groups would typically be located at the interstices of civil and political society.

This taxonomy can also be applied to international society if we accept the notion of parallel personal and national individuation as typical of modernity (Bloom 1992). In the lower left-hand corner we would find the concept of "international anarchy" typical of the realist school of international relations. This school argued that the prime objective of states is to maximize national interest and security, mainly by military means. In the lower right-hand box we would find "international co-ordination", institutions established for the purpose of co-ordinating relations among states. The first international organisations were basically of a co-ordinating, non-collaborative nature, stressing the netness dimension more than the catness dimension. In the upper left-hand box we might put "world community" as the imagined community of the present system of states. Frequent references to the opinion of the world community or statements that the world community should act on this or that issue are indicative of the idea of corporeal entity that corresponds to our definition of categorical identity. Finally, in the upper right-hand corner we would suggest putting "international organisation" with clear distinctions between members and non-members and with networks for membership interactions. Regional organisations like the European Union may be said to both possess a high categorical identity vis a vis non-members and other regions of the world as well as a relational identity as a network for the interaction of member states. However, "the law of oligarchy" applies as much to international organisations as to national, and the present tensions within the EU very much reflect the extent to which the EU is heading towards the sort of corporate, corporeal entity which we find representative of categorical identity.

Taxonomies are not theories; they serve as heuristic devices to outline the contours of a field for further theoretical exploration as well as empirical investigation. Our objective has been to do exactly that; to outline the contours of a field in order to come up with suggestions for research. Some pointers are given by White, Tilly, Calhoun and by Somers and Gibson (1994) with their concepts of "narrative identity" and "relational setting", drawing upon McIntyre (1981) and Taylor (1989). These approaches would stress the processual and relational aspects of identity at the expense of the categorical aspects. A narrative identity is defined thus by Somers and Gibson, "while a social identity or categorical approach presumes internally stable concepts, such that under normal conditions entities within that category will act predictably, the narrative identity approach embeds the actor within relationships and stories that shift over time and space and thus precludes categorical stability in action (1994: 65). On the other hand, a relational setting is "a pattern of relationships among institutions, public narratives and social practices. As such it is a relational matrix, similar to a social network. Identity formation takes shape within these relational settings of contested but patterned settings among narratives, people and institutions" (1994: 70). Some social scientists like Anthony Giddens (1990: 12ff.), Charles Tilly (1984: 11) and Michael Mann (1986: 2) have argued for doing away with the concept of society altogether as it obscures the patterned relationships among individuals, institutions and social and cultural practices. The basic unit for study would thus not be the individual in society, but the social relationship, the interaction of two or more individuals, as Tilly notes, referring to Sorokin (1984: 28). The utility of White's taxonomy would be, *inter alia*, to turn categorical distinctions (dichotomies) into empirically distinguishable continua.

For our purposes, we find that these concepts are useful to work with and investigate further. As our focus is on collective identities and social movements, these concepts provide tools for analysing collective action domestically, but also as we have tried to show, internationally. It remains to draw some conclusions and to make suggestions for further research. To that we now finally turn.

## 5 Conclusions and suggestions for further research

Our objective in this review has been to draw up the outline of a field for further study, theoretical explorations as well as empirical investigations. The idea has been to provide the prospective student of collective identities and social movements with at least the rudiments of a tool box with which to work. We started out by delineating some salient features of modernity as a way of situating social movements within a social and historical context. We then proceeded to describe the assumptions of the collective behaviour, resource mobilisation and new social movements approaches and recounted some of the criticisms which have been raised against them. In the process we devoted considerable attention to the work of Eyerman and Jamison on cognitive praxes and of Cohen and Arato on civil society, both recent additions to the NSM approach. Both were faulted for their selective definition of social movements which we found to be biased in favour of certain types of movements while overlooking others. Therefore, we continued the search for a framework that would be sufficiently broad-based and neutral to cover all kinds of movements. Such a framework was found in the juxtaposition of categorical and relational/narrative identities which we find to be a tool that is suited to the analysis of the multiplicity of identities.

On the basis of the above we would like to suggest three areas where more research may be needed. First, we would suggest research on the concept of differentiated citizenship and the phenomenon of multiculturalism. This is a topic which is indeed very topical at the moment. In the US, it has given rise to heated debates about the content of the curriculum in colleges and universities and about political correctness. Generally speaking, this research project would be about the relationship between political membership and cultural membership and the degree to which these should be or not be overlapping. As noted above, can a country survive with separate political communities and would the granting of separate cultural membership be the first step towards separate political membership? Kymlicka and Morgan would answer in the negative, while Safran sees in multiculturalism a concession to the forces of anti-modernity (1994: 69). As we noted above, there remains a lot of work on a theory of citizenship appropriate to the contemporary age.

Secondly, we would suggest more work on the concept and theories of social movements. We have noted that much of the current work is oriented to progressive, democratic movements. But movements may also be regressive, anti-liberal and anti-democratic. Theories need to account for both similarities and differences in recruitment, organisation structure and methods of operation among the full range of movements, whether progressive or regressive. In-built biases excluding the latter type of movements, even if conceding good reasons for doing so, do not add to our general knowledge about social movements.



Thirdly, more work needs to be done on the emergence and changes of identities. We have used the concepts of categorical, relational and narrative identities to grasp some of these facets of identity. Within sociology there is a thriving field of network studies, and anthropology has similarly analysed networks as relational identities in studies of kinship. This line of research seems well suited for local-level studies of the composition of identities and the saliency of particular identities at points in time, drawing both on social position and narratively mediated traditions.

These proposals are merely meant to be suggestive. Other threads may be explored, but the above does point to both theoretical and empirical research questions needed to be more fully worked out.

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