

Cambridge Cultural Social Studies

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Music and social movements

Mobilizing traditions in the twentieth century

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On social movements and culture

The new sensibility has become a political factor. This event, which may well indicate a turning point in the evolution of contemporary societies, demands that critical theory incorporate the new dimension into its concepts, project its implications for the possible construction of a free society.

Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (1969: 23)

Social movements and cultural transformation

Social movements are interpreted in this book as central moments in the reconstitution of culture. In the creative turmoil that is unleashed within social movements, modes of cultural action are redefined and given new meaning as sources of collective identity. For brief, intensive moments, the habitual behavior and underlying values of society are thrown open for debate and reflection, and, as the movements fade from the political center stage, their cultural effects seep into the social lifeblood in often unintended and circuitous ways.

It is our contention that both the culture of everyday life – the values, mores, and habits that form the basis of social behavior – and the “art worlds” of cultural expression are deeply affected by the innovative activities, the exemplary cultural actions, that take place in social movements. In the 1960s, Herbert Marcuse emphasized the aesthetic dimension of the movements of the time, suggesting that it was primarily in art and music that social movements “re-membered” traditions of resistance and critique (Marcuse 1969). More recently, Richard Flacks, in his analysis of the American “tradition of the Left,” has indicated how social movements have often been more important as cultural than as political actors (Flacks 1988). This book continues along the lines staked out by Marcuse and

Flacks by offering a theoretically informed reflection on the relations between social movements and culture.

Our claim is that, by combining culture and politics, social movements serve to reconstitute both, providing a broader political and historical context for cultural expression, and offering, in turn, the resources of culture – traditions, music, artistic expression – to the action repertoires of political struggle. Cultural traditions are mobilized and reformulated in social movements, and this mobilization and reconstruction of tradition is central, we contend, to what social movements are, and to what they signify for social and cultural change.

These processes have generally been neglected in social theory and in cultural studies, where responsibility for change is usually attributed either to anonymous, universal forces, such as modernization, capitalism, or imperialism, or to charismatic leaders and powerful individuals. This book argues, in opposition to these dominant approaches, that the collective identity formation that takes place in social movements is a central catalyst of broader changes in values, ideas, and ways of life. We intend to give social movements the recognition they deserve as key agents of cultural transformation.

In the following chapters, we will consider the culturally transforming aspects of social movements primarily in relation to music. Music and song have been important in the formation, and remembrance, of a wide range of social movements, but these musical components of collective identity have seldom been examined explicitly in the social movement, or broader sociological, literature. By focusing on the interaction of music and social movements, we want to highlight a central, even formative aspect of cultural transformation. And we want to offer a new kind of contextual understanding for students of popular music and culture.

We conceive of these relations between culture and politics, between music and movements, as collective learning processes, in continuation of what we have previously characterized as a cognitive approach to social movements. In our previous work, we have sought to identify the knowledge-producing activities that are carried out within social movements, and have attempted to indicate how this “cognitive praxis” has affected scientific research programs and professional intellectual identities. Social movements have provided contexts for the politicization of knowledge, and the effects have often been profound on scientific theorizing, disciplinary identities, and even technological developmental trajectories (Eyerman and Jamison 1991). The aim of this book is to redirect the cognitive approach to music and to consider musical expression in social movements as a kind of cognitive praxis.

The labor movement, the civil rights movement, the antiwar movement, and the feminist and environmental movements have all largely disappeared as living political forces in our societies, but they remain alive, we contend, in the collective memory. These and other social movements have all been more than merely political actors; their significance has been also – in many ways even more so – cultural (Darnovsky, Epstein, and Flacks 1995). Reducing them to politics, as most students of social movements tend to do, is to ignore a great deal of what social movements actually represent. In essence, it is to relegate them to the dustbin of history, to a nostalgic activism that at best can serve to inspire new politics, but all too often evokes little academic or political interest. The attempts, for example, by Doug McAdam (1988), to revive the spirit of the civil rights movement, and by Jack Whalen and Richard Flacks (1989) to trace the impact of the “sixties generation” through empirical analysis of the life histories of activists have unfortunately fallen victim to changing political and academic fashion. The other tendency typically followed in cultural studies and the humanities, namely to limit attention to artistic or literary movements, frequently downplays the political basis, or underlying motivation, for many cultural innovators. Among sociologists like Howard Becker (1982) and Diana Crane (1987), for example, artistic creation is placed in social contexts of “art worlds” or “avant-garde movements,” but the broader links to politics and social movements are barely noticed. The political movements have thus generated one sort of academic literature, while the cultural movements have generated very many others, subdivided and differentiated along genre, disciplinary, and national lines. It sometimes seems as if politics and culture were pursued on different planets.

The few analysts who have tried to link the two have provided us with some important starting points. Alberto Melucci, following in the tradition of Alain Touraine, has long stressed the centrality of the cultural aspects of social movements, as did earlier students of “collective behavior” (see Melucci 1989). For Melucci, movements are characterized as a kind of symbolic action, by which new forms of collective identity are created. The emphasis is on the psychological attributes of identity formation, on the meanings that individuals derive from participation in movements, and the results of movements are seen as codes or signs that challenge the dominant political order. It is an impressive sociological theory that Melucci presents in his most recent work, a major achievement in linking structure and action, and in infusing meaning into the study of social movements (Melucci 1996). And yet the actual cultural work that is carried out in social movements is given little attention. By viewing social movements through the deductive, or rationalist, lens of what C. Wright Mills once called

“grand” sociological theory (Mills 1959), Melucci unintentionally transforms social movements into abstract concepts: into fields, arenas, forms, logics, frames, and symbols.

The work of R. Serge Denisoff, and, more recently, Ray Pratt, provides us with another point of departure (Denisoff 1972, Pratt 1990). Here the emphasis is on the cultural work of social movements themselves, the songs and the singers, to be precise. Like Crane and Becker in the world of art, the sociologist in this case is a descriptive categorizer of reality, giving particular songs and singers social functions or roles, and thus practicing a form of what Mills termed “abstracted empiricism.” The many other students of musical and cultural movements who have provided so much of the “data” for our effort here are not to be faulted for neglecting the cultural activity that takes place in social movements. The problem is rather that the empirical material is separated out from broader patterns and conceptions of social change, and, indeed, separated from other domains of social life, becoming part of a sociological subfield, the sociology of music, art, or culture.

Our effort attempts to find a middle ground between grand theory and abstracted empiricism. Like Melucci, we seek to link politics and culture, but we want to lower the level of abstraction. Rather than imposing a language of discourse and coding onto the substance of social movements, we want to extract the cultural aspects from real social movement activity. Rather than constructing a grand sociological theory of social movements, we want to link social movement theory to cultural studies. By considering the cultural aspects of social movements as cognitive praxis, and thus viewing them through the lens of a critical theory of knowledge, we seek to avoid the opposite danger of abstracted empiricism. Our examples are, as it were, “theory laden”; they are selected to answer a theoretical question, namely how do social movements contribute to processes of cognitive and cultural transformation?

We have earlier argued that social movements are important sources of knowledge production, both scientific and non-scientific, and that it is, in large measure, through the knowledge interests of social movements that paradigmatic, or cosmological, assumptions about reality, as well as scientific approaches to nature and technology, are given new substantive content. Social movements provide an important context for at least some of the scientific revolutions, the formulation of new scientific paradigms, that Thomas Kuhn brought to widespread attention in the 1960s (Kuhn 1970). In our day, feminist theory and women’s studies, African-American studies, and the wide range of environmental sciences and social ecological theories have been strongly shaped by the cognitive intervention of social

movements. These social movements, like the labor movement in the past, have also provided new career opportunities, as well as training grounds for the testing of new ideas, which have later been translated into professional activities by academics and other intellectuals.

In this book, we want to extend our approach by examining the ways in which social movements contribute to processes of cultural transformation, particularly in relation to music. On the one hand, social movements challenge dominant categories of artistic merit by making conscious – and problematic – the taken-for-granted frameworks of evaluation and judgment. This they do on a discursive level as well as in performance practices, by experimenting with new aesthetic principles and creating new collective rituals. On the other hand, social movements utilize the media of artistic expression for communicating with the larger society and, by so doing, often serve to (re)politicize popular culture and entertainment. In music, art, and literature, social movements periodically provide an important source of renewal and rejuvenation, by implanting new meanings and reconstituting established aesthetic forms and genres. In more general terms, through their impact on popular culture, mores, and tastes, social movements lead to a reconstruction of processes of social interaction and collective identity formation.

Political movements or cultural movements?

These cultural political activities are not necessarily progressive nor need they always be morally commendable. In the twentieth century, traditions have been mobilized by movements with a wide range of political agendas, from the fascist and communist movements of the interwar years through the new social movements of the 1960s and on to the movements of ethnic nationalism of the 1980s and 1990s. The cultural work of many of these social movements has been regressive, if not reactionary, in that the selective transformation of tradition has often been aggressively directed toward the non-privileged others, those who have fallen outside the culturally defined categories of acceptance. The “reactionary modernism” of the Nazis, as well as the religious intolerance that is to be found in many contemporary forms of fundamentalism, is derived from mobilizing cultural traditions for political purposes in ways that are directly comparable to the “progressive” movements that we take up in this book – movements, we admit, with which we share a basic sympathy.

Whether progressive or reactionary, what is at work in almost all social movements, we would claim, is an active reworking of cultural resources, both an inventive, creative work of artistic experimentation and a critical,

reflective work of evaluation. And it is the cultural effects that often live on; it is through songs, art, and literature – and as ritualized practices and evaluative criteria – that social movements retain their presence in the collective memory in the absence of the particular political platforms and struggles that first brought them into being.

In actual social movements, this cultural work is often subsumed to more immediate political tasks, and is seldom examined in an explicit way, either by activists or observers. Indeed, many activists are at pains to distinguish the political from the cultural in social movement activity. And, partly as a result of this separation, social movements are usually discussed and interpreted in political terms: ideologies, tactics, issues, campaigns, strategies, organizations. The dominant interpretative frameworks portray movements as instrumental actors, channeling material, human, and organizational resources into political struggles. What is of interest is the effectiveness with which social movements are able to achieve their political goals, while most analysts pay little attention to the deeper and more long-lasting impact that social movements have on processes of cultural transformation. While movement “cultures” have come to be taken more seriously in recent years, there is still little attempt to focus analysis directly on the cultural work that is actually done in social movements (Johnston and Klandermans 1995).

For many empirical researchers of social movements, culture is viewed as a “frame” that structures the “real” movement of political activity, while for theorists like Alberto Melucci social movements are, as it were, reduced to a semiotic culture of codes and symbolic meanings. Our ambition here is not to belittle either contribution, but rather to focus on the essential tension between the political and the cultural, which, we suggest, is crucial for our understanding of social change. Such a focus can also provide a valuable corrective to the emphasis on discourse and language that characterizes so much of the ongoing debates about modernity.

Most of the literature on the “postmodern condition” focuses on texts, either actual literary products or the dialogic practices that can be read into social interactions. Society is treated, for the most part, as a web of discourses, and the emphasis is placed on the construction of identity and meaning through various forms of written articulation. The text, however, whether it be a book or a “social text,” is usually treated as a thing in itself, decontextualized and disembodied. This often makes for fascinating analyses of particular cultural representations, and has led to the production of an entire new methodological arsenal for extracting the essence out of an exemplary document; but all too often the deeper structures of social and cultural change are left unexamined. The importance of history, and

especially the role of collective action and social movements in reconstructing the contexts in which all texts are made and remade, is bracketed out. In order to concentrate on the specificity of texts, the generality of contexts is dismissed. We do not want to resurrect the “structuralist” theories that the postmodernists have challenged, but we do contend that there are very serious limitations in the attempts to read society in textual terms.

While there exists a vast number of accounts by historians of art, music, and literature on the cultural activities of political movements, most remain curiously underutilized by students of social movements. All too often, these accounts are written in the idioms of cultural history, where aesthetic considerations take precedence over social understanding. There are exceptions, to be sure, but it can be claimed that the voluminous writings about the relations between communist, fascist, and Nazi movements and culture have not had a great deal of impact on our understanding of social movements. There are exciting studies about the artists of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Weimar Republic, and there are fascinating portrayals of the use of art and performance rituals of left- and right-wing movements of the interwar period. Biographies provide detailed accounts of the involvement of many leading artists, musicians, and writers in political campaigns – from the resistance movements of the 1930s and 1940s to the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s.

For our purposes, these accounts open up a rich field for sociological analysis. On the one hand, they point to the crucial importance of political commitment in much artistic production. So many of the leading artists, writers, and composer/musicians of the twentieth century have been involved, at formative periods of their lives, in political movements. This does not mean that the monumental artistic achievements of Picasso, Kollwitz, Rivera, Gorky, Brecht, Sartre, Weill, Copland, Bernstein, Baez, Dylan, and all the others can be reduced to their political involvements. But it does suggest that, without having taken active part in social movements, these individuals would have produced very different works. And, in most cases, movement involvement remained central to their artistic production. Their engagement was objectified in their art, and the movement thus came to be embodied in them. When the movements in which they had been involved were no longer active, the ideas and ideals of the movements lived on in their art. And, in many cases, they served to inspire new movements by helping to keep the older movements alive in the collective memory.

On the other hand, the detailed accounts of the relations between cultural expression and politics provide exemplification for expanding our cognitive approach into the realm of culture. What we have previously called cognitive praxis and movement intellectuals can be seen, with the

help of this material, to encompass cultural practices of both anthropological and aesthetic varieties. Movements are seen to be the breeding ground for new kinds of ritualized behavior, as well as for artistic, musical, and literary experimentation. For example, Temma Kaplan's recent book on the interplay between art and politics in Barcelona at the turn of the century shows how participants in the Catalan national movement carried out a range of cultural activities, and how artists like the young Pablo Picasso served as movement artists in articulating the identity of the movement (Kaplan 1992). Closer to the concerns of this book, Robbie Lieberman's study of “people's songs” in the United States between the years 1930 and 1950 shows how the socialist movement provided a context for the making of American folk music. It was as part of a social movement that Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Alan Lomax, Leadbelly, Burl Ives, and so many others brought folk songs into the popular culture (Lieberman 1995). Similarly, Bernice Johnson Reagon's doctoral dissertation on the songs of the civil rights movement shows how activists mobilized the traditions of black and white folk and popular music in pursuing their political goals (Reagon 1975). In both cases, the cognitive praxis of social movements has had, as we shall see in coming chapters, a major impact on musical taste and popular culture throughout the world.

Many cultural historians, and historians of music, art, and literature have begun to look more closely at the social contexts within which culture is created and produced. We now have a vast literature of studies of particular cultural and artistic “worlds,” ranging from the galleries of Soho to the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, or from the writers of the Harlem “renaissance” of the 1920s to the pop musicians of contemporary Africa. And there is, among the biographers of artists and musicians, a noticeable effort to socialize the subject, to see the individual artist as not merely expressing his or her own personality, but rather to see Duke Ellington, Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, or Jimi Hendrix, to name some of the characters who will appear later in this book, as representative figures, as symbols for their times. More generally, Robert Cantwell's recent study on the “folk revival” (Cantwell 1996) and a range of other materials – from CD boxes to autobiographical recollections – have brought the music of the 1960s back to life, and it has become obvious that many of the musical innovations of the times were intimately and intricately connected to the political campaigns and struggles that were taking place. The music and the politics fed into one another in complex and variegated ways, providing what Marcuse at the time termed a new sensibility, planting many of the seeds for today's “global” youth culture.

Unfortunately, this work has had little apparent influence on the

sociology of social movements. Partly, this is due to a difference in focus: for most social movement theorists and other sociologists, culture is something that forms or “frames” social movements and other social activities as a set of (external) conditioning factors, while for the students of culture it is social movements or environments that provide the external contexts or conditions that shape the primary objects of analysis, art, music, literature, and their creators. The one talks of a movement culture or a cultural frame for movement activities and campaigns, while the other refers to the social background that is embodied in, or has helped to shape, the individual artist or group. The difference, we might say, concerns what is influencing what, the direction of conditioning. Even more importantly, there seems to be a fundamental difference in language, methods, and theoretical orientation. Sociologists and humanists are subjected to different processes of academic socialization, and are seldom given an opportunity to interact, or even read or hear about each other’s works.

Our approach seeks to synthesize social movement theory and cultural studies by using the texts and contexts of popular music as illustrative material. In the twentieth century, a central component of the cultural work of social movements has been music and song, or what Houston Baker, in speaking of African-American movements, calls “sounding”: musical traditions have been given new life through social movements at the same time as social movements have often expressed their meaning and gained coherence through music (Baker 1987). And perhaps nowhere has the “role” of music been more important than in the United States, where social movements have often been less ideological and more emotive than in other countries. From the abolitionists through the populists in the nineteenth century and on to the labor and ethnic and “new” social movements of the twentieth century, music and song have helped to shape the imagery and the meaning of American social movements. It has been perhaps primarily through music and song that social movements have exerted their main influence on the wider American culture, as well as on the rest of the world. By focusing on the interrelations between music and social movements in the United States – and on the transfer of those experiences to Europe – we hope to disclose a central but neglected force in broader processes of cultural transformation.

The American experience, at one and the same time exceptional and universal, will provide our main empirical material for illustrating the central importance of social movements in the “mobilization of tradition.” By a selective reworking of traditional cultural materials, modern societies periodically reinvent themselves, and popular music is increasingly one of the most significant arenas for this mobilization.

Sociology and culture

Sociological approaches to culture are typically divided between so-called Weberian and Durkheimian traditions. Max Weber and his more recent followers locate culture within human consciousness, as worldviews or cognitive frameworks through which actors organize sense impressions and interpret the world as meaningful. Weber assumed that it is through subjectively rooted categories that human beings impose frameworks of meaning on an otherwise meaningless world. It is by uncovering these frameworks that sociologists are able to explain as well as understand human action because, as Anne Swidler puts it, “culture shapes action by defining what people want and how they imagine they can get it” (1995: 25).

Weber distinguished ideal-typical categories of “ethos” – like the Protestant-based secularizing ethos in the West and the Confucian-based customary ethos in China – and of “action,” like rational-instrumental, value-rational, and effectual, which the sociological observer can use to explain why individuals do what they do. Talcott Parsons, Jürgen Habermas, and other “grand” theorists follow a similar procedure in developing categories or types of action from the point of view of the sociological observer, without consideration of the individual actor. The interactionist perspective of Jonathan Turner adds to categorizations of the Weberian type the point of view of the actor. From the interactionist perspective, culture or meaning is emergent and ephemeral; it develops out of the situated interactions of individuals as a collective accomplishment. As such, it is fragile and must continually be reaffirmed. Turner discusses the categories which actors use to define a situation when monitoring their own behavior, that is, when pondering which is the proper response in a given situation: such as work/practical, ceremonial, or social. Defining or categorizing a situation is a useful, perhaps even a necessary, simplifying procedure for actors in a complicated social world. The focus is on the interaction of individuals, rather than on the individual as such.

Emile Durkheim located culture in the social practices which tied members of a society or social group to each other, in the objective “collective representations” or the subjective codes through which they were understood. Such collective representations, writes Swidler, “are not ideas developed by individuals or groups pursuing their interests. Rather, they are the vehicles of a fundamental process in which publicly shared symbols constitute social groups while they constrain and give form to individual consciousness” (1995: 26). Ceremonies or ritualized practices were vital in maintaining group solidarity in simpler or primitive societies, while in modern societies more organic forms of interaction, mediated through a

complex social division of labor, were seen to link individuals together. Regardless of such evolutionary distinctions, the focus of the Durkheimian analysis of culture, as Jeffrey Alexander writes, "is on the structure and process of meaningful systems, which are taken to be universal regardless of historical time or place" (1990: 18).

Theoretical constructions like internalization and, more broadly, socialization have since been developed to help identify the mechanisms linking the internal and the external, the Weberian and the Durkheimian notions of culture, into one theoretical framework. Talcott Parsons' notion of "role" as the pre-formed container of societal values and norms which individuals acquire was formulated with just this purpose in mind. Parsons used the concept of "values" to signify both the collective representations which Durkheim talked about and the frameworks of meaning analyzed by Weber. Socialization is the process through which the already-existing values which constitute a culture are inculcated into individuals. At the same time, values are transformed into norms and rules – proscribed proper forms of reciprocal action – which individuals internalize as they are acculturated.

The influential cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu adopts something of a middle position with its emphasis on education and processes of habituation and distinction. For Bourdieu, culture has all but replaced society as the object of sociological concern; and, while no one can accuse Bourdieu of not taking culture seriously, his concepts are of relatively little use in trying to understand how cultures change, or how social movements conduct their cultural activity and contribute to cultural transformation. By focusing on the manifestations of culture, the longer-term processual emphasis tends to be neglected. Like the many anthropologists who try to get within the cultures they study in a densely detailed way, Bourdieu is able to disclose fascinating aspects of cultural activity and develop a sociology of culture. The crucial link to social movements, however, is largely missing from his work.

Following Durkheim more closely than Weber, Bourdieu replaces the concept of role with that of habitus, to emphasize the weight of historically formed patterns of action and codes of understanding on individuals. From his perspective, the concept of role is too tied to rules and norms which must be actively learned, rather than to more passively acquired habits. For all their differences, however, Bourdieu shares with Parsons (and many other cultural sociologists) an interest in explaining the reproduction of society, rather than its transformation, and concepts such as role and habitus are central to that aim. As such, culture is conceptualized as an anonymous, macro-level realm of values and customs or as a micro-level individualized identity of habits and norms. The crucial "levels" of mediation in between

the macro and the micro – which is where social movements are to be found – are accordingly given much less attention than they deserve.

The cultural turn in social movement theory

As has been the case for sociology in general, a growing interest in culture can be noted among scholars of social movements in recent years. In the ongoing questioning of modernity that is taking place throughout the world, there has emerged a range of new "identity movements" which is bringing issues of ethnicity, race, sexuality, and personal expression out of the private sphere and into broader societal arenas. At the same time, deep-seated cultural traditions and systems of belief have been challenged by processes of globalization, and, as a result, there has been a rise of vocal and often aggressive nationalist and "traditionalist" movements. In many of these social movements, the classical activity of political campaigning has been subordinated to a range of cultural or symbolic practices – from women wearing veils to the rediscovery of traditional forms of art, music, and religious ritual. Questions of meaning, belief, value, and identity have seemingly become more important than the political pursuit of power and the achievement of practical economic improvements. Many of the new social movements are actually practicing a new kind of cultural politics, where the main concern is to change values rather than to gain particular political results.

Culture has been brought into the sociology of social movements in recent years primarily through the idiom of "framing" by which social movement activity is subjected to a form of discourse analysis (see Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994). A series of processes are defined – frame alignment, articulation, amplification, etc. – which are meant to give structure to the ideational activity that takes place in social movements. In the analysis of particular movements, a broader, more anthropological concept of "movement culture" has also begun to be used, particularly among analysts of women's movements and organizations (Taylor and Whittier 1995). In this perspective, social movements are seen as being formed within and, in turn, helping to re-form broader domains of social life. Particular feminist movements, for example, are seen to be part of an emergent feminist culture, with values and practices that are different from those of the dominant, masculine culture. As such, a wide range of approaches is emerging, influenced both by the so-called "linguistic turn" in philosophy and social and cultural theory, and by the importance that non-instrumental activities actually play within contemporary social movements.

The cultural turn in social movement theory can also be seen as an

attempt to (re)connect European and American approaches, as a sort of positive byproduct of the globalization of academic work. When, in a now-classic article, Jean Cohen (1985) stylized two “paradigms” of social movement research, and then attempted to synthesize them, she was giving voice to processes which had been in motion since the end of the Second World War. The collective behaviorist tradition, which had dominated American research on social movements until the 1960s, had by the 1980s given way to the organizational analysis and rational choice approach of “resource mobilization” as the hegemonic leader in the field. This was matched on the other side of the Atlantic by a concern with interest mobilization and a focus on questions of power and domination. What all had in common was that social movement actors and organizations were approached from the outside, that is, as objects to be explained in terms of individual or collective strategies. The prime concern was the success or failure of movements, as measured through their longevity, power, and influence (see Eyerman and Jamison 1991).

The lack of concern with meaning by social movement theorists has now been increasingly recognized. What Jean Cohen helped identify as the “identity paradigm,” which she associated with Habermas and Alain Touraine, and which has since been recast as new social movement theory by Alberto Melucci and others, has effectively challenged the hegemony of the resource mobilization approach. That this essentially European-based approach should be gaining ground represents a sort of coup for European sociology in what has been an American field.

The recent interest among social movement theorists in culture can thus be seen as an attempt to meet the challenge of constructivism and post-modernism by referring to the “frames” in which social movements conduct their political campaigns (Tarrow 1994). Like the border around a painting, the frame structures the picture of reality that guides the movement actors in pursuing their goals. The so-called “master” frame is seen to provide an interpretation of the problem complex that the movement is operating in, something akin to what Marxist-oriented social scientists call ideology or what Weber meant by *ethos*. What is different in the new language of framing is the specificity of the analytical focus; like the post-structuralist text, the movement frame is dehistoricized as it is made available for sociological investigation. Framing points to particular problems, or issues, that particular movements respond to.

As an analytic device, the frame comes to the movement from the outside, and, of course, needs the social movement theorist for its construction. It is a method for studying social movements as discourses, as texts. It is a heuristic tool for the social scientist, not an active component of social

movement activity, at least not in an unproblematic way. The actual historical process by which the “frame” comes into being, and the traditions of ideas which are drawn upon by movement activists are seldom discussed. From this perspective, the meanings – what Melucci calls the codes of interpretation and identification – that social movement actors bring to a situation are treated as matters of secondary importance to the exercise of power in bringing about social change. Furthermore, the ways in which these meanings affect both the process of collective identity formation within a movement and the ways in which social movements affect the wider culture of the society in which they emerge are left out of the explanatory strategies of social movement theorists and relegated to the students of culture. That the alteration of meaning, the struggle to define the situation, and the discursive practices that are carried out within social movements might themselves be a major aspect of power and social change has, with few exceptions, not been considered. In the language of framing, culture is conceptualized as a kind of superstructural appendage to the real work of social movements; it is viewed instrumentally, and as an external condition of social movement activity. As such, the challenge of constructivism is not so much countered as avoided.

In his 1994 presidential address to the American Sociological Association, William A. Gamson noted that “students of social movements emphasize the importance of collective action frames in inspiring and legitimating actions and campaigns” (1995: 13). While the emphasis remains on the imposition on actors of predetermined frameworks of analysis, if we broaden our understanding to include the creation and recreation of interpretive frameworks within social movements – what we have previously called cognitive praxis – and relate this to wider historical processes, a new grasp of the relations between culture and social movements becomes possible.

A major problem with many of the existing approaches is that they are at once too general and too specific. They are too general in that an underlying phenomenological starting point begins at the highest level of abstraction, where all human understanding can be said to be framed. This is the level at which Kant spoke about the basic “categories of all experience.” From the most abstract, the social movement researcher tends to move directly to the most concrete, to the ways in which frames are imposed on specific movements and the manner in which individuals, for this is also an individual-focused approach, acquire them. In the paper already mentioned, Gamson discusses the ways in which mass media are central to the process of the construction of adversary frames. Todd Gitlin (1980) used a similar approach in his study of how media framing affected the general

public's perception of the American "New Left" of the 1960s, as well as that movement's own self-understanding.

At this "I was framed" level, what tends to be ignored is all that falls between, specifically, the historical, or what can be called tradition. It is here that present framing interacts not with the basic structures of human experience, but with previously "framed" experience. Such framing is the result of both personal experience and the collective practices we associate with the concept of culture. Traditions are inherited ways of interpreting reality and giving meaning to experience; they are constitutive of collective memory and thus provide the underlying logical structure upon which all social activity is constructed. This lifts the level of analysis, not only out of the immediate situation, but also to the collective level. Erving Goffman, who first developed the language of framing as part of his dramaturgical approach to social analysis, was primarily interested in how individuals monitor their own actions, and the reception of his ideas by sociologists concerned with social movements has retained this individual orientation. The notion of collective framing then becomes a problem.

Of the few sociologists concerned with social movements to recognize the importance of the symbolic in the formation of collective identity, Francesco Alberoni and, more recently, Alberto Melucci stand out. Alberoni (1984) discusses the processual succession and degradation between social movement and institution with reference to the theories of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. Alberoni calls attention to how actors within social movements, which in his terms begin with "the nascent state and ends with the reestablishment of everyday-institutional order" (1984: 221), tend to reinterpret the past in terms of present needs for mobilization in a process he calls "historicization." In its formative stage, or nascent state, a movement "questions anew every act and every decision and considers open to appraisal the decisions of legendary and historical figures . . . In historicizing the past, the nascent state also historicizes the present" (ibid.: 60-61). Alberoni offers the example of the Black Muslim movement in the United States, of which he writes, "the choice of the Islamic religion represented a search for a past which would clearly distinguish the new movement from the black Christian movements that had predominated until then . . . Thus both sides are responsible for the formation of cultural traditions" (ibid.: 243).

Culture as cognitive praxis

Our interest in the relations between social movements and culture can be thought of as an elaboration of what we have previously called the cogni-

tive approach (Eyerman and Jamison 1991). The cognitive approach focuses attention on the construction of ideas within social movements, and on the role of movement intellectuals in articulating the collective identity of social movements. The cognitive approach views social movements primarily as knowledge producers, as social forces opening spaces for the production of new forms of knowledge. By focusing on the cognitive dimension, our more general aim was to make the content of social movement activity, rather than its form or organization, the central focus of analysis.

Three concepts are central to this approach: context, process, and knowledge interests. Social movements emerge in particular times and places; they are the products of specific socio-political conditions as well as of deeper and more long-term historical and cultural traditions. But, while being shaped by these broader contextual conditions, social movements temporarily transcend the specific situations from which they emerge; they create new contexts, new public spaces for addressing the particular problems of their time. They are not to be reduced to the organizations or institutions that they eventually become; what is central is their transience, their momentariness, their looseness. Social movements are processes in formation; they do not spring already formed to take their place on the stage of history. Rather, they can be conceived of as contingent and emergent spaces which are carved out of existent contexts; they are creative, or experimental, arenas for the practicing of new forms of social and cognitive action.

In these newly opened spaces, the articulation of a cognitive identity is, for us, a core process. Social movements are the carriers of one or another historical project, or vision; they articulate new "knowledge interests," integrating new cosmological, or worldview assumptions, with organizational innovations, and sometimes with new approaches to science. The different dimensions of knowledge interest, which we term cosmological, technical, and organizational, are combined into an integrated activity in the space carved out by an emergent social movement. This integration of its utopian vision, or cosmology, with specific practical activities and organizational forms provides a cognitive core to movement activity as the participants form their historical project or collective identity. This process of identity formation is called cognitive praxis and those actors who are most directly involved in its articulation movement intellectuals. Cognitive praxis, like the cognitive approach as a whole, calls attention to the creative role of consciousness and cognition in all human action, individual and collective.

In its original formulation, the American civil rights movement and European environmentalism were used to illustrate how social movements

affected scientific research programs, as well as how movement activists moved between the academic and the political spheres. In this book we want to expand our analysis to take into account the even-broader significance that social movements have on processes of cultural transformation. By elucidating the relations between social movements and (musical) traditions, we want to broaden the range of the cognitive approach to encompass additional aspects of movement activity, which precondition and are in turn conditioned by cognitive praxis. Among these other aspects are the forms of habituation – the habits, mores, customs, and rituals of movements – as well as the symbolic representations which movements produce, and, in particular, the sounds and songs of movements. It is not only science or formal knowledge systems that are affected by social movements; in this book, we want to show some of the ways by which the deeper structures of feeling that provide cohesion to social formations are themselves periodically reinvented through social movements. And we want to focus not only on movement intellectuals but also on “movement artists” and those individuals who construct and organize the cultural activities of social movements.

Epistemologically, our notion of cognitive praxis derives from critical theory and is meant as an alternative to the notion of framing, in which actors either impose order on a chaotic world or internalize an already-existing reality through socialization. Cognitive praxis calls attention to the active creation of knowledge or consciousness in encountering the world. Within social movements, this process of encountering and coming to know is usually more conscious than in what is normally seen as socialization or acculturation, i.e., the process of social learning or transmitting culture from adult to child in family or school settings. Any “framing” or interpreting that takes place within a movement is a collective and interactive process of learning; both the frames and their content are reflexively constituted in a collective process. By definition, social movements break with the routines upon which “habitus” is constituted, but, of course, they are not entirely free from their influence. A movement culture is neither internal nor external, individual nor collective, but rather an active process of recombination.

Art in general and music in particular are here discussed as part of the cognitive praxis of social movements. Cognitive is used to mean both truth-bearing and knowledge-producing. Calling art cognitive is once again to rub against the grain of Kantian distinctions. If we follow the terminology of Habermas, it is also to rub against the whole edifice of modernity, a defining characteristic of which is that art becomes an autonomous sphere,

free from political and religious domination, and allowed to follow its own internal rationality. In one sense this could certainly be hailed as liberation; in another, it can be seen as part of a tradition which Kant reinvented and modified from classical Greek philosophy, which relegated art to the third rank as a basis for human understanding. As part of a struggle for domination on the intellectual field, Plato led the charge to displace art, in the form of Homeric epic poetry, as the prime source of human knowledge, and to replace it with philosophy. This “expulsion,” according to J. M. Bernstein, “constitute[s] modernity even more emphatically than . . . Plato’s philosophical utopia” (1992: 1). In viewing music as cognitive, we aim to reassert its knowledge-bearing, identity-giving qualities.

To the categories of action discussed by sociologists we wish to add the concept of exemplary action. As represented or articulated in the cognitive praxis of social movements, exemplary action can be thought of as a specification of the symbolic action discussed by Melucci and others. The exemplary action of cognitive praxis is symbolic in several senses; but it is also “more” than merely symbolic. As real cultural representations – art, literature, songs – it is artefactual and material, as well. What we are attempting to capture with the term is the exemplary use of music and art in social movements, the various ways in which songs and singers can serve a function akin to the exemplary works that Thomas Kuhn characterized as being central to scientific revolutions: the paradigm-constituting entities that serve to realign scientific thinking and that represent ideal examples of fundamentally innovative scientific work (Kuhn 1970). The difference between culture and science, however, is that the exemplary action of music and art is lived as well as thought: it is cognitive, but it also draws on more emotive aspects of human consciousness. As cultural expression, exemplary action is self-revealing and thus a symbolic representation of the individual and the collective which are the movement. It is symbolic in that it symbolizes all the movement stands for, what is seen as virtuous and what is seen as evil. In the age of symbols, an age of electronic media and the transmission of virtual images, the exemplary action of a movement can serve an educative function for many more than the participants and their immediate public. This exemplary action can also be recorded, in film, words, and music, and thus given more than the fleeting presence which for Hannah Arendt characterized the exemplary action of the Greek polis, one of the sources of our conceptualization (see Jamison and Eyerman 1994: 46–50).

In this light, art and music – culture – are forms of both knowledge and action, part of the frameworks of interpretation and representation pro-

duced within social movements and through which they influence the broader societal culture. As such, they are much more than functional devices for recruitment or resources to be mobilized. It is not our intention to deny that there are instrumental uses of music in social movements and elsewhere, but, to the extent that social movements are able to transcend these instrumental (and commercial) usages, music as exemplary action becomes possible.

As cognitive praxis, music and other forms of cultural activity contribute to the ideas that movements offer and create in opposition to the existing social and cultural order. Perhaps more effectively than any other form of expression, music also recalls a meaning that lies outside and beyond the self. In that sense it can be utopian and premodern. In saying this we do not mean to imply that such truth-bearing is inherent in music, part of some transcendent and metaphysical fundament. Our argument is more modest in that we restrict our claim to music in relation to social movements.

In social movements, even mass-produced popular music can take on a truth-bearing significance. As we will suggest in a later chapter, in the context of the social movements of the 1960s, American folk-inspired rock music became a major source of knowledge about the world and their own place in it for millions of youth around the globe. In terms of classical aesthetic theory, this music may not have been beautiful and awe-inspiring and, in that sense, not real art, but it clearly has had a truth-bearing role. On the other hand, music that was beautiful and more like "real" art in the terms of aesthetic theory, like classical music, did not, for many of those involved in this movement in any case, carry any truth-bearing meanings. It was the movement context that made this process possible, not the music itself. In that context, singer-songwriters like Bob Dylan and Phil Ochs created songs with wider meaning than perhaps even they had intended. In the case of Dylan, it was not long before he rejected the role being given him and his music by the movement. He preferred the more traditional role of artist and performer to "truth-bearer." Ochs turned just the other way. He could not live without that role, and committed suicide rather than face life in the more normal, routine sense.

One more qualification is perhaps necessary. We do not claim that all movements use and provide music which is truth-bearing. Empirically this is not the case, although most social movements, especially those connected to nationalist and ethnic causes, do use and produce music of this sort. Saying this should also remind the reader of the fact that we are not claiming any necessarily "progressive" role for social movements or for music. While we would attest to being partisans of progressive social change, whatever that may mean specifically, we recognize that many social move-

ments, especially today, are hardly progressive in any sense that we would acknowledge. But social movements do create a situation, a context, where music can recover at least some of its ancient, truth-bearing role. Our aim in the pages that follow is to provide substantive exemplification of these claims.