

David Slater (ed.)

**New social movements and the
state in Latin America**



FOR MY MOTHER AND FATHER

PREFACE

The papers collected together in this volume originate from a CEDLA workshop, held in October 1983. That workshop was inspired by a belief in the importance of providing a forum for discussion and debate on the topic of new social movements and the state in Latin America. Although there have already been a number of conferences organized around this theme in Latin America, we felt that it would be well worthwhile convening a meeting of Western European based social scientists working on this same subject. Such a conference also seemed like an interesting venture in the light of the growing interest in new social movements in Western Europe.

The financial support necessary to bring people together in Amsterdam was made available by CEDLA in Amsterdam and Z.W.O. (Foundation for Pure Scientific Research) in the Hague, the latter organization generously granting funds to enable Dr. Kowarick to travel to Amsterdam from São Paulo. All the different presentations were well attended, helping thus to spark off many stimulating and fruitful debates.

With regard to the planning and actual organization of the workshop I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jolanda van de Boom, Erik-Jan Hertogs and Wil Pansters for making sure that everything moved smoothly and sociably.

For the next phase, the translation and editing of a sizeable number of the workshop papers, I am indebted to Jean and Zela Carrière and Peter Mason. Whatever difficulties and ambiguities were to emerge in the translation became quickly and effectively resolved.

As far as the typing is concerned Jolanda van de Boom and Thea Dekker worked with their customary speed, efficiency and sense of humour - at one moment it was suggested that if any other unforeseen sources of delay were to surface I had perhaps better change the title to the 'old social movements'.

Next, I would like to thank two external readers for providing enthusiastic support together with constructive criticisms, and finally I want to extend a word of thanks to the contributors for ensuring that we had an enjoyable and valuable workshop which has now resulted in the following volume.

Amsterdam

July 1985

CONTENTS

D. Slater	Social Movements and a Recasting of the Political	1
<u>PART I</u>	<u>THEORETICAL DEPARTURES AND DELINEATIONS</u>	
1. E.Laclau	New Social Movements and the Plurality of the Social	27
2. T.Evers	Identity: the Hidden Side of New Social Movements in Latin America	43
<u>PART II</u>	<u>SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE CITY</u>	
3. L.Kowarick	The Pathways to Encounter: Reflections on the Social Struggle in São Paulo	73
4. N.Vink	Base Communities and Urban Social Movements - a case study of the Metalworkers' strike 1980, São Bernardo, Brazil	95
5. E.Henry	Urban Social Movements in Latin America - towards a critical understanding	127
<u>PART III</u>	<u>REGIONS, SOCIAL CONFLICT AND THE STATE</u>	
6. D.Slater	The Peruvian State and Regional Crises - the development of regional social movements, 1968-1980	147
7. V.Gianotten, et al.	The Impact of <i>Sendero Luminoso</i> on Regional and National Politics in Peru	171
<u>PART IV</u>	<u>REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE, POPULAR HEGEMONY AND THE ROLE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT</u>	
8. J.L.Coraggio	Social Movements and Revolution: the case of Nicaragua	203

9. M.Molyneux	Mobilisation without Emancipation? Women's Interests, State and Revolution in Nicaragua	233
10. R.Reddock	Popular Movement to 'Mass Organization' The Case of the National Women's Organization of Grenada (NWO) 1979-1983	261

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND A RECASTING OF THE POLITICAL

David Slater

By way of introducing and situating the following collection of papers I want to select and briefly consider some of the central issues that impinge upon current debates around the theme of the new social movements and state power in Latin America.

I. New Social Movements - A Preliminary Identification

As far as the advanced capitalist societies are concerned the term 'the new social movements' is invariably used to refer to *inter alia* the feminist movement, the ecology movement, the peace movement and the anti-nuclear movement. For Latin America, and using Brazil and Argentina as case studies, Mainwaring and Viola (1984) suggest the existence of five 'new movements': ecclesiastical base communities, neighbourhood associations, and the feminist movement in Brazil; human rights groups in Argentina, and ecological associations in both countries.¹ Evers, in his contribution to this volume, indicates an even broader range of new movements in Latin America, including, in addition to those just mentioned, workers' associations organizing independently from the traditional trade union structures and political parties, indigenist associations appearing autonomously on the political scene, educational and artistic activities on a popular level, coalitions for the defense of regional traditions and interests, environmental movements and a patchwork of self-help groupings among the unemployed and poor people. Potentially, therefore, we are presented with a highly diverse and multi-faceted list of social movements that have surfaced in recent years, causing ripple effects in both political and theoretical contexts. However, before looking more closely at the possible range of these so-called

new social movements let us first diagnose their suggested novelty.

II. What Precisely is New about the New Social Movements ?

In relation to the development of new social movements in Latin America, Evers appropriately draws our attention to the fact that the surfacing of these movements has not depended on the specific political situation created by military dictatorships nor on a clear-cut defeat of Left parties. For example, we find such movements in countries like Venezuela where the institutions of peripheral capitalist democracy have not been made redundant by military rule, and in Peru where the Left has expanded its influence in conjunction with the development of new social movements. Hence, as Evers observes, because the same term is being used for new forms of expression and also because there are obvious analogies between these movements we can advance the idea that the existence of new social movements is very much rooted in the contemporary social development of capitalist societies (my emphasis).

It is exactly this intrinsic connection that provides the *leit-motif* for Mouffe's (1984) succinct examination of the specificity of the new social movements.² She argues, for instance, that these movements are the expression of antagonisms which have emerged as a consequence of the new hegemonic formation to be consolidated after the Second World War. Thus, advanced capitalist societies have been transformed into extensive market places where all the products of human labour have become commodities and where almost all 'needs' depend on the market to be satisfied. This 'commodification' of social life has been accompanied by a joint phenomenon of 'bureaucratization' resulting from the increasing intervention of the state at all levels of social reproduction. Moreover, a third and linked process can be distinguished, namely that of 'cultural massification' resulting from the all-embracing influence of the mass media. According to Mouffe most of the existing collective identities of Western societies have been demolished or profoundly challenged by the

effects of these three combined processes, and as a consequence new forms of subordination have been created. It is then as resistances against these new forms of subordination that the new social movements ought to be interpreted and politically located. Furthermore, Mouffe emphasizes that what all these new antagonisms have in common is that they do not affect the social agent in so far as s/he occupies a place in the relations of production and therefore they are not class antagonisms. This does not mean of course that such antagonisms have been abolished - in fact they have been increased. The point rather is that these are not new antagonisms but the extension of already existing ones. 'What is new is the diffusion of social conflict into other areas and the politicization of more and more relations'.³

Developing the same position Laclau and Mouffe (1985) in their recent treatment of hegemony and radical democracy write that the common denominator of all the 'new social movements' (urban, ecological, anti-authoritarian, anti-institutional, feminist, anti-racist, ethnic, regional or sexual minorities) would be their 'differentiation from workers' struggles, considered as 'class' struggles'.⁴ However Laclau and Mouffe are not interested in the arbitrary grouping of these new movements into a category opposed to that of class, but rather they seek to emphasize 'the novel role they play in articulating that rapid diffusion of social conflictuality to more and more numerous relations which is characteristic today of advanced industrial societies'.⁵ Extending the argument further Laclau and Mouffe contend that the calling into question of new forms of subordination is characterized by continuity as well as discontinuity. The feature of continuity is to be found in the permanence of an egalitarian imaginary that allows us to establish an historical connection between the struggles of the nineteenth century against the inequalities bequeathed by the ancien régime and the social movements of today. On the other hand, the aspect of discontinuity and of historical novelty is to be found in contemporary resistance to the new forms of subordination generated by the three processes of 'commodification', 'bureaucratization' and 'massif-

ication' mentioned above.⁶

The discontinuity and historical novelty of the new social movements is further discussed by Laclau in the following chapter, where he approaches the definition of 'newness' in terms of the way in which the new struggles have provoked a crisis of a traditional paradigm in the social sciences, concerning the kind of unity characterizing social agents and the forms which conflict between them can take. Laclau writes that traditional conceptualizations of social conflicts have been typified by three major features - i) the determination of the identity of the agents was given through categories belonging to the social structure, so that the area of emergence of every conflict is traced to the 'empirical-referential unity of the group' - struggles are labelled 'peasant', 'bourgeois' etc.; ii) the kind of conflict was determined in relation to a diachronic-evolutionary paradigm, whereby the meaning of every struggle is fixed by a 'teleological-evolutionary scheme' through which the meaning becomes 'objective', viz., 'it does not depend on the consciousness of the agents, but on an underlying movement of history', e.g. the transition from feudalism to capitalism; and iii) to the extent that conflicts became politicised, the plurality of the spaces of social conflict was reduced to a 'unified political space in which the presence of the agents was conceived of as a "representation of interests" - here the political sphere is a precise 'level' of the social and since the identity of the social agents is constituted at an economic level their presence at the so-called political level can only take the form of a representation of interests.

For Laclau then what is symptomatic of the new social movements is that through their presence the unity of these three aspects of the paradigm is dissolved. Therefore, in the first place, it has become impossible to identify the group, conceived as referent, with an orderly and coherent system of 'subject positions'. So taking the worker as an example it cannot be assumed that there will be a stable relation between his/her position in the relations of production, his/her position as consumer, resident in

a specific area and participant in the political system. The relation between these different positions or identities is not fixed by reference to a pre-given social category but rather it becomes expressed as the result of a complex series of political constructions which cannot be read off unilaterally from the relations of production. Equally these various positions of the social agent have become increasingly autonomous, as, for instance, the bonds which linked the various identities of the worker have become weakened, and according to Laclau 'it is this autonomy which is at the root of the specificity of the new social movements'.

Secondly, the notion that each single position of the social subject can be referred to a rational and necessary succession of stages has also been undermined by the multiplication of political spaces and the coexistence of ideological elements which, according to the diachronic theory of 'stages', ought to have appeared in successive phases of development.

Finally, since the identity of social agents can no longer be constituted at a single level of society the 'representation of interests' model loses its viability and the political becomes, rather than a level, a dimension which, in varying degrees, is expressed in all social practice. Hence, for example, feminist, ecologist or anti-institutional struggles, do not necessarily assume the form of antagonisms whose politicisation must call forth the representation of each of these 'interests' in a different and pre-given political sphere, but instead they generate a direct politicisation of the space in which they are constituted. Therefore, after Laclau, the political imaginary is no longer formed by a 'total model' of society but is constituted around certain demands and specific social relations, so that the 'radically democratic potential of the new social movements lies... in their implicit demand for a radically open and indeterminate view of society', or as Evers (1984) more polemically puts it, 'it is the continuous effort at democratization that matters, not some mythical "D" day on which some winter palace is stormed, the means of production etatized, and freedom promulgated'.⁷

This particular dimension of the new social movements - their expression of a more open and pluralistic form of democracy - has been taken by a number of authors to be a central feature of their historical novelty.⁸ And although, as Laclau and Mouffe have reminded us, the presence of an egalitarian imaginary within today's social movements furnishes a continuity with the democratic struggles of the last century, it is indeed the diffusion of collective and participatory values and practices through an ever-widening range of sites of social struggle that gives us one of the constitutive elements of the novelty of the new social movements.

Having outlined some elements of the existing discussion concerning the specificity of the new social movements I believe it is possible to identify three constitutive components of their novelty.

1. First we can mention the emergence of new forms of struggle in relation to new forms of subordination and oppression in late capitalist society. Here we have the discussion of bureaucratization, commodification and massification and the historical novelty of the peace movement, the ecology and anti-nuclear movements can be interpreted in terms of resistance to these contemporary social processes. For example, one of the crucial orientations of the peace movement concerns the struggle against the anti-democratic nature of the bureaucratic decision-making process governing the development of weapons-systems and the link up with the state's influence over the means of communication and the related direction and content of 'public discussion'.⁹ On the other hand, movements with a longer history, such as the women's movement and certain regional and urban social movements have to be looked at more in terms of how their demands, modes of operation and social effects changed from their earlier origins. In other words their reaction to the new forms of subordination in late capitalist society must not lead us away from the need to attempt a periodization of their forms of development and differential social impact.¹⁰

2. Secondly, Laclau's thesis, whereby the autonomization of the various positions of the social subject, the absence of any previously-constituted schema for the historical situation of a given subject position and the dissolution of the 'representation of interests' model establish the novelty of the new social movements, can be taken to form a second constitutive element. With this approach we are making of course an irrevocable break with the notion that the economy can remain determinant 'in the last instance'. And at the same time since, as Ryan (1984) expresses it the fixing of a final and authoritative category such as 'the economic' is closely connected to the elaboration of an authoritarian politics,¹¹ the emphases given by the new social movements reflect a more open conceptualization of politics. Equally, however, we must not assume that there exists a linear relationship between new movements and a progressive political orientation, because obviously it cannot be assumed *a priori* that every new struggle or demand will somehow automatically express a socialist content. Everything depends on the ways in which particular social demands and concerns are articulated to different discourses.¹²

3. Thirdly, I think we can suggest that the previously-mentioned values of 'basis-democracy', the importance given to high levels of participation in internal decision-making, the search for cooperative relations, the respect of social differences, and the socio-cultural 'signification' of inter-personal relations combine to form another key constitutive element of the novelty of the new social movements.

Taking these three constitutive elements together we have a sufficient basis for understanding the newness of the new social movements, but the next question we have to tackle is - to what extent are these constitutive components omnipresent? Can we talk of a universality?

III. Universality or Historical Specificity ?

In the case of Latin America struggles against new forms of subordination and oppression have been linked to an intensification and deepening of alienation,¹³ and also to a crisis of the state. In both instances it is important to remember that in the societies of the capitalist periphery the generalization of the capital/wage-labour relation has been more limited and the means for the reproduction of labour-power far less developed than in advanced capitalist societies. With the crisis of the state a link can be drawn with our previous reference to struggles against bureaucratization but in contrast to Western Europe, where the state's penetration of civil society has been far greater and where the welfare functions of the state have been much more effectively established, in Latin American societies many of the new social movements have found a focus of protest around the following three features.

First, the excessive centralization of decision-making power within the apparatuses of the state coupled with acute and increasing administrative inefficiency has provided one cause of opposition to the contemporary state model. Second, and closely related, the state's incapacity to provide adequate services in the area of the so-called collective means of consumption (urban amenities, water, electricity, health, transport etc.) has also formed a basis for the coalescence of social demands within both the women's movement and urban social movements whereby we should emphasize the close interrelationships between the two.¹⁴ Third, there is the issue of the steadily-eroding legitimacy of the state itself which when combined with an accentuated scepticism towards the established political parties, has led to an articulation of social demands that do not flow directly through the already existing channels of political incorporation and control.¹⁵

Of these three aspects the first two are more specific to the Latin American experience than the third for in the advanced capitalist societies the new social movements have also sought to remain independent of the established organs and institutions of the

political system, although obviously the extent of this autonomous separation has varied with the changing ideological orientations of the different movements.

With reference to the historical specificity of Latin America another dimension which requires noting concerns the struggle in countries such as Brazil and Argentina to re-establish formal democracy and the role played therein by for instance the ecclesiastical base communities (see Vink's contribution in this volume), the women's movement and the human rights groups, especially in the Argentinian case.¹⁶ In Western Europe, on the other hand, the new social movements have been aiming to 'democratize democracy' or to extend the principles of participatory practice and collective decision-making beyond the confines of democratic institutionalization as prescribed under capitalism.¹⁷ In this sense there is a strong link with the struggle for socialism for as Williams (1985) has recently argued the only kind of socialism which now stands any chance of being realized in the bourgeois democracies is one that would be fundamentally based on new types of communal, cooperative and collective institutions. In these, as Williams puts it, 'the full democratic practices of free speech, free assembly, free candidature for elections, and also open decision-making, of a reviewable kind, by all those concerned with the decision, would be both legally guaranteed and, in now technically possible ways, active'.¹⁸

In other regions of Latin America, in particular in Central America, (El Salvador, Guatemala) the fight for a new radical democracy has to be sustained against highly repressive state-structures where the degree of institutionalized violence is such that armed struggle becomes a central and unavoidable component of the liberation movement's *raison d'être*. Similarly, in the Nicaragua of the Somozas, where the state had been transformed into a 'bureaucratic excrescence imposed by force upon the rest of society',¹⁹ the methods of radical democratic strug-

gle relevant in the advanced capitalist societies were not applicable. Forms of political action had to be found which were effective under the specific conditions of military dictatorship - I shall return to this topic below.

Remaining still with our initially-positing constitutive element of novelty - the response to new forms of subordination - the commodification that Laclau and Mouffe discuss is clearly related to Aglietta's work on the contemporary regime of intensive capital accumulation most evidently found in the developed capitalist economies. In Latin America, whilst 'peripheral Fordism' may well be an important feature, overall, contraction of capitalist development, especially in the industrial sector, and the pervasive and devastating socio-economic effects of the debt crisis have led to a growing impoverishment that cannot be left out of account in any consideration of the genesis of the new social movements. Kowarick, in a following chapter on recent social struggles in São Paulo, examines this issue in the following way. He writes:

'...there is no linear connection between the precariousness of living standards and the conflicts carried forward by the groups who are affected by it. This is so because, despite a variable but common situation of socio-economic exclusion... the praxes of struggle have widely disparate trajectories, pointing to impasses and solutions for which objective structural conditions are, at best, merely an enormous backdrop'. It is necessary therefore to recognize that 'pauperization and spoliation in themselves are simply the raw material that potentially nourishes social conflicts' (p. 81).

Turning now to our second and third constitutive components of the historical novelty of the new social movements, Laclau's thesis on the crisis in the traditional paradigm of the scientific investigation of social conflict possesses a broad rele-

vance and is pertinent in Latin America as well as in Western Europe.²⁰ The third element which concerns the question of 'basis-democracy', the search for autonomy, the deconcentration of power, the construction of a new political morality and the fight against all forms of oppression and exploitation would also seem to inhere in the new social movements at the Latin American 'periphery' as well as at the European and North American 'centre'. According to Mainwaring and Viola one of the conditions responsible for the surfacing of new social movements in Brazil and Argentina has been the development of such movements in the North, that is in Western Europe and the United States²¹ - examples being the ecology and feminist movements. Although the diffusion of political ideas and new forms of practice, especially in the case of the ecology movement,²² is a significant factor, with reference to the women's movement it is important to be aware of the long history that this movement has had in Latin America, while at the same time recognizing the differences in priorities and orientation that exist between the women's movement as in the 'North' and 'South' - Molyneux's initial discussion in her paper on Nicaragua is highly relevant here.

Having thus sketched out some contrasts and similarities between the new social movements of Latin America and of the developed capitalist societies we must add the following observation. The attempted comparative examination outlined above has been essentially based on our three constitutive elements of the novelty of the new social movements. What must also be stressed is this. Such movements develop along trajectories born out of civil societies with many crucial historical divergences. The nature of state-society relations, the origin and character of the dominant political discourses, the forms of insertion into world capitalist economy and the variegated composition of social forces all obviously mould the potentiality and range of political effectiveness of these movements. Such phenomena

do not possess an equivalence that stretches from the capitalist periphery to the social formations of Western Europe and North America. Perhaps we can better illustrate this idea by turning to a third series of issues.

III. State Power, Social Movements and Revolution

Recent disputes on class, social movements and socialism have been riven by a number of associated fissures. An instructive example can be found by contrasting Williams with Miliband and Mulhern. Williams, in his treatment of class, politics and socialism, writes that the significant social movements of the last thirty years and the needs and feelings which nourish them 'are now our major positive resources, but their whole problem is how they relate or can relate to the apparently more important institutions which derive from the isolation of employment and wage-labour'. He goes on to suggest that we are now faced with either the 'final incorporation of the labour movement into a capitalist bargaining mechanism, with socialism left stranded as a theory and a sect, or the wide re-making of a social movement which begins from primary human needs'. For Williams these needs are for 'peace, security, a caring society and a careful economy'. He concludes by assailing the outdated assumptions which govern the labour movement, and above all its now 'sickening self-congratulatory sense of a taken-for-granted tradition and constituency'. Finally, he states:

'The real struggle has broadened so much, the decisive issues have been so radically changed, that only a new kind of socialist movement, fully contemporary in its ideas and methods, bringing a wide range of needs and interests together in a new definition of the general interest, has any real future'.²³

Responding to Williams' text, Mulhern (1984) restates the well-known 'class-politics' position. After averring that nothing unites the new social movements except their 'organizational separation from the labour movement', he goes on to sustain

the thesis that the working class is revolutionary on account of its three immanent features - 'as an exploited class it is caught in a systematic clash with capital '...; 'as the main producing class it has the power to halt... the economic apparatus of capitalism...'; 'and as the collective producer it has the objective capacity to found a new, non-exploitative mode of production' (emphases all in the original). Thus, following Mulhern, 'this combination of interest, power and creative capacity distinguishes the working class from every other social or political force in capitalist society, and qualifies it as the indispensable agency of socialism' (emphasis added). And moreover, referring to Williams' idea that social movements constitute 'our major positive resource', Mulhern retorts by asserting that it is only the organized working class that can provide this essential quality. He sums up by stating:

'If that resource should, in some calamitous historical eventuality, be dispersed or neutralized, then socialism really will be reduced to a sectarian utopia beyond the reach of even the most inspired and combative social movement'.²⁴

This last assertive statement finds a supportive echo in Miliband's (1985) recent critical appraisal of the so-called 'new revisionists'. Miliband holds to the view that it is the organized working class that remains the principal if not the only 'gravedigger' of capitalism; here is the indispensable and necessary 'agency of historical change'. He continues:

'And if, as one is constantly told is the case, the organized working class will refuse to do the job, then the job will not be done; and capitalist society will continue, generation after generation, as a conflict-ridden, growingly authoritarian and brutalized social system, poisoned by its inability to make humane and rational use of the immense resources capitalism has itself brought into being - unless of course the world is pushed into nuclear war'.²⁵

The above passage is further clarified when in discussing the international dimension Miliband contends that 'not much will really move until the organized working class decides that it should'.²⁶

The cardinal tenet of Mulhern and Miliband's position is that it is the organized working class that remains the indispensable agency of historical change under capitalism, and if that class, that social force, for whatever reason, does not fulfill its predetermined revolutionary role then socialism has no future. For the sake of brevity, I want to concentrate on three aspects of this expression of political determinism..

First, leaving aside the discussion on how we might best arrive at a situation or definition of the 'true' working class in relation to the trends of segmentation and fragmentation of the contemporary production process, it can be effectively argued, as Laclau and Mouffe (1985) have demonstrated, that there is no *a priori*, fixed and necessary link between socialist objectives and the positions of social agents in the relations of production.²⁷ The political direction of the workers' struggle will depend, as with any other social struggle, on its forms of insertion within a given hegemonic context. At the same time, as was noted at the beginning of this introduction, the various subject positions of a worker will be constructed through their articulation to particular political discourses. As Laclau and Mouffe suggest, 'in order to advance in the determination of social antagonisms, it is necessary to analyse the plurality of diverse and frequently contradictory positions, and to discard the idea of a perfectly unified and homogenous agent, such as the 'working class' of classical discourse'.²⁸ However, by the same token, and as we indicated previously, it cannot be maintained that the new social movements must by definition be of a progressive nature, for there are no 'privileged points for the unleashing of a socialist political practice; this hinges upon a 'collective will' that is laboriously constructed from a number of dissimilar points'.²⁹ Thus, for example, the political significance of an ecological struggle or of a regionalist

social movement, or of a local community struggle is not pre-given; rather it depends on its hegemonic articulation with other struggles and demands.³⁰

Second, within the thesis that prioritizes the pre-determined revolutionary potential of the organized working class, one normally encounters a tendency to conceive of socialism simply in terms of the coming to power of this same class, allied to a heteronomous organization of other social sectors. Further, and along the same lines, the interpretation of the political substance and texture of socialism tends to carry with it far more traces of an authoritarian Leninist version than of a collective, democratic imaginary. One aspect of this dimension is signalled by Gorz (1982) when he writes that 'insofar as they have postulated that individuals exhaustively coincide with their social being, and that social being realises the full wealth of human capacities, the theories, utopian visions and political practices of socialism have led to a straightforward negation of the individual subject'.³¹ Opposition to Leninist modes of political organization and conceptualization of socialism has been forcefully elaborated by the feminist movement, and Rowbotham's (1980) incisive intervention on this question provides an excellent example of the way in which critical but constructive interrogation can be developed.³²

Finally, what is also striking about the Mulhern and Miliband perspective is its eurocentric, universalist inclination to sustain conclusions about revolution and socialism without drawing on the experience of societies of the capitalist periphery, where revolutions against the dominance of capital have actually taken place. In this area we have to touch on issues of the revolutionary party, state power and the influence of social movements.

A preliminary comparison of the papers by Laclau and Coraggio, included in this collection, might seem to indicate some important divergences with respect to the role of the party in the process of revolutionary change. For Coraggio, looking at the Nicaraguan experience, certain key political functions must remain centralized within the structure of a mass party that maintains a horizontal rather than vertical relation with the people. On the interrelationship between social movements and the revolutionary party, Coraggio writes as follows:

'At the level of political practice, where the objective is not to wipe out all forms of power, but rather to ensure that social power is exercised by the people, the movement towards synthesis..... correlates with the process of articulation of social movements in which the political parties have historically played a central role. In particular, in reflecting on the process of achieving a correlation of power which would lead to a break with the structures which subjugate the people, we must reintroduce the role of the revolutionary party (emphasis in original). Not only because it articulates specific movements into a front of social forces but also because in many cases, it is a product of these movements and of the way in which they operate' (p. 225).

In the specific case of Nicaragua, Coraggio highlights the central importance of the form of articulation between political party and social movement, indicating the existence of a 'verticalist' option whereby the mass organizations are located in a subordinate position vis-a-vis the party, and an option wherein the party articulates the various identities and their corresponding popular organizations 'horizontally'. The former option can take us along the Cuban road, with all the organizational and procedural implications of an adapted Leninist model. Such a model stands in stark contrast to the basic thrust of the radical democratic project carried forward by many of the new social movements. However, the so-called 'horizontal' option comes much

closer and recalls an observation made by Laclau and Mouffe on the role of the party.

They note, for instance, that the party as a political institution can be one of two things; either 'an instance of bureaucratic crystallization which acts as a brake upon mass movements', or 'the organizer of dispersed and politically virgin masses', whereby it can serve as an 'instrument for the expansion and deepening of democratic struggles'.³³ The second instance relates more closely to the Nicaraguan case, although the term 'politically virgin masses' is not entirely pertinent since the masses in Nicaragua have a longer history of struggle and political consciousness than is often assumed. Nevertheless, in the context of the role of the party, we can see here a tangible link between Coraggio's approach and the ideas adumbrated by Laclau and Mouffe. In the context of the debate around the interrelationships between the revolutionary party and social movements, Reddock's discussion of the women's movement in Grenada - see chapter 10 - as well as Molyneux's more theoretical treatment for Nicaragua, are both illuminative in the way they bring out the crucial issue of popular democracy.³⁴ In general, Nicaragua remains a positive example, in the sense that a successful revolution against imperialist domination has been achieved, and despite continuing U.S.-aggression, the Sandinista Revolution finds new ways to survive and go forward. And in this process, popular democracy and political space for the development of a range of social movements gives the Nicaraguan experiment a vital and original historical significance. But in what ways does the Nicaraguan experience have a wider relevance for other regions of Latin America? How are we to view the revolutionary potential of new social movements in societies where capitalist statepower appears to remain so oppressively inviolate? Or, in other cases, where an opening towards limited democracy has been achieved, as for instance in Brazil or Argentina, how can that democracy be extended and generalized when the apparatuses of state repression have not been dismantled? Many difficult issues are involved here and there are no facile answers, or at least no easy and effective answers.

Is it perhaps in part because of the apparent intractability of many of these questions that they are often not raised? One possible way of approximating a general response to this set of questions lies through reference to Gramsci's concepts of war of position and war of movement. In the former case, we have a close link with many aspects of the new social movements, since in a war of position we are referring to wide-ranging social organization and ideological influence whereby the struggle for popular hegemony on these fronts makes possible or conclusive a frontal attack or war of movement against capitalist state power. In countries like Brazil and Argentina with relatively densely-structured civil societies a war of position is indispensable and the radical democratic struggles of the new social movements provide a crucial contribution to just such a 'war'. A successful war of movement, a frontal confrontation involving an armed struggle against the state, would appear far more elusive.

On another level, in the Peruvian case, *Sendero Luminoso's* vision of revolutionary victory stems not from an adherence to the Gramscian concept of a quick war of manoeuvre but from a protracted guerrilla war. And *Sendero Luminoso*, as Gianotten et al describe in their following contribution, certainly does not subscribe to the notion of a war of position.³⁵

In contrast, one striking facet of the originality of the Sandinista revolutionary project has been, in practice, to carry out a necessary war of movement against Somoza, as a moment in the continuing war of position against the external and internal forces and agents of United States imperialism. The forging of a national popular movement against military dictatorship, within which the capacity to out-manoeuvre and overthrow the varied repressive apparatuses of that dictatorship was ably constructed, led then to the task of continually fighting for the development of popular hegemony in the post-revolutionary situation. In the Nicaraguan case, as in other Third World societies to have experienced revolutionary change, pre-revolutionary civil society was not as fully developed as in the larger countries of Latin America, such as Mexico, Brazil,

Argentina or Chile. How a revolutionary course might be charted out in these societies seems, at this point in time, to lead us into what can only be somewhat premature conjecture. Perhaps, too, this is one reason why the emergence of new democratic antagonisms has been so enthusiastically heralded; in the palpable absence of more immediate prospects of radical transformation of state power, new social movements generate new sources of political hope. And optimism of the will can invariably attenuate pessimism of the intellect.

IV On the Structure of the Collection

At the outset an attempt was made to define the novelty of the new social movements. However no question of definition was posed concerning social movements in general, old, new, ancient or modern. Touraine (1984), in a condensed presentation of his ideas, suggests that there are three types of conflict.³⁶ First conflictual actions which can be characterized as defensive collective behaviour; second, conflicts which modify decisions or whole systems of decision-making which for Touraine become social struggles, and third, if conflictual actions 'seek to change the social relations of power in the decisive cultural areas - such as production, science and ethical values - ' then Touraine proposes the term 'social movement'.³⁷

A similar concern to attempt some delineation of types of struggle can be found in Falabella's (1983) account also,³⁸ and certainly there are potential classification problems around this whole problematic. To what extent can the human rights association in Argentina be collocated with the ecclesiastical base communities in Brazil as both being examples of social movements? Referring to Touraine's three-fold division of social conflict, we might infer that human rights associations represent an example of 'defensive collective behaviour', but equally in relation to their ability to sustain collective action they can come to represent in Touraine's terminology agents of social struggles, and further, since they may seek to change the social relations of power in the area of 'ethical values' then why not a social

movement too?

Henry, in his contribution to the following section on social movements and the city, also grapples with problems of classification, noting, as a point of departure, the risks involved in directly applying to Latin American reality categories and ideas produced in Western Europe.³⁹

On classification still, Castells (1982) opts for a delineation of urban movements from social movements; that is, urban movements may become agents of social transformation (à la Touraine) depending both on their ability to relate their protest to the overall process of political change, and on the destruction of the relationships of social integration established by the state.⁴⁰ Consequently, an urban movement for Castells is not the same as a social movement, the latter term being connotated by social transformation. In between there would then appear to be an intermediate category of 'urban social movement', leading to a degree of ambiguity that provides a focus for Pickvance's (1985) recent article.⁴¹

It will be clear to the reader that, from the underlying positions of the contributions to the volume, social movements in Latin America are conceived of in an open and wide-ranging manner. On the other hand, it must also be pointed out that it was not the practical intention to try and assemble a comprehensive set of papers on the new social movements. Instead, we have placed on the agenda some of the pivotal problems in relation to a selection of work on the different kinds of movements. Hence, the volume represents more of an initial reconnaissance and orientation than an over-arching coverage.⁴²

In the first section, Laclau and Evers, in contrasting but mutually compatible ways, examine the general problematic of new social movements and political change. In doing so they provide us with a stimulating range of insights and conceptualizations for further more detailed investigation.

In the second part, Kowarick, Vink and Henry look at a series of themes in relation to social movements in the city. Kowarick and Vink, basing their approaches on the Brazilian experience, draw

a number of important links with workers' struggles. In Kowarick's chapter on São Paulo we are presented with an analysis of the interwoven nature of urban struggles in neighbourhood and factory, whereas Vink elects to investigate the ecclesiastical base communities and the role of religion in the context of the metalworkers' strike of São Bernardo in 1980. Henry then takes up the issue of distinguishing the variety of urban social movements to have emerged in Latin America, basing many of his examples on his Peruvian work.

Peru also provides the focus for the third part of the volume. Firstly, Slater looks at the conditions affecting the surfacing of a number of regional social movements in the military period (1968-1980). This is followed by a more specific analysis of the guerrilla movement *Sendero Luminoso*, and here Gianotten, De Wit and De Wit furnish much useful information on the background to Sendero's rise to political prominence. At the same time, they give us a valuable overview of the different interpretations of Sendero's evolution and strategy.⁴³

Finally, Coraggio, Molyneux and Reddock address themselves to the question of revolutionary change, the women's movement and concomitant issues of popular hegemony. This triad of papers includes the scrutiny of political themes whose significance stretches far beyond the shores of Central America and the Caribbean. Despite varying shades of emphasis and nuances of argument they also underline the importance of eschewing eurocentric approaches to the analysis of social movements and political change. Equally these contributions, as well as the foregoing, call our attention to the need for more investigation⁴⁴ - not simply for scientific reasons but also as an arm in the struggle for a genuinely democratic social transformation.

NOTES

1. See Mainwaring, S., and Viola, E., (1984), *New Social Movements, Political Culture and Democracy: Brazil and Argentina in the 1980s*, *Telos*, no. 61, Fall, pp. 17-54.
2. Mouffe, C., (1984), *Towards a Theoretical Interpretation of 'New Social Movements'*, in: Hanninen, S., and Paldán, L., (eds.) *Rethinking Marx*, Argument - Sonderband AS 109, Berlin, pp. 139-143.
3. Mouffe, op.cit. 2, p. 141.
4. Laclau, E., and Mouffe, C., (1985), *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy - towards a radical democratic politics*, Verso Books, London, p. 159.
5. *ibid* 4.
6. As one example here, we can mention that the waste of natural resources, the pollution and destruction of the environment and the subordination of life to the boundless pursuit of profit have given rise to the ecology movement and to quite new forms of social resistance - see Bahro, R., (1982), *Socialism and Survival*, Heretic Books, London.
7. See Evers, T., (1984), 'Basisdemokratie' in Search of its Subject: New Social Movements and Political Culture in West Germany, *Praxis International*, 4:2, July, p. 145.
8. See, for example, Mainwaring and Viola (1984), op.cit. 1, p. 36, and Eder, K., *A New Social Movement?* *Telos*, no. 52, Summer, pp. 5-20; the latter writer stresses more the cultural dimension of these movements and argues that the ecological movement as exemplar is characterized by a cultural orientation of social development based on a new conception of nature and man, and a new moral order rooted in collective needs and wants (p. 18).
9. There is a connection here with McCarthy's (1984) recent discussion of the 'scientization of politics' in relation to Habermas' work on critical theory where it is argued that 'new potentials for expanded power of technical control make obvious the disproportion between the results of the most organized rationality and unreflected goals, rigidified value-systems and obsolete ideologies' - see McCarthy, T., (1984), *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas*, Polity Press, Cambridge, p. 13. For a comment on the anti-democratic nature of decisions on nuclear weapon development, see, for example, Kaldor, M., (1982), *An Interview*, *Telos*, no. 52, Spring, p.88.
10. On the women's movement in the Third World Janyawardena (1982) usefully points out that contrary to the Eurocentric assumption which holds that the movement for women's liberation in the Third World has been 'merely imitative of Western models', and devoid of its own history, in actual fact feminist struggles originated in many countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America between 60 to 80 years ago - see Jayawardena, K., (1982), *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* -

in nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague.

11. Ryan, M. (1984), *Marxism and Deconstruction*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, p. 102.
12. For instance as Mouffe (1984) explains what is really 'new' in the 'new right' is its ability to utilize potential opposition to bureaucratization, increasing social insecurity etc. and to incorporate this opposition into a reactionary discourse that re-emphasizes traditional values and the supposed superiority of a mythical previous epoch: - Mouffe, C., (1984), op.cit. 2, p. 142.
13. See, for example, Karner, H., (1983), *Los Movimientos Sociales: Revolución de lo Cotidiano, Nueva Sociedad*, no. 64, enero-febrero, pp. 25-32.
14. for a recent study, see CEPAL (1984), *La Mujer en el Sector Popular Urbano - América Latina y el Caribe*, Santiago de Chile, especially, pp. 19-116.
15. One recent example is that of 'el movimiento vecinal' in Venezuela, a country not characterized by the military's suspension of the political institutions of formal democracy - see De la Cruz, R., (1985), *Encuentros y Desencuentros con la Democracia - los Nuevos Movimientos Sociales, Nueva Sociedad*, no. 77, mayo-junio, pp. 87-88.
16. See Mainwaring and Viola (1984) op.cit. 1.
17. The solidarity movement in Poland expresses a similar objective although pitted against another kind of state-structure, governed by the ideological parameters of an ossified 'Marxism-Leninism' - for an interesting discussion see the Special Section on the Polish Crisis, *Telos*, No. 51, Spring 1982, pp. 173-190.
18. Williams, R., (1985), *Towards 2000*, Pelican Books, p. 123. There are some interesting links between Williams' discussion of democracy with its critique of 'commandist' viewpoints and Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) recent work. On reading these two analyses together there is one strongly-expressed standpoint in Laclau and Mouffe which seems to sum up both positions; they write: 'The task of the Left therefore cannot be to renounce liberal-democratic ideology, but on the contrary, to deepen and expand it in the direction of a radical and plural democracy' - Laclau and Mouffe (1985) op.cit. 4, p. 176.
19. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) op.cit. 4, p. 180.
20. As a qualifying comment it might be added that the 'diachronic-evolutionary schema' has been generally less influential in Latin America, and also the representation of interests model perhaps less developed than in Western Europe, given the greater permanence of bourgeois democratic institutions in the latter case.
21. Mainwaring and Viola (1984), op.cit. 1, p. 32.

22. Although the development of the ecology movement in Latin America has been much more limited than in Western Europe, due to the predominance of issues of basic survival for major sections of the population, some progress has been made. For instance, in Brazil the group '*Desobedeça*', inspired by the European ecological parties became established within the Workers Party in São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul and Rio. In the November 1982 elections, '*Desobedeça*' elected one representative in the state House of Rio de Janeiro. In Argentina too, an ecology group was formed in the early 1980's setting up a journal called *Mutantia*. For further details, see Mainwaring and Viola (1984), op.cit. 1, pp. 29-30.
23. Williams, R., (1985), op.cit. 18, p. 174; other quotations p. 173.
24. Mulhern, F., (1984), 'Towards 2000': News From You Know Where, *New Left Review*, no. 148, November/December, p. 22; previous *ibid*.
25. Miliband, R., (1985), The New Revisionism in Britain, *New Left Review*, no. 150, March/April, pp. 13-14.
26. Miliband, R., op.cit. 25, p. 25.
27. Laclau and Mouffe (1985), op.cit. 4, see in particular pp. 75-88.
28. Laclau and Mouffe (1985), op.cit. 4, p. 84.
29. Laclau and Mouffe (1985), op.cit. 4, p. 87. It is useful at this point to contrast Laclau and Mouffe on the new social movements with Mulhern's (1985) observation that these movements are increasingly drawn into a 'ceremony of approval' that 'inhibits political and intellectual engagement' - Mulhern, F., (1985), op.cit. 24, p. 20.
30. Again this position can be contrasted with Mulhern's approach contra Williams whereby Mulhern sees the 'community' as a highly dubious focus for left-wing politics thus missing the need for hegemonic struggle at and through all levels and spheres of social existence.
31. Gorz, A., (1982), *Farewell to the Working Class*-an essay on post-industrial socialism, Pluto Press, London, p.90.
32. Rowbotham, S., (1980), The Women's Movement and Organizing for Socialism, in Rowbotham, S., Segal, L., and Wainwright, H., (eds.) *Beyond the Fragments* - feminism and the making of socialism, Merlin Press, London, pp. 21-156.
33. Laclau and Mouffe (1985), op.cit. 4, p.180.
34. The reader will also find Henfrey's (1984) recent article on Grenada useful.
Henfrey, C., (1984), Between Populism and Leninism - the Grenadian Experience, *Latin American Perspectives*, Issue 42, vol. II, No. 3, Summer, pp. 15-36.
35. Also on *Sendero Luminoso*, see Taylor, L., (1983), *Marxism in the Andes: Sendero Luminoso and the Contemporary Guerrilla Movement in Peru*, Centre for Latin American Studies, Univer-

sity of Liverpool, and McClintock, C., (1984), *Why Peasants Rebel: The Case of Peru's Sendero Luminoso*, *World Politics*, Vol. XXXVII, October, No. 1, pp. 48-84.

36. Touraine, A., (1984), *Social Movements: Special Area or Central Problem in Sociological Analysis?* *Thesis Eleven*, No. 9, July, pp. 5-15, and also see his *The Voice and the Eye - an analysis of social movements*, Cambridge University Press, 1981.
37. There is some link between this definition and a recent article on urban social movements by Pickvance (1985), where he suggests a distinction between urban movements and 'urban social movement' the latter term being reserved for 'the extremely rare cases of a major change in urban power relations' - Pickvance, C., (1985), *The Rise and Fall of Urban Movements and the Role of Comparative Analysis*, *Society and Space*, Vol. 3, pp. 31-53.
38. Falabella, G., (1983), *Movimientos Sociales, Intelectuales Organizados y el Intelectual Orgánico en América Latina: una perspectiva comparada*, Centro de Investigaciones del Caribe y América Latina, CISCLA, Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, Documentos de Trabajo, no. 16.
39. Henry includes here a reference to the influential work of Castells - see, for instance, Castells, M., (1982), *Squatters and Politics in Latin America: A Comparative Analysis of Urban Social Movements in Chile, Peru and Mexico*, in Safa, H., (ed.), *Towards a Political Economy of Urbanization in Third World Countries*, Oxford University Press, pp. 249-282.
40. Castells, (1982), *op.cit.* 39, p. 262.
41. Pickvance (1985), *op.cit.* 37.
42. For a relevant study that had still not arrived in Amsterdam at the time of writing, I would refer the reader to Esterez, J., and Falabella, G., (eds.) (1985), *Movimientos Sociales en América Latina: Perspectiva de los años ochenta*, Editorial Nueva Imagen, México.
43. It can be argued that on most counts *Sendero Luminoso* is not a 'new social movement', certainly not in relation to the way this category has been discussed earlier on. On the other hand, its tactics and strategy as a guerrilla movement are new. Its political immersion in the rural communities of Ayacucho and beyond contrasts markedly with earlier guerrilla movements whose leadership was easily identifiable and whose armed practice remained fragile.
44. One of the few existing research projects on social movements and the state in Latin America was originally launched by UNRISD in Geneva. Stiefel's (1984) overview paper as well as reports published in *Dialogue* are very relevant - see Stiefel, M., (1984), *Social Movements and the State in Latin America - methodological questions and preliminary findings from an UNRISD research project*, (mimeo) UNRISD, Geneva.

