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Social Movements and Networks

Relational Approaches to Collective Action

edited by

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Apart from the contributors to this book, papers by Mustafa Emirbayer, Roberto Franzosi, Mimi Sheller, and David Tindall were also presented. Commentaries on the presentations came from Donatella della Porta, Brian Doherty, Christopher Rootes, John Scott, Sidney Tarrow, Satnam Virdee, and Alan Warde. We are sincerely grateful to them all for their insights and collegiality. Although he could not attend the meeting, Charles Tilly was a source of inspiration and encouragement during the preparation of the conference, and we are delighted to be able to include his and Lesley Wood's chapter in this book.

The Director of the Democracy and Participation Programme, Paul Whiteley, deserves a very special mention. Not only did he provide extra funds from the central budget, but he also made an outstanding contribution to the meeting both on the academic and on the social side. The opportunity to exchange views with colleagues who did not specialize in social movements was one of the great bonuses of the conference, and Paul fully played his part in this regard.

We are also grateful to the Politics editors at Oxford University Press, Dominic Byatt and Amanda Watkins, and to the anonymous reviewers who commented on the proposal and on early drafts. We are particularly indebted to Ken Newton and Max Kaase, for their intellectual openness and their decision to include our book in the Comparative Politics series. While the comparative value of the empirical materials presented in the book is limited, that of the theoretical enterprise is not. We subscribe to Giovanni Sartori's—and indeed many others'—long-established claim that any serious comparison rests on a careful specification of the basic concepts and parameters. Regarding networks, in particular, no comparative progress can be made if we do not engage in a systematic assessment of different uses of network concepts in current social movement research. That is what our book tries to do. We hope to be able to lay the foundations for a genuinely comparative analysis of movement networks.

Our last thought goes to two outstanding colleagues and friends who prematurely lost their lives when this book was at its final stages. Roger Gould, who was at Ross Priory and whose contribution appears as Chapter 10 of this volume, passed away on 29 April 2002, only a few days after *Social Movements and Networks* received its final green light from the publisher's reviewers. He was preceded by a few months by leading social movement theorist Alberto Melucci, who died on 12 September 2001. Although he was not involved in the conference, and would not strictly qualify as a 'social network analyst', Alberto's work on the role of informal networks in mobilization and identity-building processes shaped the thinking of most of us. As for Roger, even readers unfamiliar with his seminal work on networks in the Paris Commune will quickly be persuaded by his outstanding chapter of the magnitude of his role as a network scholar, and of the magnitude of our loss. We dedicate our collective action to their memory.

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Introduction: Social Movements, Contentious Actions, and Social Networks: 'From Metaphor to Substance'?

Mario Diani

It is difficult to grasp the nature of social movements.[1] They cannot be reduced to specific insurrections or revolts, but rather resemble strings of more or less connected events, scattered across time and space; they cannot be identified with any specific organization either, rather, they consist of groups and organizations, with various levels of formalization, linked in patterns of interaction which run from the fairly centralized to the totally decentralized, from the cooperative to the explicitly hostile. Persons promoting and/or supporting their actions do so not as atomized individuals, possibly with similar values or social traits, but as actors linked to each other through complex webs of exchanges, either direct or mediated. Social movements are in other words, complex and highly heterogeneous network structures.

Since the 1970s, analysts of social movements and collective action have tried hard to make sense of these structures and their dynamics. That collective action is significantly shaped by social ties between prospective participants is not a recent[2] discovery (e.g. Pinard 1968; Booth and Babchuk 1969; Oberschall 1973; Pickvance 1975; Tilly 1978; Snow *et al.* 1980); nor is the view of social movements as networks linking a multiplicity of actors (e.g. Gerlach and Hine 1970; Curtis and Zurcher 1973). More recently however, interest in the relationship between social movements and social networks has grown both in the range of the topics addressed and the depth of the research results. Although not all relational approaches to social movements qualify as 'network analysis', the claim that social network analysis at large has moved 'from metaphor to substance' (Wellman 1988) also applies to social network approaches to the study of collective action.

This book charts recent developments in this line of inquiry. As yet, the most massive set of contributions has dealt with the processes of individual recruitment. Embeddedness in specific relational contexts has been found to be conducive to various forms of collective engagement (Oliver 1984; Kriesi 1988; Opp 1989; Fernandez and McAdam 1988, 1989; Knoke and Wisely 1990; McAdam and Fernandez 1990; McPherson et al. 1992; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; McPherson and Rotolo 1996; Kitts 2000; Tindall 2000; Passy 2001b; Diani, forthcoming). Other studies have focused on the overall structure of networks in specific communities and their impact on the development of collective action, assessed both in terms of formal models (Gould 1993b; Marwell and Oliver 1993; Macy 1993; Oberschall and Kim 1996; Heckathorn 1996; Kim and Bearman 1997; Oliver and Marwell 2001) and in reference to specific empirical evidence (Gould 1991, 1993a, 1995; Barkey and van Rossem 1997). Explorations of the networks-mobilization link in social movements have also prompted broader reflections on the relationship between structure and agency and relational approaches to social theory (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Emirbayer 1997; Emirbayer and Mische 1998; Emirbayer and Sheller 1999).

The structure of social movements has also attracted increasing attention. Studies in this area have focused on interorganizational exchanges, whether in the form of coalition-building (Rucht 1989; Diani 1990, 1995; Philips 1991; Hathaway and Meyer 1994; Sawer and Groves 1994; Ansell 1997, 2001) or overlapping memberships (Rosenthal et al. 1985, 1997; Schmitt-Beck 1989; Diani 1995; Carroll and Ratner 1996; Ray et al. 2001). Others have focused on networking activities in social movement communities, whether 'real' or 'virtual' (Melucci 1984; Taylor and Whittier 1992; Whittier 1995; Polletta 1999a,b; Pickerill 2000; Hampton and Wellman 2001). The intersection of individuals, organizations, and protest events over time has also been explored (Bearman and Everett 1993; Mische 1998; Franzosi 1999; Mische and Pattison 2000; Osa 2001). Network analysis has also facilitated the analysis of the role of advocacy groups, public interest groups, and social movement organizations in policy networks (Laumann and Knoke 1987; Broadbent 1998).

The very expansion of network studies of social movements renders an assessment of the applicability and usefulness of the concept an urgent and useful enterprise. The first reason for doing so is that empirical evidence is not universally supportive to the thesis of a link between networks and collective action. Several studies actually found a modest relationship between the two (Luker 1984; Mullins 1987; Jasper and Poulsen 1993). This has led some critics to reduce networks to a mere resource aside others (Jasper 1997). The pervasiveness of network effects has also prompted claims that the concept had been stretched too far and thus made tautological (Piven and Cloward 1992). The simple acknowledgement of a relationship between the social networks of some kind and the development of collective action (whether in the form of personal ties linking prospective participants to current activists, or of dense counter-cultural networks

affecting rates of mobilization in specific areas) is no longer sufficient. Instead, it is important to specify 'how networks matter', in relation to both individual participation (e.g. What is their relative contribution vis-à-vis individual attributes such as education or profession, broader political opportunities, or emotional dynamics? What types of networks do affect what type of participation?) as well as in relation to interorganizational dynamics (e.g. what does the shape of interorganizational links tell us about the main orientations of specific movements?).

Although the need for such specification has long been recognized (e.g. Snow et al. 1980), attempts in that direction have clearly taken momentum in the 1990s (Marwell and Oliver 1993; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Diani 1995; Gould 1995; Ohlemacher 1996; Kitts 2000, to mention only a few). This book charts recent developments in this particular line of inquiry and illustrates the centrality of these concerns to social movement research. There is also another ambition though, namely to provide a ground for intellectual exchange across disciplines and specific research communities. Besides asking 'What do networks mean' and 'How do networks matter', the book also addresses—albeit more indirectly—the question of 'to whom (in the social science research community) should (social movement) networks matter'. We claim that they should matter to a much broader community than those identifying themselves as social movement researchers. There are already several instances of overlap. Important contributions to social movement analysis from a network perspective actually refer to empirical objects, which would not automatically fall in the domain of social movement analysis, such as working class action (Klandermans 1984, 1997), or participation in religious groups (Snow et al. 1980); other studies widely used among social movement scholars include investigations of participation dynamics in voluntary associations (Wilson 2000; Anheier 2001a,b; McPherson et al. 2001).

This book intends to contribute to the cross-disciplinary exchange with those social scientists who do not consider the concept of social movement as central to their theoretical preoccupations, yet have a strong interest in the network dimension of political action at large (e.g. scholars of collective action: Macy 1990, 1991, 1993; Heckathorn 1996; Ostrom 1998; policy networks—Laumann and Knoke 1987; Kenis and Schneider 1991; Knoke et al. 1996; interorganizational relations—Galaskiewicz 1985; Podolny and Page 1998; Gulati and Gargiulo 1999; Pichierri 1999; social capital—Stolle 1998; Stolle and Rochon 1998; van Deth 2000; Prakash and Selle, 2003). On a more ambitious note, looking at the network dimension may serve to dispel some of the ambiguities regarding the concept of social movement and thus clear the table of issues which keep marring the debate, such as the relationship between the movement organizations and interest groups (Jordan and Maloney 1997; Diani 2001; Leech 2001), or between protest and movements (Melucci 1996). Although this will not be the main focus of the book, it will represent one of the possible developments of our thinking on the issue.

It is not difficult to see why the concept of network has become so popular in the social sciences in recent times. Its flexibility, and in many senses its very ambiguity, enables researchers to deal with phenomena of change, which are difficult to contain within the boundaries of formal bureaucracies or nation states, or at the other pole, the individual actor (Mutti 1996). Referring to networks provides a clue to assess the social location of specific actors as well as to identify general structural patterns from a relational perspective. The interest in the linkage between network concepts and social movement analysis may be located in at least three different intellectual contexts. The first one consists of the renewed interest in the meso-level of social analysis and the relation between structure and agency. Attention to the 'micro-macro link' (Alexander *et al.* 1987) has fostered the study of the patterns of social organization (including social networks), which mediate between the individual actors and macro social processes. The relation between the constraining character of social structure and the actors' capacity to affect it by adapting and modifying rules, meanings, and patterns of interaction has been addressed from several perspectives, from exchange theory (Coleman 1990; Cook and Whitmeyer 1992) to action theory (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984; Sewell 1992), from neo-institutionalism (DiMaggio and Powell 1991) to explicit attempts to reformulate theories of an agency from a relational, network perspective (White 1992; Emirbayer 1997). In some cases, advocates of the integration of structure and agency have argued their cases by drawing explicitly from social movement research (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Livesay 2002).

The second important trend has to do with the resurgence of interest in 'social mechanisms' (Hedström and Swedberg 1998) as a corrective to invariant explanations and the search for law-like formulations.[3] Rather than reorienting social movement research, so far the attention to mechanisms has made more explicit what was already a relevant orientation within it, namely, the tendency to focus on specific dynamics relevant to the spread of social movement activity: among them, recruitment, framing, tactical adaptation of action repertoires, and of course networking. Attention to mechanisms has also brought about a plea for greater dialogue between the social movement community and cognate fields. This has mainly taken the form of the search for mechanisms which could account for a wide range of political processes, most of which had been overlooked so far by mainstream social movement research, such as democratization (Tilly 2001; McAdam *et al.* 2001). On the other hand, moving towards mechanisms has further strengthened the tendency to use the concept of social movement in purely denotative terms, that Touraine (1981) or Melucci (1996, but originally 1982) had long exposed. 'Social movement' is in this perspective, merely the word to identify the set of phenomena ('episodes', in McAdam *et al.*'s (2001) words) within which the dynamics of substantive interest of researchers could take place.

The third important process has been the consolidation of social network analysis as a distinct field in social science. To a large extent it is still controversial whether it should be regarded as a simple set of research techniques, a distinct perspective on society, or a scientific paradigm proper (Wellman 1988). Indeed,

the analysis of social networks in the broader sense may also be conducted through approaches other than those usually associated with network analysis, including qualitative techniques (Wellman and Berkowitz 1988), as Jeffrey Broadbent's chapter in this book exemplifies. Nor do structural approaches need necessarily to focus on networks—either 'concrete' or symbolic—between specific actors. According to an authoritative line of thinking, while network analysis focuses on individual actors and data, structural analysis looks at the patterns of exchanges between predefined groups which is very difficult to modify.[4]

Whatever the case, network analysis as it is best known developed with reference to a 'realist' view of social structure as networks which linked together concrete actors through specific ties, identifiable and measurable through reliable empirical instruments ('regularities in the patterns of relations among concrete entities': White *et al.* 1976). This view represented an alternative to both views of social structure as macro forces largely independent from the control of the specific actors associated with them (the working class, the capital class, the nation...), and views of structure as aggregates of the individual actors sharing determinate specific traits (as in the political behaviour, survey-based tradition of research, where 'class factors' are frequently reduced to individual occupation).

Gradually, a different vision of network analysis has also emerged, which does not emphasize empiricism and concreteness, and highlights instead the inextricable link between social networks and culture. Following largely Harrison White's (1992) seminal contributions, social ties have been treated as consisting of processes of meaning attribution. In contrast to other versions of network analysis, which treat ties either as a precondition of culture or ideology (e.g. Erickson 1982) or as a product of a particular version of 'homophily' as shared cultural traits (e.g. McPherson *et al.* 2001; for an application to social movements, Diani 1995). Here a linkage exists only to the extent that a shared discourse enables two or more actors to recognize their interdependence and qualify its terms: 'a social network is a network of meanings' (White 1992: 67). This perspective prompts a reflection on the relationship between the social networks and the cognitive maps through which actors make sense of and categorize their social environment and locate themselves within broader webs of ties and interactions. Proponents of the cultural approach to social networks have engaged in sustained dialogue with sociological neo-institutionalists (DiMaggio and Powell 1991), encouraging developments in several specific areas, from organizations (Carley 1999) to markets (White 1988, 2002), from the study of the legal system (Breiger 2000) to literary analysis and the sociology of the arts (Mohr 2000). We have also seen ambitious attempts to develop a relational perspective on sociology with a special focus on the notion of agency (Emirbayer 1997; Emirbayer and Mische 1998).

THE CONCEPT OF NETWORK IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT ANALYSIS

Social movements have been defined in a variety of ways. For some, they are the actors of central conflicts in society, embodying fundamental oppositions regarding

the direction of the historical process (Touraine 1981). For others, they represent a peculiar type of collective action, characterized by identity, solidarity, and the attempt to break limits of compatibility of a given system (Melucci 1996). For still others they are little more than expressions of preferences, that movement organizations are supposed to mobilize and turn into real action (McCarthy and Zald 1977, even though they have changed their view of movements and got closer to Tilly's; see also Zald 2000). The most popular view at the moment is probably one focusing on sustained interactions between challengers and power holders (Tilly 1994).

Trying to associate networks to a particular conception of movements would make little sense at this stage. For all their differences, the definitions mentioned above all accommodate network mechanisms within their broader frameworks (Diani 1992a,b). Moreover, we would risk overlooking the contribution that a network perspective can offer to our understanding of the multiplicity of levels of experience, usually found in processes of collective action and grassroots mobilization. It is, therefore, wiser to start by recognizing that a network perspective may illuminate different dynamics, which are essential to our empirical understanding of movements, and leave attempts to reconcile them in a unitary view of movements for a later stage (provided an integration should be needed at all, as many people in the field, including most contributors to this volume, seem to doubt).

A cautious approach also makes it more explicit that the empirical phenomena studied by 'social movement scholars' from a network perspective do not necessarily fall under a specific domain with clear-cut boundaries. For example, the chapters in this book which deal with the role of individual networks in collective action, do so by looking at organizations that need not be defined SMOs, and that one could refer to as 'public interest groups' (Passy's environmental and peace organizations) or 'revolutionary party' (Anheier's German National Socialist Party). Likewise, the study of networks between citizens' organizations (see the chapters by Diani, Ansell, and Osa in this book) has been studied by people who would not regard themselves as social movement scholars (e.g. Knoke and Wood 1981).

In order to follow some order in the presentation of the most relevant contributions of the social network perspective to social movement analysis in its inclusive version, it is worth referring to the conventional view of networks as sets of nodes, linked by some form of relationship, and delimited by some specific criteria. Although this framework is most frequently adopted by those close to the empiricist tradition rather than to the cultural one, it still leaves room for epistemological debates on what should represent a node, a tie, or a boundary, and in this particular sense it is fully compatible with the latter.

Nodes may consist of individuals, organizations, and eventually—if more rarely—other entities such as neighbourhoods (e.g. Gould 1995) or states (e.g. Breiger 1990). They may also consist of events linked by persons, or as in some recent application, even of elements of speech (e.g. Bearman and Stovel 2000). Relationships may consist of either direct or indirect ties. We have direct ties when two nodes are directly linked in explicit interaction and interdependence—for example, two activists who know each other personally, or two organizations who jointly promote a rally. We have indirect ties when a relationship is assumed to exist between two nodes because they share some relevant activity or resource—for example, due to overlaps in their activists or sympathizers, or to their joint involvement in some initiatives or events. Relations may be single or multiple depending on whether two nodes are linked by one or more types of relations, and they may also differ in term of contents, emotional intensity, and strength. The definition of what constitutes a social bond is a huge problem in itself and it is disputable whether it should stretch as far as the cognitive maps shared by people, or the exposure to a similar message, or cognitive framework (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994). Boundaries may be defined on the basis of realist or nominalist criteria (see also Diani 2002). Nominalist criteria are predetermined by the analyst; in contrast, realist criteria include in a given network only those nodes that happen to be actually related to each other by some kind of relation. The identification of nodes, of the relevant ties between them, and of the boundaries of the network represent fundamental steps in any study of network structures.[5] They will guide our discussion of what has been achieved in social movement analysis from a network perspective.

Networks of Individuals

Social movements exist inasmuch as individuals can be convinced to become personally involved in collective action and be offered the opportunities to do so on a sustained basis. It is, therefore, not surprising that substantial attention has been paid to the contribution of social networks to individual participation.[6] As Doug McAdam notes in his contribution to this volume, the notion that prior social ties operate as a basis for movement recruitment and that established social settings are the locus of movement emergence are among the most established findings in social movement research. Typically, social movement activists and sympathizers are linked through both 'private' and 'public' ties well before collective action develops. Personal friends, relatives, colleagues, and neighbours, may all affect individual decisions to become involved in a movement; so may people who share with prospective participants some kind of collective engagement, such as previous or current participation in other movement activities, political or social organizations, and public bodies. Individuals may also be linked through indirect ties, generated by their joint involvement in specific activities and/or events, yet without any face-to-face interaction. These may range from participation in the same political or social activities and/or organizations to involvement in the same subcultures or counter-cultures (e.g. the rave parties' scene in the UK in the 1990s, or the gay and lesbian counter-cultures in the USA: Taylor and

Whittier 1992; McKay 1996). One current critical area of debate is the extent to which exposure to the same media, whether 'traditional' (including television) or 'computer-based' may represent a social network link, and the impact of new forms of communication on social movement communities and the broader civil society (Rheinghold 1993; Calhoun 1998; Diani 2000c; Norris 2002: ch. 10). Even more fundamental is whether we should regard shared cognitive and cultural spaces as independent sources of links and therefore as the basis for specific types of networks (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994).

Both direct and indirect ties may activate a number of mechanisms, which in turn affect the chances and forms of participation. Networks may provide opportunities for action through the circulation of information about on-going activities, existing organizations, people to contact, and a reduction of the practical costs attached to participation. They may be the source of social pressure on prospective participants ('if you go, I will go too'), although we should neither forget the possibility of cross-pressures (McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Kitts 2000) nor of opposite mechanisms, whereby people participate precisely because they expect others not to do anything (Oliver 1984). Networks may facilitate the development of cognitive skills and competences and/or provide the context for the socialization of individuals to specific sets of values. They may also represent the locus for the development of strong emotional feelings (Taylor and Whittier 1995; Melucci 1996; Goodwin *et al.* 2000). It is disputable whether direct or indirect ties should operate differently, although in general, social pressure is more likely to be exerted through direct links while socialization to values or cognitive skills may also originate from involvement in similar organizational settings, regardless of strong involvement with specific individuals.[7] Whether strong or weak ties should matter most is also a matter of debate: one would expect strong ties to matter more in the case of high-risk activities (della Porta 1988) but weak ties may facilitate the contacts between a movement organization and a constituency with more moderate or at least diversified orientations, and/or the diffusion or the spread of a movement campaign (e.g. Ohlemacher 1996).

Most studies in this vein look at how involvement in networks affects individual behaviour. It is much rarer that the overall configuration of networks linking individual activists is assessed in order to evaluate the potential for collective action in a given collectivity. Albeit indirectly, Kriesi (1988) attempted to do this while looking at the relationship between exposure to a movement counter-culture and chances to sign a peace petition. This exercise usually clashes with the difficulty of collecting detailed data about a whole population of individual activists (Kitts 2000) and has, therefore, been frequently addressed through simulation data. Marwell and Oliver (1993: 101–29; see also Oliver and Marwell 2001) have been particularly active here, addressing the impact of centralization and cliques over chances of collective action. So have among others Macy (1990, 1991, 1993), Gould (1993a,b), Heckathorn (1993, 1996), Oberschall and Kim (1996), and Bearman and Kim (1997).

The impact of individual networks on individual participation has been tested with reference to different dependent variables. These have included the presence or absence of participation (McAdam 1986, 1988a,b; Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Kriesi 1988; Opp 1989; McAdam and Paulsen 1993); decisions to jointly participate (McAdam and Fernandez 1990); participation in specific types of activities, for example, in conservation or political ecology groups (Diani and Lodi 1988); the continuation of participation over time (McPherson and Rotolo 1996).

However, individual networks also shape other important features of collective action. They may contribute to organizational formation, sometimes through forms of block recruitment (Oberschall 1973) and other times by providing the necessary links between the founders. They may also provide the basis for factions and coalitions within organizations and for the emergence of group leadership (Gerlach and Hine 1970; Zachary 1977; Zablocki 1980; Diani and Donati 1984; Krackhardt 1992). Looking at how members of a given movement organization interact with each other can also provide insights into its participatory rather than professional nature, the degree of internal division of labour, the subcultural elements of the group, the difficult balance between individual and group identities, etc. (Melucci 1984). Individual networks also represent the backbone of broader social movement communities where interpersonal ties are often multiple and may involve joint participation in mobilization campaigns as well as the sharing of distinctive lifestyles or of broader cultural models. While social movement scholars have studied them mostly in reference to 'new' social movements (e.g. Melucci 1984 on 'movement areas' in Milan; Taylor and Whittier 1992 on lesbian subcultures; Kriesi *et al.* (1995) on gay subcultures; McKay 1996 on alternative cultures in the UK), working class communities continue to attract considerable attention from social historians and historical sociologists (Fantasia 1988; Savage 1996; Blokland 2001; Strangleman 2001). Communitarian ties operate at a minimum to strengthen the identity and solidarity among movement activists and sympathizers. At the same time, though, they provide the specific locus of social conflict in those cases where the challenge is eminently on the symbolic side and where, in other words, the definition of identities and the preservation of opportunities for the enactment of alternative lifestyles are mainly at stake. Looking at networks may tell us to what extent certain lifestyles (e.g. fair trade businesses, microbiotic food, exchanges of Vegan boxes, and LETS schemes) reflect a distinct movement subculture or simply a niche of the broader market. This will depend on actual links between people and most importantly, on their identities and representations.[8]

Networks of Organizations

Organizations form the other major node in social movement networks. It is actually very difficult to think of a movement as consisting of one organization, or at least as having one organization in a totally dominant position. When this

happens, as in the instances of the Bolshevik party in Russia or the National Socialist party in Germany it is more appropriate to drop the term 'movement' altogether and concentrate instead on the concept of political organization. Movements seem indeed to consist of multiple instances of collaboration on campaigns of different intensity and scope, with both the recurring presence of some actors and the more occasional presence of others. Direct ties between movement organizations include most prominently the exchange of information and the pooling of mobilization resources (Curtis and Zurcher 1973; Rucht 1989; Diani 1995; Jones *et al.* 2001); indirect ties cover a broad range of possibilities, from shared personnel (Curtis and Zurcher 1973; Rosenthal *et al.* 1985, 1997; Diani 1995; Carroll and Ratner 1996) to joint participation in specific actions and/or events (Laumann and Knoke 1987; Knoke *et al.* 1996), from exposure to the same media, especially computer mediated ones (Bonchek 1995; Pickerill 2000; van der Aalst and Walgrave 2001) to shared linkages to third parties (whether private or public organizations).

A particular version of the interorganizational approach looks at linkages between sets of organizations rather than individual ones (e.g. Bearman and Everett (1993) examine the links between types of political organizations in America over a long time, based on their coparticipation in protest events in Washington DC). Others (McPherson *et al.* 1992) look at how shared traits of their members may have different types of organizations engaging in competitive relationships for support in the same socio-cultural space.

Sometimes, relationships between groups and organizations are recurrent to the point that for a given social movement one can think of a distinctive 'alliance structure' and 'oppositional structure' (Curtis and Zurcher 1973; Klandermans 1990); other times this does not happen and *ad hoc* shifting coalition networks prevail. Always, however, the difference between a pure coalition, driven by instrumental principles (Lemieux 1997) and a movement network is given by identity playing a key role in boundary definition. Networks undoubtedly facilitate mechanisms like the mobilization and allocation of resources across an organizational field, the negotiation of agreed goals, the production and circulation of information, all activities which are also essential to any type of coalition, broadly defined; at the same time, however, they also may—or may not—facilitate the circulation of meaning and mutual recognition. It is the definition of a shared identity which qualifies a movement network vis-à-vis a coalition network, and draws its boundaries. The ego-network of a movement organization (i.e. the set of actors with whom an organization has links) also usually includes actors that are not perceived as being part of the same movement or 'family' of cognate movements, but simple allies on specific causes. Interorganizational networks and movement boundaries do not necessarily overlap.

The instability in movement boundaries is also reflected in movements' internal structure. Movement networks usually reflect processes of segmentation; these may sometimes be attributed exclusively or mainly to principles of division of labour or the actual differentiation of issues and other times, more explicitly to ideological conflicts and fragmentation (Melucci 1984; Philips 1991; Sower and Groves 1994; Ansell 1997). Differences in network patterns also reflect dynamics of centralization. To which extent are movement networks centralized or decentralized? What are the factors which account for some SMOs occupying specific positions in the network, either because of attracting links from many sources or playing the role of an intermediary that connects otherwise noncommunicating milieus (Diani 1995 and in this book)? In all these cases, looking at networks may facilitate our understanding of the criteria, which guide organizations mobilizing in a movement in their choice of occasional and more permanent allies. Interest in these issues among movement scholars has paralleled similar developments in the sociology of organizations (Podolny and Page 1998; Gulati and Gargiulo 1999; Pichierri 1999; Kenis and Knoke 2002). Both have explored the factors behind alliance and coalition-building, addressing questions such as, what are the traits of nodes that account for individual SMOs' centrality or marginality in a network? How do preexisting ties—both organizational and between leaders (or managers/entrepreneurs in the case of firms) affect chances of new alliances to develop, or the location of specific organizations in a broader organizational field? Answers to these questions also predict influence in the larger political system and attitudes towards collaboration with external actors (see Diani's and Ansell's chapters in this book).

Networks of Collectivities and Events

There are also other types of networks, which we should consider when assessing the overall contribution of network approaches to the study of collective action. Important insights have been generated by scholars focusing on collectivities and on the impact of their relationships on grassroots mobilization. In those cases, the dependent variables are not individual behaviours/choices, nor the location of specific organizations in a broader relational setting, but the levels of collective performance that different social units can achieve. Along these lines, Gould (1991, 1995) has demonstrated how the interdependence between Parisian neighbourhoods affected levels of resistance by the National Guard battalions in the 1870 Commune insurrection; Barkey and van Rossem (1997) have shown that the location of villages in regional networks in eighteenth century Turkey shaped their capacity to promote challenges to established powers, if largely conducted individually; Hedström and his associates have illustrated how opportunities of communication between districts in Sweden—operationalized through spatial proximity—affected the development of Trade Unions and social democratic organizations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Hedström 1994; Hedström *et al.* 2000).

Other potentially interesting uses of the idea of network have only begun to be explored. One can, for example, think of network applications to the protest events dynamics. Although the whole idea of protest cycle presupposes interdependence

between events and so do the techniques of event history analysis increasingly used in this area of inquiry (Koopmans and Statham 1999), the tendency to treat movements as aggregates of events is also strong (see, e.g. Kriesi *et al.* 1995). The application of a network perspective could generate important insights on the process whereby events become a movement, through meaning attribution and recognition of commonalities, that is, through processes of identity construction (Melucci 1996; McAdam *et al.* 2001; Tilly 2002). Events are linked to each other through innumerable mechanisms. Organizations operate as ties by promoting and/or participating in multiple events; individual activists operate in the same way; thirdly, events may be linked through symbolic means, that is, by representations that underline continuity between what could otherwise be largely independent and disconnected events. While the creation of a symbolic link between events is a heavily contested exercise related to competition both between movement entrepreneurs to secure property of specific issues, and between movements and opponents trying to disentangle specific events from the movement's influence, the other two types of link are much more obvious. Through their action both organizations and individuals stress the continuity between events. Continuity does not equate with perfect coherence, as there may be breaks and changes in strategies, but more broadly with a sense of compatibility between different instances of the movement experience. For example, one could easily reverse Bearman and Everett's (1993) data on the presence of different actors at demonstrations on Capitol Hill, Washington DC, to look not at the relations between types of collective actors, mediated by their joint participation in protest activities, but at the linkages and continuities between the latter, mediated by different actors' involvement in them (more on this in Diani's conclusions).

ON THIS BOOK

How does our book cover the themes just outlined? We start with the most established area of investigation, looking at the impact of networks on individual participation and at the contribution of individuals to organization foundation. Florence Passy elaborates on previous contributions (Marwell and Oliver 1993; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Gould 1995; Kim and Bearman 1997) in her search for specific network mechanisms at the individual level. She distinguishes between *socialization functions* of social networks, which create an initial disposition to participate; *structural-connection functions*, generating practical opportunities for involvement; and *decision-shaping functions*, affecting the ultimate decision to take part. She explores these dimensions by looking at members of two Swiss political organizations, WWF and the Bern Declaration, and illuminating different dynamics in the two cases (Table 1.1 below summarizes the views of networks adopted in the different empirical chapters of this book).

TABLE 1.1. *A summary of the empirical approaches presented in this book*

Chapter	Nodes	Ties	Network concepts/measures	Dependent variables
Passy	Individual activists	Private ties (kin, personal friendship, etc.) Public ties (associations, public bodies, etc.)	Ego-networks (presence/absence of ties; range)	Participation
Anheier	Individual activists Organizations	Public ties (associations, public bodies, etc.) Joint activists	Ego networks (presence/absence of ties; range)	Organization founding Structure of the right-wing network
Osa	Organizations	Joint activists	Centrality in network consisting of overlapping memberships	Structure of the oppositional network
Diani	Organizations	Exchanges of resources, information, etc. Shared personnel	Centrality in interorganizational network	Centrality in the interorganizational network Regular ties to media and institutions
Ansell	Organizations	Exchanges of resources, information, etc.	Location in movement networks (structural equivalence)	Attitudes towards collaborative governance
Tilly and Wood	Social groups	Direct ties (Claims making) (Attack)	Centrality Structural equivalence	Structure of contention (alliance and oppositional fields)
Oliver and Myers	Virtual individuals in virtual collectivities	Simulation data	Density of the network Network structure (centralization)	Participation rates in different networks
Broadbent	Local communities	Links to local elites	Ties with elites	Protest success in different communities

Helmut Anheier explores the role of individuals in promoting collective action and organizational growth. His findings on single members of the Nazi party in 1920s–30s Germany (i.e. members who operated in areas where there were no chapters and therefore acted as individual political entrepreneurs), qualify some of the propositions of mass society theory regarding the mobilization of extremism (Fangen 1999). Early Nazi activists were not marginal socially isolated persons, but came from ordinary middle class backgrounds and were embedded in organizational networks: indeed, the stronger their embeddedness, the higher their chances of establishing a local chapter of NSDAP. On the other hand, all their linkages were within the extreme right subculture and totally separated from mainstream politics. This is actually consistent with the claim (Kornhauser 1959; Lipset 1960; Linz 1967) that concentric circles (i.e. densely knit clusters of ties with little outside ramifications) generate a fragmented society and are therefore an obstacle to democratic politics.[9]

The second section presents three chapters on interorganizational networks. Maryjane Osa explores changes in the informal networks of overlapping memberships between opposition organizations in Poland between the 1960s and the 1980s. When civic organizations are subject to severe constraints, as in Communist regimes, informal networks are particularly important as alternative sources of resources (Rose 2001). There, networks not only operate as micro-mobilization contexts, but also provide the basic infrastructure for civil society. Linking civil society and networks explicitly, Osa asks herself 'What network characteristics are likely to facilitate movement emergence? Why are some networks less vulnerable to repression than others?' Her answers are distinctive in that she explicitly brings a time dimension into her analysis, using individuals to chart the evolution of networks over time and offering an accurate reconstruction of changes in the Polish political system as well as in the role of events with a strong emotional impact, such as the Pope's 1979 visit.

Mario Diani's focus is instead on interorganizational exchanges, analysed with reference to Italian environmentalism in the 1980s. Despite the rhetoric on social movement networks being decentralized and antihierarchical, this is not necessarily the case. Diani assesses the position of different organizations within movement networks in the light of two criteria, network centrality (Freeman 1979) and brokerage (Fernandez and Gould 1994). He argues that these measures reflect two different types of movement influence based on the capacity to attract support for specific initiatives (*centrality*) and the capacity to connect sectors of a movement who hold different stances and world views (*brokerage*). He shows how these measures are differently correlated with indicators of external prominence like access to institutions and the media. He also discusses the conditions under which central and brokerage positions tend to be occupied by the same actors, as in the Italian case, or by different ones (as in the Australian women's movement: Sawer and Groves 1994).

Chris Ansell's chapter also deals with networks of environmental organizations, yet his investigation of the environmental movement in the San Francisco Bay Area

has a different focus. While Diani's perspective is largely internal to the movement, Ansell draws upon literatures on collaborative governance, social capital and communitarianism to explore the embeddedness of social movements in local communities. In principle, social movements could be regarded either as an expression of community embeddedness, strongly rooted in specific territorial spaces and the associated systems of relationships, or as attempts to build broader networks based on the identification with a specific cause, which cut across local community loyalties and relations. Ansell is interested in exploring which of the two models is more conducive to collaborative governance: 'How does embeddedness in a particular territorial community or a particular issue-oriented community affect social movement attitudes towards collaboration? How does embeddedness in a social movement subculture affect the attitudes of groups towards collaboration?'

In the third section of the book, we present three contributions which build on network concepts and/or methods to reformulate classic concepts of the political process approach like alliance and oppositional fields (Charles Tilly and Lesley Wood), protest cycles (Pam Oliver and Dan Myers), or political opportunities (Jeffrey Broadbent, with a special focus on elites-movement interactions) from a relational perspective. Tilly and Wood present an unusual application of network analysis to collective action (see also Franzosi 1999). They do not use network analysis to map links between individuals and/or organizations and explain specific behaviours; instead, they use it to chart significant changes in patterns of relationships of attack and claim-making among different social groups (including among others royalty, parliament, local and national officials, trade, and workers) in Britain between 1828 and 1834. Building block models based on the intersection of actors and events, they map networks of contention before and after the passing of the 1832 Reform Act which increased the centrality of parliament in British politics. They highlight the process by which people through collective action not only create new forms of political repertoires, but also forge relations to other actors both at the local and the national level.

If Tilly and Wood draw upon massive historical evidence, Oliver and Myers adopt simulations to explore network mechanisms in diffusion processes and protest cycles. They unpack the idea of a protest cycle and reformulate it in order to take the network dimension into account, focusing on three processes: the flow of information, the flow of influence, and the construction of joint action. They introduce some important clarifications, noting that the repeatable and reversible nature of protest requires models of diffusion, which focus on the spread of actions and not the spread of ideas across actors (while a specific information, once diffused, remains permanently with the recipient, involvement in collective action is temporary and individuals may withdraw—and usually do withdraw—at later stages). They also emphasize the difference between diffusion and cycles: 'Diffusion processes tend to generate waves or cycles of events, but not all waves of events arise from diffusion processes. Waves of protest can also arise from rhythms and from common responses to external events'. Another important factor is

constituted by media logics. Even in the case of unbiased sampling newspapers may generate fictitious cycles simply through random variations in coverage. Oliver and Myers find that 'the effect of network structure varies greatly depending upon the nature of a particular network process' and thus demonstrate the need for better specification of network mechanisms in our empirical investigations.

In his chapter, Jeffrey Broadbent presents a case for a network version of the concept of political opportunity structure. He focuses on a non-Western case of mobilization, namely, environmental protest in eight communities in Japan. This enables him to draw our attention to the fact that network analyses of mobilization are actually located in specific cultural and social contexts, with distinctive network properties. Embeddedness in specific networks shapes political action much more strongly in 'thick' societies like Japan than in Western, individualistic societies; in Japan, networks operate mostly in terms of block rather than individual recruitment, and this holds for both movements and elites. In particular, vertical ties between elites and citizens strongly shape local 'political opportunities': it is the presence of 'breakaway bosses' (i.e. local leaders who take the protesters' side) to prove the strongest predictor of success for collective action. Broadbent also contributes to the comparative analysis of mobilization processes by looking at his specific case through a broader and more ambitious theoretical framework, Integrative Structurational Analysis. His model emphasizes the role of 'plastic' processes, by which he means those patterned dynamic processes which shape cultural, material, and social factors and link structural and agency levels.

The fourth and final section of the book consist of chapters by Roger Gould, Ann Mische, Doug McAdam, and Mario Diani. With different emphases, they all link network approaches to social movements and collective action to broader currents in contemporary social science and identify possible future lines of development for research in this area. Roger Gould evaluates the contribution of the relational perspective to our understanding of individual activism by contrasting it to traditional rational choice thinking. Although available evidence consistently suggests a link between network embeddedness and participation, its insights have not been used in a way conducive to accumulate knowledge. This is due to a view of theory as identification of classes of phenomena, rather than as specification of explanatory mechanisms. Opting resolutely for the latter, Gould suggests we abandon the practice of adding new factors to our list of explanatory variables and focus instead on the interactions between those variables. In particular, he exposes the limitations of rational choice reasoning by noting that future expectations are often difficult to calculate and challenging the equation of social ties with prospects of future interaction. Alternatively, he emphasizes the dynamic role of activism in transforming lives and in doing so, changing the meaning and impact of the friendship ties in which prospective activists are involved. Gould nicely illustrates how discussions of networks and collective action can illuminate our understanding of 'social conflict and cooperation in general'.

Despite coming from a fairly different perspective, Mische elaborates on this suggestion by exploring the link between analysis of discourse and forms of talk and network analysis. In dialogue with recent developments in cultural sociology (e.g. Steinberg 1998; Mohr 2000), she looks at the forms of discourse generated by movement activists in response to the multiple relations in which they are involved. She reformulates networks as 'multiple, cross-cutting sets of relations sustained by conversational dynamics within social settings'. Relations are constituted in conversational settings. While the literature on networks has focused mostly on cohesion paradigms, little attention has been paid not only to cross-pressures, but to the fact that in order to go beyond the limited, local boundaries movement activists need to break the limits of densely knit groups and relate to much broader sets of prospective allies. Networks, therefore, are the location for the development of movement solidarities and for the transmission of messages, identities, etc. across movements at the same time. Mische identifies several conversational mechanisms that characterize the process of network construction and reproduction. She also proposes a technique, Galois lattices, to map the complexity of conjunctures of actors and events in a dynamic way.

In what a distracted reader could interpret as yet another 'epitaph to a successful (theoretical) movement', Doug McAdam assesses the limitations of the structural paradigm for the investigation of the network-participation link, and invokes a greater role for cultural analysis in the identification of recruitment and mobilization mechanisms (McAdam *et al*. 2001). He proceeds to illustrate his general point in reference to three specific 'facts' regarding the origins of protest and contention, conventionally associated with the standard structuralist argument: prior social ties as a basis for movement recruitment, established social settings as the locus of movement emergence, and the spread of movements along existing lines of interaction. For each of these cases, he identifies mechanisms which combine structural and cultural elements. Rather than rejecting the formalization and the quest for systematic patterns, to which network concepts and methods have so much contributed in recent years, he joins Mische's call for a more dynamic integration of interpretative and structuralist research strategies.

Mario Diani concludes the book with a plea to reorient social movement research along network lines. While looking at networks as a powerful precondition of collective action has proved a very fruitful exercise in its own right, one could also take the network idea further and make it the core of a distinctive research programme. Diani argues that viewing movements as a distinctive type of social networks may reorient social movement analysis and help better specifying the relation between movements and related phenomena such as coalitions, solidarity campaigns, and political organizations. He then briefly sketches the basic traits of a research programme to the analysis of network dynamics within social movements, looking first at different network patterns and then identifying some analytical principles which also draw upon existing paradigms.
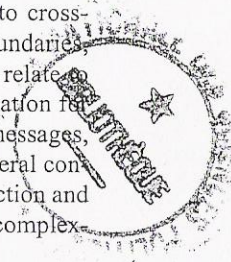
NOTES

1. To refer to them, terms as vague as 'flows' (Sheller 2000) have recently been invoked.
2. Throughout this introduction, and indeed this book, 'recent' and similar words are to be understood in relative terms. It goes without saying that one could easily trace many of the 'new insights' discussed here well back in classic sociology (Simmel's work on formal sociology and Marx's historical writings on conflicts in France being just two most obvious examples).
3. Mechanisms have been defined as 'a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations' (McAdam *et al.* 2001: 11).
4. Blau (1982); Blau and Schwartz (1984). Some very influential works in the field of contentious politics (e.g. Gould 1995) are actually examples of structural analysis in this sense, rather than network analysis proper.
5. See Diani (1992*b*, 2002) for a more thorough presentation of network methods in reference to social movement analysis. For introductions to social network methods see Scott (1992) and Wasserman and Faust (1995). A useful glossary of network terms may be found at the following web address http://www.nist.gov/dads/termsArea.html#graph.
6. For thorough reviews of this field of investigation see Knoke and Wisely (1990); Kitts (2000); Diani (forthcoming).
7. McAdam and Paulsen (1993) show that direct ties do not count if people are involved in broader activities compatible with the type of participation to be explained.
8. For example, Melucci's project (1984) suggested that in the environmental field, networks developed in militant contexts had helped to set up natural food trade businesses, but that these largely identified with market activities rather than with a specific cause. In that context, the boundaries between movement community and market were vague at best.
9. Diani (2000*b*) presents a different reading of concentric circles, noting that political subcultures in countries like Italy, Belgium, or the Netherlands did not necessarily weaken democracy but provided distinct, previously excluded areas of society with political organization and opportunities for legitimacy.

Part I

Individual Networks

experimental method could be harnessed to this effort as well. Besides small group studies in the lab, we could also take a page from Gamson's seemingly endless book of methodological tricks and try to simulate contention through naturalistic experiments of the sort that he and his colleagues devised in *Encounters with Unjust Authority* (1982).

These few suggestions hardly exhaust the topic, nor do they begin to convey the daunting methodological challenges that await anyone who would seek to take up the research programme advocated here. Challenges aside, what I feel confident about is that when joined with the theoretical pluralism embraced here, this more catholic approach to research methods promises to move us well beyond the essentially static and descriptive structural facts that currently pass for theory in the study of social movements and contention. This volume is dedicated to that end.

13

Networks and Social Movements: A Research Programme

Mario Diani

In this book we have charted the contribution of network perspectives to the study of social movements and collective action at different levels. We have illustrated how networks affect individual contributions to collective action in both democratic (Passy) and non-democratic (Anheier) organizations; how patterns of interorganizational linkages reflect different styles of collective action and affect the circulation of resources both within movement milieux and between movement organizations and the political system (Osa, Diani, Ansell); and how network concepts and techniques may be used to generate a more nuanced account of key elements of the relationship between movements and the broader political process, such as the role of elites (Broadbent), the configuration of alliance and conflict structures in a political system (Tilly and Wood), and the clustering of episodes of collective action in broader cycles (Oliver and Myers). We have also highlighted the differences in the logics of different theoretical perspectives (Gould, Mische).

Achieving greater clarification regarding the use of a polysemic concept like network, and mapping recent developments in several areas of inquiry, might not be a negligible achievement in its own right. My question here is whether it would not be possible and desirable to go one step further, and attempt to integrate into a specific research programme what many might still regard as a fairly heterogeneous set of intellectual questions and procedures. In the previous chapter, Doug McAdam has presented his proposal for an expansion along interpretive lines of the structural programme, which he largely identifies with network accounts of individual recruitment and participation. More specifically, he has called for a greater recognition of the role of cultural forms and discourses in constructing social relations and constituting the mechanisms through which networks operate. In doing so, not only has he effectively integrated many of our chapters, but he has also provided a possible bridge between research on social movements and broader controversies in social science.

McAdam's chapter may also be read as an invitation to social movement researchers to go beyond the empirically defined boundaries of their specific field of inquiry and engage in the search for more general mechanisms which can illuminate not only the traits and developments of specific social movements, but a much broader range of 'dynamics of contention', from revolution to democratization (McAdam *et al.* 2001; Tilly 2001). The tendency to embed social movement analysis in broader social science frameworks is certainly not new, even though it has taken different forms in North America, where the dialogue with organization theory has been most intense (Zald and McCarthy 1987), and in Europe, with the analysis of movements overlapping at times with the analysis of macrostructural change (Habermas 1981; Offe 1985), cognitive praxis (Eyerman and Jamison 1991), or identity dynamics in information society (Melucci 1996).

There is nothing wrong, and a lot to commend, in these orientations. They may act as an antidote to disciplinary parochialism; they may also facilitate the spread of important research findings beyond the professional subgroups who happen to have a direct empirical interest in certain specific phenomena. At the same time, however, as a direct consequence of the greater integration between social movement studies and other fields, the question arises 'What is peculiar to the contribution of social movement research—in this particular case, of network approaches to social movements?' Social movement researchers may have paid more attention than other scholars to certain themes: for example, the relationship between networks and individual participation has been more frequently explored by them than by students of political parties. But this is not in itself very revealing. The real question is whether there is a distinctive theoretical contribution.

On one level, this may look like an empty question: there are innumerable areas in which scholars conventionally identified as 'social movement researchers' have contributed to the understanding of broader social processes, from collective action dynamics (Oliver and Marwell 2001) to identity formation (Melucci 1996), from the mobilization of social resources (McCarthy and Zald 1977) to changes in forms of public action (Tilly 1978, 1995a–d). However, most of these contributions would still be entirely meaningful if their authors did not speak of 'movements' at all. The concept of social movement has always had uncertain status among American scholars, who have preferred terms like protest, collective action, and so on. In Europe, even people who emphasized the analytical nature of the concept of 'social movement' (e.g. Melucci 1995, 1996) suggested dropping it owing to its too strong association with industrial society, and only stuck to it for lack of better alternatives. In this chapter I take a different approach. I argue that focusing on the concept of social movement—in particular, treating movements as networks—enables us to identify a specific social dynamic, which differentiates social movements from cognate processes. This can both facilitate crossfertilization with other intellectual fields and emphasize the distinctiveness of social movement research.

Few would deny that social networks are an important component of social movements. But do we really need to go so far as to assign the concept of social network a central position in our theoretical and empirical work? A few years ago, a systematic comparison of definitions of 'social movements' by scholars from different intellectual traditions led me to identify in a view of movements as networks a potential terrain for convergence and paradigmatic integration in the field. More specifically, I defined social movements as networks 'of informal interactions, between a plurality of individuals, groups or associations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity' (Diani 1992: 13).[1]

Approaching movements as networks enables us to capture their peculiarity vis-à-vis cognate forms of collective action and contentious politics better than current dominant paradigms. Social movements are distinctive neither because of their adoption of radical forms of action, nor because of their interest in new issues or their predilection for loose organizational forms (Diani 2000b). They are distinctive because they consist of formally independent actors who are embedded in specific local contexts (where 'local' is meant in either a territorial or a social sense), bear specific identities, values, and orientations, and pursue specific goals and objectives, but who are at the same time linked through various forms of concrete cooperation and/or mutual recognition in a bond which extends beyond any specific protest action, campaign, etc. We get closer to a social movement dynamic the more there is a coupling of informal networks, collective identity, and conflict; the more, in other words, the following conditions are simultaneously satisfied:

1. actors are engaged in a social conflict, that is, they promote initiatives meant to damage other social actors who are either denying them access to social resources (however defined) they feel entitled to, or trying to take away from them resources over which they currently exert control;
2. actors share a collective identity while maintaining their own as individual activists and/or members of specific organizations. They identify each other as part of a collective effort, which goes beyond specific initiatives, organizations, and events. It is mutual recognition that defines the boundaries of a movement, which are by consequence inherently unstable. Identity is built on the basis of interpretations or narratives which link together in a meaningful way events, actors, and initiatives which could also make perfect sense (but a different one) if looked at independently or embedded in other types of representation;
3. actors (individuals and/or organizations) exchange practical and symbolic resources through informal networks, that is, through coordination mechanisms, which are not subject to formal regulation and where the terms of the exchange and the distribution of duties and entitlements are entirely

dependent on the actors' agreement. Accordingly, the ever present attempts to shape strategic decisions by specific organizations are subject to unstructured and unpatterned negotiations.

Focusing on definitions of social movements does not aim at identifying a discrete set of empirical phenomena, even less at placing them in a specific cell of a broader typology; rather, it is a way to identify the basic traits of a distinct social process, which we can then use along with other models to analyse specific episodes of contention (see Table 13.1). Our task then becomes to find out to what extent we have, within any particular and concrete instance of contention, a social movement dynamic in progress, rather than other forms of collective action, and how the different dynamics interact. That is when the discriminant capacity of the concept is tested. To illustrate this point, let us look at the complex of events, organizations, activities, and like-minded individuals conventionally labelled as the 'environmental movement'.

First, the presence of conflict differentiates social movements from 'non-conflictual movements', that is, forms of collective action conducted by networks of actors who share solidarity and an interpretation linking specific acts in a longer time perspective, but who do not identify any specific social actor as an opponent. We might come across instances of sustained collective action on environmental problems that imply broader identities yet do not imply any conflict. A model of environmental action as a collective effort aiming entirely at the solution of practical cases of pollution through voluntary work, or the transformation of environmental consciousness through education, would match this profile. In that case, the identity would connect people, organizations, events, and initiatives in a meaningful, longer-term collective project, transcending the boundaries of any specific organization or campaign, but there would be no space for conflictual dynamics.

Second, the informal nature of the networks differentiates movements from 'organizations', that is, coordinated forms of interaction with some established membership criteria and some patterned mechanisms of internal regulation. We shall often come across instances in which environmental action is mainly conducted within the boundaries of specific organizations, which are the main source

TABLE 13.1. *Social movements and cognate collective dynamics*

	Informal networks	Collective identity	Conflict
Social movements	0	0	0
Non-conflictual movements	0	0	
Political organizations/sects		0	0
Coalitions	0		0

of participants' identities, whereas the loyalty to the 'movement' as a whole is far weaker, and so are opportunities for individuals to play any role unless their participation is mediated by specific organizations. In this case we would have not a 'social movement dynamic' in progress, but the mobilization of a set of specific organizations trying to acquire full ownership of an issue. In the most extreme case, we might have one single organization taking full control of the issue—as the Bolshevik party and the Nazi party to a large extent managed to do in their respective cases.

Third, the presence of an identity, which transcends the boundaries of any specific event, and also enables actors to connect different episodes of collective action, sets social movements apart from coalitions. Accordingly, we might find that the expression 'environmental movement' denotes little more than a set of largely independent events and activities, each reflecting a specific conflict, and each supported by a specific coalition, but with few links across events and coalitions. In a coalition dynamic, the absence of collective identity would prevent the establishment of connections between activities located at different points in time and space, and the local networks would not concatenate in broader systems of solidarities and mutual obligations.

Finally, we might also come across a 'social movement dynamic' proper. In that case, individuals and organizations, engaged in innumerable initiatives to protect the environment against its socially identifiable 'enemies', would share a broad identity and would be able to link their specific actions into a broader narrative and into a broader collective 'we', while renouncing their own peculiarity. Events which could otherwise be the result of ad hoc coalitions and expressions of NIMBY orientations would then acquire a new meaning and be perceived as part of a larger, and longer-term, collective effort.

In this perspective, the role of networks is radically different from that of facilitators of individual recruitment and participation, which has been traditionally assigned to them. Rather than preconditions and resources for (individual or group) action, networks become the analytical tool, which enables us to capture the dualistic nature of action. Looking at network configurations is an opportunity to address explicitly and empirically the issue of the duality between action and structure (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Emirbayer and Mische 1998; Mische and Pattison 2000; Mohr 2000; Livesay 2002). Social ties discourage certain courses of action and facilitate others, which in turn affects how actors attribute meaning to their social linkages, thus (re)creating rules and arrangements perceived as relatively stable and 'structural'. Through cultural production and multiple involvements, people create webs of ties that enable them to further act collectively and shape their future behaviour. The origin of network ties becomes a major focus of investigation (McPherson *et al.* 2001; Kenis and Knoke 2002).

More specifically, networks and the attached systems of mutual obligation correspond to a form of social organization with more than passing commonalities with the network organizations explored by organizational theories: independence

of the single components, horizontal integration, flexibility in goals and strategies, multiple levels of interaction with the possibility of communitarian elements (Podolny and Page 1998; Gulati and Gargiulo 1999; Pichierri 1999). Of course, there are also some obvious differences, as those who have strongly associated network organizations with instrumental and/or circumscribed goals (Pichierri 1999) would be quick to point out. However, while the relevance of the subcultural—eventually counter-cultural—dimension is once again variable, many profit-oriented network organizations also rely on identities and solidarities generated by the community (e.g. industrial districts in Italy: Trigilia 1986). Those versions of the network organization theory most influenced by neo-institutionalism (Powell 1990; Hall and Taylor 1996; Pierson 2000) are best equipped to capture the interplay between the instrumental dimension of exchanges and the flow of mutual recognition and obligations, which make this form of organization feasible.

The network perspective has at the same time some significant advantages over established theories, and the potential to engage in a fruitful dialogue with them. In relation to resource mobilization theory, viewing movements as networks allows us to get over the tendency to treat movements as organizations of a peculiar type, and therefore to address the issue of the relationship between movements, parties, and interest groups from a different perspective. Admittedly, the distinction between movements and social movement organizations (SMOs) is very clear in the programmatic formulations of the resource mobilization perspective (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Likewise, attention has been paid to inter-organizational relations among SMOs, with a special focus on the interplay of competition and cooperation in a specific movement industry. However, all in all it is safe to claim that resource mobilization theory mainly focuses on (social movement) organizations, rather than on the linkages between them, and the processes of meaning construction which may—or may not—render them part of a broader collective effort. But if movements are organizations, then inevitably misleading questions about whether specific organizations should be approached as movement organizations or interest groups arise, and dialogue across professional boundaries—as well as attempts to grasp the peculiarity of concrete processes—becomes difficult (Leech 2001). If we maintain our focus on single organizations, there is indeed no ground to claim that the Worldwide Fund for Nature is an SMO rather than a public interest group, or Earth First! a social movement rather than a radical grassroots organization. Identifying them as one or the other depends ultimately on the socially constructed professional identities of the researchers (on environmental organizations compare, e.g., Rucht 1989 and Jordan and Maloney 1997).

If, alternatively, we regard movements as non-hierarchical network forms of organization with boundaries defined by collective identity—that is, by actors' mutual recognition as members of the movement linked by a distinctive culture and solidarity—then the questions introduced earlier take on a different meaning. The issue will no longer be whether a specific organization is a SMO or an interest group, or whether a 'movement' has become an interest group, but how and

if different actors, both individuals and organizations, with varying degrees of formal structure, relate to each other. We have social movement processes in motion, the more we observe sustained interactions between different political organizations, which go beyond a single-issue campaign to draw on, and reproduce, distinctive collective identities. If, on the contrary, the very same organizations act mainly on their own, and are the main focus for their activists' loyalties, to the detriment of broader movement identities, then we have political dynamics that are closest to the classic models of interest politics (Diani 2001). In these terms, 'social movement organization' is defined not in terms of attributes, but in terms of relations: SMOs are all those groups who identify themselves, and are identified by others, as part of the same movement, and exchange on that basis.

In relation to new social movements theory, scholars traditionally associated with this approach, such as Touraine or Melucci,[2] have contributed substantially (more through their analysis of identity dynamics than through that of identity in information society) to the understanding of key aspects of the social process I associate with social movements—namely, the creation and maintenance of a specific conflictual network. Melucci's analysis of the internal complexity of collective actors who are usually portrayed—and portray themselves—as homogeneous and coherent is of particular relevance here, as it provides us with the intellectual tools to identify the complex negotiations which take place between different actors in the emergence and reproduction of a movement identity. While this is a fundamental insight, Melucci's (1996: 113–17) strong association of network forms of organization with new movements—as opposed to the more bureaucratic forms of 'old' movements—is problematic. The main analytical gain from the network perspective is that the existence of a (new) movement is no longer tied to the existence of distinct (new) conflictual stakes, and no specific correspondence is expected between the two. A network form may be a useful analytical tool to apply to both 'old' and 'new' movements; likewise, conflicts on issues of knowledge control, and opposing technicians and experts to bureaucrats and technocrats, may not necessarily result in extensive network forms of organization but instead be carried on by formal organizations acting as experts' interest groups (e.g. Hoffman 1989).

In relation to political process theories, a network perspective can counteract their tendencies to identify movements with strings of protest events (Kriesi et al. 1995). There is of course widespread recognition of the problems attached to treating movements as aggregates of actors/events and ignoring identity dynamics and interactions within such aggregates (e.g. Tarrow 1998b: 57–8). Still, when it comes to research practice the tendency to treat movements as aggregates persists. A network view of movements places the attention more squarely on the connectivity between events, both in terms of meaning attribution and in terms of chains of actors (connected by events) and events (connected by actors). Accordingly, events falling within the same broad category may or may not turn out to be related to a specific movement, depending not only on the definitions of the conflict adopted by

mobilized actors, but also on the continuity guaranteed by individual activists and organizations.

MAPPING MOVEMENT NETWORKS

It would be unfair to claim that attention to the interdependence between actions, identity, and networks is unique to the perspective presented in this chapter. Within this book, most chapters focus on the dynamic nature of networks, even though authors might not share the focus on the concept of social movement. Where this perspective is different, however, is in the centrality assigned to the idea of network as the basis for a theory of social movements.[3] In order to build such a theory, an important task is to define parameters to identify the structure of movement networks, and then elaborate appropriate theoretical models to explain certain network patterns and/or certain actors' incumbency of specific positions. To this purpose I refer to two important dimensions of networks, namely, the opposition between decentralized and hierarchical structures, and segmented and reticulated structures (Gerlach and Hine 1970; see also Philips 1991; Knoke 1990a: ch. 5).

The concept of network centralization allows us to differentiate between the informality of social movement networks and the frequently related, if misplaced, assumption of the absence of asymmetries and differences within those networks. An informal network may indeed range from being totally decentralized to totally centralized. Although the extent to which differences in centralization correspond to differences in influence and possibly power remains to be seen, organizations most central in movement networks have been found to play a greater role in external exchanges to powerful actors, which suggest something about their potential leadership (as Diani's and Ansell's chapters in this book illustrate). At the very minimum, differences in centrality testify to a tendency of flows of exchanges and communication to concentrate towards specific actors, and thus to affect how a movement operates and builds its identity.

The level of network segmentation reflects the extent to which communication between actors is prevented by some kind of barrier. In formal terms, we may characterize it as the average number of intermediate steps, necessary to reach any one node in the network from any other node.[4] In substantive terms, this concept reflects the distance that separates members of a network (in our case, of a movement) on a number of possible grounds. Criteria for segmentation may vary, depending on the ties we are looking at: it might be ideological segmentation, where the relational distance increases with the difference in ideological stances between actors; or issue distance, if the decisive factor is represented by differences in the levels of interest in specific issues.

By combining these two dimensions we obtain four types of network structure (see Figs 13.1–13.4). In the illustrations that follow, all actors will be assumed

to recognize each other as parts of the same movement, and focus will be on real exchanges. However, one could apply the same logic to the analysis of mutual recognitions of identity. It is important to acknowledge the distinction between identity networks and concrete ones. While identity reflects in both '[agents'] mental models and in their patterns of interaction with others' (Carley 1999: 16; see also Howard 1994), networks of mutual recognition do not necessarily overlap with the networks which result from alliance-building, information exchanges, shared resources and multiple memberships. It is admittedly sensible to assume that the feelings of identity tend to be stronger among actors who collaborate on a regular basis than among those who relate occasionally, or hardly ever. However, one has also to recognize the difference between 'real' exchanges—which may not necessarily imply identity, as in instrumental, ad hoc coalitions—and actors' interpretation of their social space in terms of who is perceived as close/similar/part of the same collectivity, and who is not. 'Who identifies whom and is identified by whom as part of a movement' is an interesting question in itself (Melucci 1984, 1996), which may lead to the identification of several network forms, regardless of whether actors actually interact with each other.

Movement Cliques

A clique (better: a 1-clique) is a decentralized, reticulate network, where all nodes are adjacent to each other (Scott 1992: 117; see Fig. 13.1). This type of structure is conventionally associated with a redundancy of ties, which in turn suggests a pattern of linkages with a strong expressive dimension, and a high investment in the building and maintenance of the network. There is also a very high level of mutual engagement among nodes in the network, which results in high reticulation and null segmentation. The clique is also a decentralized network, in which there is no opportunity for any actor to control exchanges among network members. To be sustained over time, this pattern of relations requires a strong equalitarian culture. The number of ties that actors are engaged in also suggests that involvement in this specific network is likely to reduce their opportunities to engage in external relationships (obviously allowing for substantial differences in the resources controlled by specific actors, and thus in their network-building capacity). A clique configuration may result from strong ideological and/or cultural affinities between network members with a strong emotional involvement. It may also originate, however, from other more practical factors such as the strong interest in a specific issue or set of issues.

Social movements, which emerge in parallel with the development of a major protest cycle, and subcultural and counter-cultural movements in general, are the most likely to display a relational pattern, which at least for some time approximates this model. In the first case, the mounting of a fundamental challenge to established institutions might facilitate the spread of strong equalitarian and
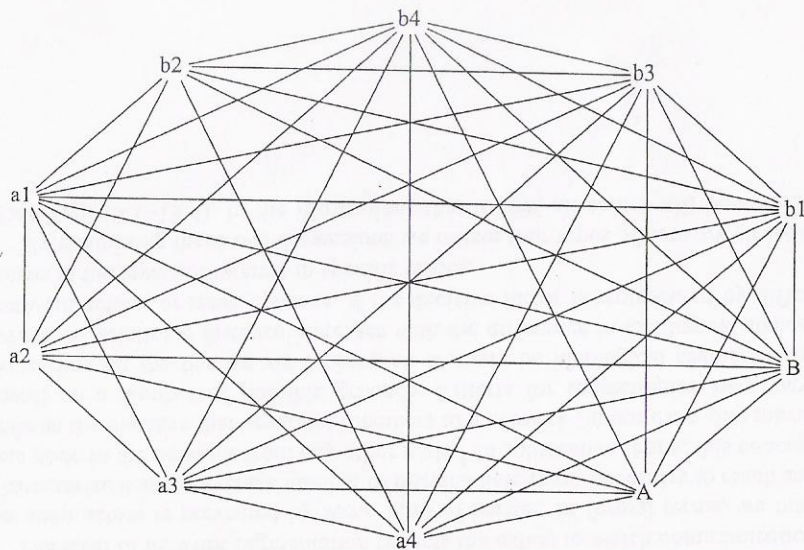
FIG. 13.1. *Clique structure*

FIG. 13.2. *Policephalous structure*

participatory identities, which cross the boundaries of any specific organization and reject any principle of hierarchy, even informal (one example being the student movement of the late 1960s in Italy: Passerini 1988). In the second case, the distinctiveness of the cultural model adopted by the movement facilitates—and requires—horizontal patterns of interaction between movement actors. Accounts of movements with a strong identity like the gay and lesbian ones also suggest a similar profile (Taylor and Whittier 1992). It has to be said, however, that the very level of investment required to sustain this model reduces the chances to find examples of it in movement networks with a large population, while it may be more possible to find it within sections of them. For example, in his study of the Greek environmental movement Botetzagias (2000) found a strong clique consisting of the large majority of the most important environmental organizations in the country, but with very sparse ties involving other less prominent organizations.

Policephalous Movements

Figure 13.2 illustrates a centralized, segmented structure. By comparison to other structural patterns, this network is at least partially segmented, as the distance between some of the actors is relatively long. The presence of horizontal linkages between semi-peripheral actors suggests the persistence of efforts to engage
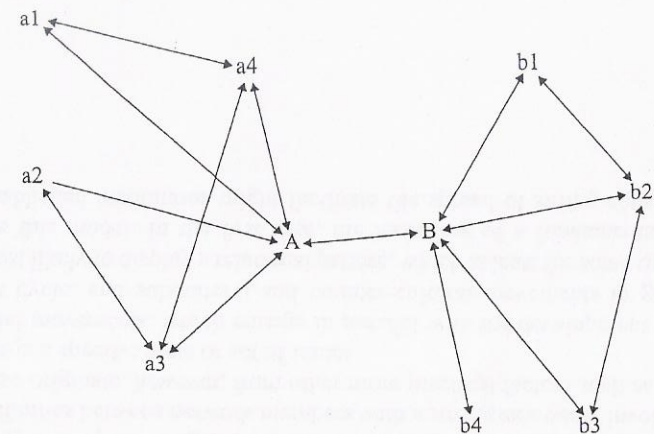
actively in collective action without delegating important tasks to a few centrally positioned actors. Nonetheless, the network is also relatively centralized, as some actors (A and B) are involved in more links than the others and are therefore in the best position to control relational flows within the network. This may in turn result in greater influence for them.

An example of a policephalous structure comes from the Australian women's movement (Sawer and Groves 1994). The difference between the organizations created after the Second World War and those, which emerged during the second wave of women's mobilization in the 1970s was reflected in the structure of the movement network. It consisted of two components, which were both strongly connected internally, but had little ties between them. The two organizations at the core of those sectors (NCW-National Council of Women for the cluster grouping more established organizations, and WEL-Women's Electoral Lobby for the more recently developed sector) did not have direct ties to each other (Sawer and Groves 1994: 451). In this case, in contrast to the Milanese environmental movement analysed by Diani (Chapter 5 in this book), centrality and brokerage roles did not overlap. Another example of the tension between centralization and relatively dense peripheral cliques may be found in the transformation of the Italian movements in the early 1970s. While the student movement at its very origins was originally largely a network of independent or semi-independent local action committees, approximating clique structures of relations, it was gradually controlled by political organizations with a broader political scope and a more distinct ideological profile. Organizations like Lotta Continua or Avanguardia Operaia developed special linkages to cultural associations (e.g. Circoli Ottobre, related to Lotta Continua), student action groups at high school or university level, groups

of radical trade unionists (e.g. CUB, related to Avanguardia Operaia), etc. (Lumley 1990). While the extent of formal association of these groups with the main new left organizations varied considerably, they also maintained a significant degree of interaction among themselves and with other movement organizations in specific localities or on specific issues. This generated a policephalous structure, which displayed at the same time a certain amount of centralization, but considerable levels of density.

Centralized, Nonsegmented Networks (Wheel/star Structures)

A wheel-shaped network (Fig. 13.3) combines high centralization with low segmentation. There is one central position coordinating exchanges across the network and acting as a linking point between peripheral components that are not directly related to each other. Incumbents of that position are likely to exert considerable influence over the network in terms of the pooling and redistribution of resources. The lack of horizontal exchanges at the periphery, and the relatively low number of ties activated suggest a comparatively low level of investment in the building of the network as a whole. Network members are likely either to be involved in a considerable amount of exchanges with actors outside the movement boundaries, or to conduct most of their projects on their own.

This is a network characterized by an instrumental pattern of linkages, with most actors investing the minimal resources in linkage-building. Ties to a central actor are sufficient to secure easy access to the rest of the network through a minimal number of intermediate steps. While peripheral positions are unlikely to exert any substantial influence over the network as a whole, the low level of investment in
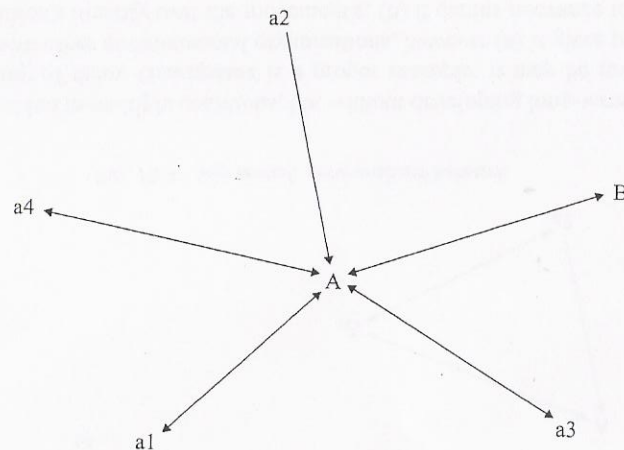

FIG. 13.3. *Wheel/star structure*

linkage-building suggests that this may not be among their incumbents' priorities. At the same time, the very existence of a coordinating node, which controls all exchanges, ensures a relatively low segmentation of the network: peripheral nodes may not feel overtly committed to network building, yet feel close enough to share a common partner to which network coordination is somehow delegated.

Examples of wheel structure include those movements, which combine a fairly high degree of inclusiveness with a low propensity to expand the scope of collective action beyond the actors' specific interests and the most obvious central political goals as articulated by the movement core actors at any given point in time. Environmental movements often match this profile. Italian environmentalism in the 1980s (Diani 1995, and this book) and British environmentalism in the previous decade (Lowe and Goyder 1983) presented a pattern of relationships where a group of core—and strongly interconnected—organizations acted as a bridge between a number of local actors, who acted mostly on an independent basis. The same actors had, however, frequent contacts and exchanges with actors who did not share in an environmental identity but were still prepared to collaborate on specific issues.[5] Another example comes from the women's movement in Canada in the late 1980s–early 1990s. Although 29 out of 33 major national organizations were connected to each other, the overall amount of exchanges was fairly low, and they were mostly filtered by one central organization, the Canadian National Action Committee—NAC (Philips 1991).

Segmented, Decentralized Networks

This model (Fig. 13.4) reflects a largely atomistic style of action within the network. It is indeed difficult even to think of a network in this case, as actors largely operate either on their own, or developing small collaborations on specific issues. They are either unable or unwilling to develop more extended and encompassing linkages. They focus on their specific and restricted areas of concern, and reject attempts by prospective leaders to coordinate their action into broader overarching projects.

This highly segmented and decentralized structure is unlikely to fit the concrete experience of any specific social movement. However, it is important to refer to it here as it captures the formal properties of a system of interaction, which reflects the absence of social movement dynamics. Interestingly, it can accommodate substantively very different types of collective action. On the one hand, the model fits a style of pluralistic politics, in which specific actors tend to maximize their own outcomes without paying any attention to the broader moral constraints/obligations such as those attached to large-scale collective identities. This is a situation in which movement identities are at their lowest vis-à-vis organizational identities, and in which loyalties go to the latter rather than the former. In such a model, specific organizations operate as (public/private) interest groups, community organizations, and even political parties in several political arenas. They may
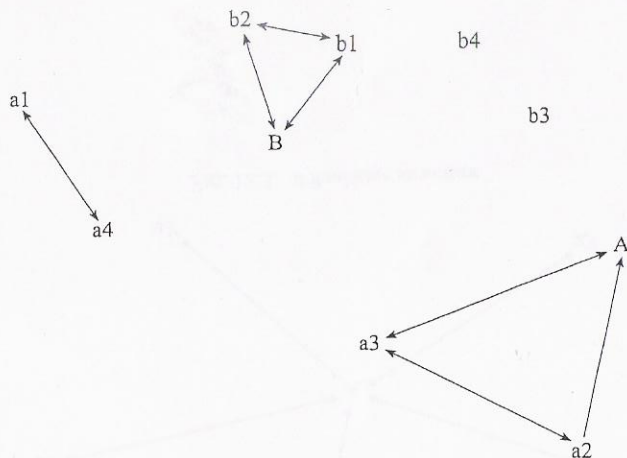
FIG. 13.4. *Segmented, decentralized network*

well get involved in multiple coalitions, but without developing long-term identifications to any of them. Greenpeace is a proper example: it may be involved in coalitions with other environmental organizations, however (a) it gives priority to the organization's identity over the movement's; (b) it denies relevance to the collaborative activities in which it is involved (at least in the UK: Rootes 2002; data about Italy—Diani and Forno 2002—suggest a more alliance-oriented attitude). On the other hand, this formal model captures the relationships—better, the lack of relationships—between actors which are distinctly radical in their challenges to political and/or cultural institutions, yet do so by emphasizing their organizational, rather than movement identities. For example, religious sects—or sectarian revolutionary parties—come to operate along these lines when they abstain from cooperation with similar actors following a combination of quest for ideological purity and attempts to discredit potential competitors for the same pool of constituents. Despite substantial differences in content, both examples reflect a weakening of the process that I refer to as 'social movements', in favour of processes that assign greater space to organizations as sources of agency and identity. Among our contributors, Osa most clearly identifies this model: while there were only a few ties between organizations in the 1960s, in the absence of sustained mobilizations and a proper movement dynamic, the number of connected organizations and the extent of their integration grew dramatically in the momentous years between 1976 and 1981.

A RESEARCH PROGRAMME IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT NETWORK ANALYSIS

How to translate these abstract models into a specific research agenda? My proposal rests on four key concepts: multilevel analysis, multiplexity of linkages, time, and

homophily. Below, I illustrate how established social movement perspectives may contribute to its implementation.

Multilevel Analysis

For obvious practical reasons, most analysis of social movements focus either on individual participants, or on organizations, protest events, etc. It is very difficult to integrate all these different components into a unitary framework. Yet this is precisely what we have to do if we are to grasp the complex nature of sustained collective contention and recognize the multiplicity of ties, actors, and events which make up the empirical episodes we define 'social movements'. One possible way to achieve this goal is through an expansion of Simmel's intuition on the 'duality of persons and groups' (Breiger 1988; Simmel 1955; Diani 2000*b*): while persons are linked by their shared memberships of social groups, groups are likewise connected by the members they happen to share. The identity of persons is ultimately the result of the particular intersection of their group memberships, while the position of groups depends on the multiple memberships of their members.

This idea enables us to expand considerably on the assumption that networks only consist of direct ties between homogeneous actors, and to start to build a more complicated picture. While there is no space here to elaborate on the technical aspects of this approach, based on an elementary application of matrix algebra (Namboodiri 1984; Laumann and Knoke 1987; Breiger 1988; Diani 2002), it represents a powerful yet simple analytical tool which may allow for several distinct applications. So far, recognition of the duality of persons and groups has driven attempts to map, among others, interorganizational and interpersonal ties in movement milieus (Fernandez and McAdam 1988, 1989; McAdam and Fernandez 1990), ties between organizations in Italy (Diani 1995) or Poland (Osa, Chapter 4 in this book), or ties between different movement sectors (Carroll and Ratner 1996). It could be, however, conveniently expanded to include all the events, activities, and actors, which may be meaningful to analyse in order to capture the complexity of social movements.

For example, we could look at how individuals are linked by participation in the same protest events, by patronizing the same alternative cafés or bookshops, or at least sharing in the same cultural activities, or by being exposed to the same media. We might do the same, obviously with the proper adaptations, for organizations too, and chart their involvement in protest and/or cultural events. We would then be able to identify the multiple levels of relationship, which may exist between actors engaged in collective activities. For example, treating joint participation in protest events as an indicator of a link has made it possible to identify different network patterns linking environmental organizations, with varying centralization and segmentation, in different European countries (Rootes 2002).

Of particular interest are the applications of this logic to entities other than individuals or organizations. A more sophisticated example, which integrates individuals, events, and cultural narratives ('projects'), comes from Ann Mische's

work on mobilizations in contemporary Brazil (1998, and Chapter 11 in this book; Mische and Pattison 2000). Along these lines, we could look at the role of persons and/or groups in establishing connections between events, by participating in them. For an organization, getting involved in different events implies at the very minimum the recognition of some compatibility and commonality between them; for an individual it is a reflection of how that person combines interest in different issues (even allowing for the gap between perceived interest in some issues, and actual involvement: Klandermans 1988). Likewise, we could look for a structure of connections between different subcultural activities—not to mention the even more complex case in which individuals or organizations establish connections between different categories of phenomena such as protest events and subcultural events (e.g. when the same individuals both attend specific demonstrations and are part of distinctive cultural milieus).

Single and Multiple Linkages

The approach proposed here allows recognizing the multiplicity of ties linking actors in a social movement network. How to treat those linkages is, however, an open question. One possibility would be treating them in an additive way, thus distinguishing between multiple, 'strong' ties from weaker ties, based on fewer types of connections. Alternatively, one could acknowledge the heterogeneity of network linkages when this is the case, and try to account for differences between specific network structures. For example, in the Milan environmental movement the network of interorganizational relations had a more centralized, wheel structure than the network based on multiple memberships and intragroup personal friendships, and illustrating those differences was useful to highlight the opposition between a largely instrumental model of interorganizational models and a distribution of multiple memberships which was close to a clique structure and pointed at widespread inclusiveness in the definition of the identity of the movement (Diani 1995).

As usual, the choice between the two approaches is largely driven by the specific theoretical perspective. If we are mainly interested in identifying the most solid components of a movement, then looking at multiplexity in additive terms might be advisable (commitment to collective action is often supported by strong ties: della Porta 1988; Krackhardt 1992). If on the other hand we are interested in the extent to which organizations and/or individuals mobilizing on certain issues find at least some ground for exchange, then acknowledging differences in network structures might be preferable. Of course, the model can be further complicated by including in the map mutual recognition between actors as part of the same movement, to measure to what extent specific links also carry with them broader solidarities and identities (two organizations may cooperate in alliance and share some core personnel, yet still not regard themselves as part of

any broader social movement: that is after all how many coalition dynamics operate).

Networks and Time

This framework also allows us to organize data with a view to diachronic analysis, the centrality of which is well documented in our book by chapters by Osa, Tilly and Wood, and Oliver and Myers. If individuals and organizations operate as links between events, then it is also possible to explore the potential continuities in issues and activities over time. Of course, one has to take into account changes in organizational identities, or in basic orientations in movement milieus, or in dominant political cultures. These and other changes prevent us from assuming exactly the same meaning for events at different points in time, even though the organizations and/or individuals involved happen to be the same. Nonetheless, this logic of analysis is worthy of attention, for its potential to map flows of people and organizations across events at different points in time, and the connections between events that these establish.

At the same time it is important to remember that in themselves, the models presented in the previous section do not imply any necessary trend. In particular, I do not suggest any reframing of the 'from movement to institution' dynamic along relational lines (e.g. in terms of 'from clique to wheel ...'). If such a reading might fit the evolution of the radical movement sector in Italy (for a formulation of this hypothesis see Diani 1992b), it does not universally apply. For example, in his analysis of the evolution of environmental movement networks in Spain, based on data from press reports of environmental protests, Jimenez (2002) illustrates a transformation from a wheel to a policephalous structure between 1988 and 1997, as the movement specific identity strengthened, and the aggregate of local environmental initiatives led eventually to a broader political project—if one largely conducted along conventional lines. What these models offer, then, are simply tools to try and make sense of specific network configurations, and of the specific concatenations between them.

Structural Homophily

The perspective outlined here does not displace existing paradigms of social movement analysis but rather uses them for different purposes. They may contribute to the analysis of movement networks particularly at the level of what social network scholars label 'homophily' processes (McPherson *et al.* 2001): that is to say, the identification of the actors' attributes which may facilitate the establishment of linkages between them. While the crucial element in social life may not be attributes but relations, sharing certain traits nonetheless encourages or constrains network building (e.g. Blau and Schwartz 1984). The question then becomes what traits are more salient at any point in time, and under what conditions different

attributes may or may not play a major role. On this ground each of the current paradigms can offer important insights. Let us illustrate some of them with reference to the two criteria I have used to characterize different network structures, centralization, and segmentation.

Resource mobilization theories draw our attention to how the distribution of organizational resources may affect the role played by different actors in a network, in particular, whether more central actors owe their position to a greater control of resources. Although both Diani's and Ansell's chapters largely support this line of argument, this need not necessarily be the case as radical movements may well develop around groups strong on charismatic leadership but weak on organizational resources. A relational version of this approach could stress the importance of existing social ties (or social capital) between groups as predictors of network centrality (as again illustrated by Diani's chapter here). It is also important to look at competition dynamics among movement organizations as a potential source of fragmentation within networks (Zald and McCarthy 1980; Staggemborg 1986). Future explorations along these lines should be conducted in more intense dialogue with parallel developments in organization theory (Podolny and Page 1998; Gulati and Gargiulo 1999; Kenis and Knoke 2002).

Macro-sociological analyses of social movements may also offer a significant contribution to the network perspective. In particular, theories of new social movements may help us specify the different mobilization issues that movements are campaigning on, and to relate them to network properties. For example, Diani (1995) found that organizations with a different level of interest in urban ecology issues also differed in their centrality within the Milanese environmental network, with conservation groups being overall more peripheral. Focusing on the properties of individuals, theories of 'new politics' (Dalton 1996) may also provide useful insights, for example, by suggesting that certain positions in movement networks might be more frequently occupied by groups with a distinct class profile (whether new or old middle class, or working class). Analogous distinctions might also usefully account for fragmentation within a sector of organizations broadly dealing with very similar issues, for example, for the difficult collaboration between middle class environmentalists and 'environmental justice' campaigners in specific localities (Lichterman 1995a, 1996). Differences in the background of movement activists have also been found to be a predictor of movement fragmentation: in 1980s Milan, environmental groups with a high share of activists with a past history in the radical movements of the 1970s shared a similar structural position in the network, and so did groups with no personal connections to that political phase (Diani 1995: ch. 5).

As Mische's chapter here most powerfully argues, differences in framing and discursive strategies may also illuminate the structure of a given pattern of ties. What are the main frames held by actors playing a central role in a movement network? To what extent is the centrality of specific actors due to their mastery of framing skills, or to their being identified within a specific frame, which happens to be dominant at a given point in time? And do these frames coincide with, or differ from, those adopted by actors who operate as brokers, that is, as bridges between different milieux of collective action? As Osa's chapter suggests, networks of oppositional actors, especially at times when opportunities for mass protest are limited, may well be fragmented along lines which largely overlap with differences in fundamental ways of framing conflicts and their stakes.

Finally, the contribution of political process theorists may take two different forms. It may highlight the importance of factors which shape the structure of traditional divisions and cleavages, for example, a salient left–right cleavage is likely to influence relational patterns even in a movement which aspires to cut across it.[6] However, political process approaches may also highlight under which conditions certain differences may prove more or less effective at shaping alliances and segmentation. In particular, movements operating in a close political environment may be expected—once again all the rest being equal—to rely more on ideological incentives than movements who have a reasonable chance of being influential through inclusion in the political process. Emphasis on ideology as a mobilizing weapon and on collective identities will be likely to affect the solidity of network forms based on mutual recognition. On the one hand, it will make it difficult to reproduce the strong collective commitment necessary to support dense structures like the clique: organizational identities will tend to prevail as organizations compete to get their ideological standpoints accepted as the movement's orthodoxy. On the other hand, the growing centrality of ideological discourse will pose similar problems to structures, which also rely on mutual recognition, but with a lower degree of emotional investment like the wheel. In one case, the network will collapse because of the struggle for ideological purity, in the other case, because of latent differences in orientations between its components becoming more salient in the new context. Both transformations might lead to segmented or policephalous structures.

CONCLUSIONS

The view of movements outlined in this chapter challenges three popular, if often implicit assumptions (or, borrowing from Tilly (1984), 'pernicious postulates') of social movement research:

(1) that the study of social movements is tantamount to the study of the organizations active within them;
(2) that network forms of organization are distinctive of (new) social movements focusing on issues of identity rather than political change; and
(3) that social movements tend to coincide with the public challenges conducted against authorities and opponents on specific sets of issues.

While few would openly subscribe to such assumptions, in practical terms research is frequently inspired by them, witness the disentangling between studies

of identity processes and that of organizational network dynamics, or of the latter and protest event investigations. The goal of the research programme sketched here is to facilitate the development of an integrated approach, which enables to translate awareness of the link between networks, actions, and identities in specific research activities. Its basic points are the following:

(1) recognition of the duality of network processes as a precondition to appropriate multilevel investigations;
(2) attention to the network processes connecting events, activities, and ideas, and not only to those linking individuals or organizations;
(3) recognition of the multiplicity of networks potentially linking different actors or events;
(4) attention to the time dimension in network processes;
(5) recognition of the value of current approaches to social movements in the investigation of homophily processes.

Hopefully, taking each of these elements seriously will also provide the basis for a comparative analysis of social movement networks, to complement what has been achieved so far in comparative research focusing on cycles of protest and contention (Kriesi *et al.* 1995; della Porta 1995; Rootes 2002), individual orientations and activities (Dalton 1996; Norris 2002), organizations (van der Heijden *et al.* 1992; Kriesi 1996). Admittedly, the perspective outlined in this chapter represents a peculiar, and to some extent radical way to reorganize the insights and inputs coming from the different chapters of this book. It should not be received as an accurate reflection of a collectively agreed conclusion—to the contrary, many contributors to this book would probably take issue with this line of argument. But perhaps this is not so surprising for a book devoted to social movements: after all, it is not so rare for political or intellectual innovation to originate out of maverick and over-ambitious attempts to impose some unity and coherence where there was little. This book might not be that different.

NOTES

1. This approach was influenced by Melucci's argument (for his final statement, see Melucci 1996) in favour of an analytical view of social movements as a specific type of collective action. My specific definition was mainly influenced by Tilly's (1978) concept of *catnet*, Pizzorno's (1996) view of identity, and Melucci's (1996) concept of submerged networks.
2. However, such association is not always consensual: Melucci in particular recurrently expressed his unease with the 'new social movements' label (1996).
3. By 'theory of social movements' I mean a set of propositions which explicitly address the analytical peculiarity of the concept of social movement vis-à-vis cognate concepts, and treat the concept as the building blocks of a distinctive theoretical argument.

One could also take the argument one step further and claim (as I have done elsewhere: Diani 2000*a*) that for all the richness of empirical results, the methodological breakthroughs, and the increasing conceptual sophistication, we still lack a social movements theory proper. What we have nowadays are theories which, in contrast, treat 'movement' as a largely denotational term to identify phenomena which could be—and indeed frequently are—equally referred to with cognate concepts such as 'protest activity,' 'coalition,' 'sect', 'interest group', etc. (Diani 1992*a,b*). But this would be going too far in the present context.

4. Reachability, in network analysis terms (Wasserman and Faust 1994: 107).
5. In Milan in the mid-1980s, ties to nonenvironmental actors were about half of those to environmental actors (Diani 1995: 134–5).
6. I illustrate this dynamic in reference to the Italian environmental movement of the 1970s, where the persistent strength of left–right divisions played against the development of systematic alliances between political ecologists and conservationists (Diani 1995).