

Why people do participate in Social Movements?

Social Movements Theory: First ideas

Plural visions

- Plural methodology and theory
- Do not generalize
- Particular theories do not explain all
- If diverse theories and methodologies are joined, they can get an idea more complex of society
- History produce unique “social movements”
- Looking for understanding social movements can be much more productive if we begin from a wide point of view

Social Movements are Society changing Society (Sztompka)

They live in Society and get inspiration in society problems and circumstances. Some of these important circumstances are:

- The crisis of the Welfare States
- The Neoliberalist economies and ideologies
- Individualism
- Competency and competition
- Globalization
- Inequality and poverty, social dualization
- Materialist and posmaterialist values
- Risk society
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Mass media, and public opinion
- Reflexivity
- Less political participation (credibility crisis)

Different theories explain why people participate in Social Movements, and explain the factors which contribute to the success or failure of Social Movements

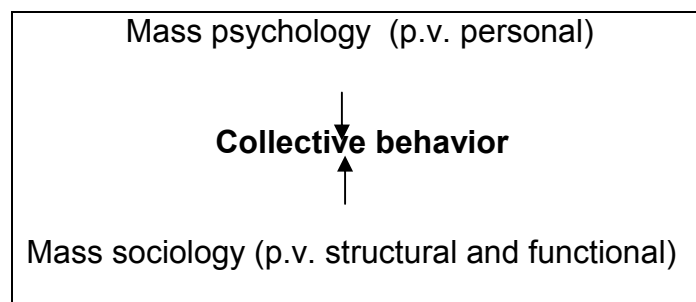
Old, classic theories

- Focused on the “**emergency**” of social movements
- Normally classified under the “**collective behaviour**”

Social Movements are born spontaneously, by “social contagion” and interstimulation of members (volcanic metaphor)

Stimulus (problem...) (first) - social explosion (social movement) (second)

- personal and structural tension -



Some particular **Old** theories:

‘Collective behavior’

Ej. Smelser and the mechanism of the emergence of social movements.

Steps:

- generalised belief
- structural strain (sick society)
- precipitating factors
- mobilisation of participants ...

‘Mass society accounts’ (atomised masses)

‘Mass deprivation’

‘People with problems and the probability of integrate social movements’

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS THEORIES

Resource mobilisation theory

Different resources are defined (different traditions):

US: Structural

“Opportunity structures”

- **Political**: political regime, states, parties, bureaucracies, institutions, etc.
- **Organizatives**: organization, strategies, resources, networks, etc.

Eur.: Cultural

- **Cultural and cognitives**: ideas, ideologies, identity, symbols, frames, legitimation...

New Social Movements Theories

- They are worried about private – intimate- things
- Heterogeneous (social composition)
- Worried about new problems (end XX and new XXI)
- Decentralized organization
- Through autonomy
- Universal
- Culture, identity, symbols...
- Mass media and dramatization
- Think Global and act local

The ‘action-identity’ approach.

Cultural, identity, subjectivity approach

More focused on the development, success and failure of social movements