

and it was the thinkers who really counted. However applicable to segments of contemporary sociology, such an accusation can not be directed at the Tillys. They are counters who both think and count. They have produced a fine, even elegant book. They deal with big questions across cultures and time periods and in a manner as disciplined and systematic as such a wide and varied net permits. Contrary to a favorite theme of sociologists of modernization the family enterprise is alive and well in industrial society.

The basic question for the Tillys is how industrialization and urbanization have affected the character and magnitude of collective action. The interest is not in violence as such, but in tracing and helping to explain the changing ways in which people act together for common ends. They analyze the interdependencies among "three heroic transformations" which occurred in most Western European societies between the 19th and 20th centuries: the emergence of an urban-industrial economy, the national state's consolidation of power, and the reorientation of collective action.

Unlike Bill Gamson who followed a sample of particular groups over a long period of time, Ted Gurr and Douglas Hibbs who compared many countries over a limited time period, or traditional historians who focus in great detail on a particular incident, the Tillys follow a sample of events in three countries over approximately a 100 year period. Through comparative history they combine the clinical case study approach of most historians with the epidemiological approach of most sociologists. The quality and type of data across countries and time periods vary considerably. Yet they were able to draw samples of violent events for several decades in Italy; from 1830-1930 in Germany, and from 1830 to 1960 in France. For France and Germany daily newspapers were systematically searched to produce the basic samples. This was supplemented by historical and archival materials.

Collective action is categorized in terms of the 3 (slightly modified) generic forms of which Charles Tilly has previously written. The Tillys observe "a deep long run alteration in the form and scope of collective acts producing violence." While some differences between France, Italy, and Germany are noted, there is a gradual move in each from "competitive" to "reactive" to "proactive" forms of collective action. This shift parallels

C. Tilly, L. Tilly, and R. Tilly  
in *Contemporary Sociology*,  
1976. Pp. 695-697.

*The Rebellious Century 1830-1930*, by  
CHARLES TILLY, LOUISE TILLY, and  
RICHARD TILLY. Cambridge, Mass.: Har-  
vard University Press, 1975. 354 pp.  
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Law professor Thomas Reed Powell once  
remarked that in the end counters didn't think



the process of state making. They argue that there is a close link between collective action and the rise and fall of national struggles for power.

Structural changes such as industrialization and urbanization have a profound, but indirect effect on collective action through "the creation, transformation, and destruction of groups with common interests and a capacity for mobilization." The Tillys argue that collective action can best be seen as a by-product of contention for power and its repression, rather than as a direct response to breakdown, hardship, rapid change, or normlessness. The data suggest the failure of any single factor such as urbanization or industrialization to account in a linear way for collective action.

One can learn a great deal from the book about the specifics and broad patterning of collective action in France, Italy, and Germany. The Tillys have sophisticatedly analyzed a wealth of fresh material bearing on major sociological questions. They have produced an important and unique book. Yet for all its elegance, clarity, scope, and descriptive documentation, it is likely to be more important to historians seeking models for quantitative history than to sociologists, particularly those familiar with Charles Tilly's previous work. I don't think the theoretical implications of the book go much beyond attacking straw persons and re-asserting some familiar sociological wheels: the parts of a society show a degree of inter-dependence; political structures affect political behavior; violence and power are linked; repression, when the state is strong, works more often than not; people have reasons for what they do and their behavior makes sense to them; group action is facilitated by belonging to groups; collective violence has an emergent quality not completely captured by considering static pre-disturbance variables; behavior has multiple causes and rarely is one variable able to account for most of the variance.

Who after all but the most naive of pop sociologists or ideologues thinks the complex social events across countries and time periods move in a linear direction in automatic response to single variables? Who but the most unreconstructed ecologist would argue that urbanization as such was the crucial factor for social behavior? Who but the most unreconstructed social psychologist fixiated in the 1950s would believe that frustration always produces aggression which then causes collective violence? Who but a McCone Commis-

sion dominated by business persons, or an occasional elite political scientist could deny that the involvement of black Baptists rather than white Episcopalians in the urban civil disorders of the 1960s, was related to the relative position of these two groups in American society and to questions of power, status, and wealth? The image presented of collective behavior theorists does not jibe with my reading of the literature. A significant and growing revisionist school emerged in the 1960s which is rather far from the image of Le Bon or Blumer in 1939.

The bibliography has a strong pre-1970 cast and ignores much of the outpouring of work on social movements and mass action since then. Work such as that by McCarthy and Zald on resource mobilization, or McPhail, Berk, and others on communication processes and ecological factors in crowd formation, or Pinard, Freeman, and Orum on the facilitative role of secondary and primary groups add support and could help further order the data.

I would like to have seen the concept of social control treated in a more differentiated way; more data on non-violent collective action; and more attention to issues which give some observers pause such as the role of agents provocateurs, foreign adventurism, and the reporting process in contributing to the "events" we seek to explain. At least some consideration of war or genocide as ultimate forms of collective violence would have been helpful.

The Tillys argue for a Marxist solidarity theory against a Durkheimian breakdown theory of collective violence. Yet I think these approaches need be opposed in only their most vulgar, reductionist, and politically self-serving forms. As with many of the debates with defuse (and sometimes confuse) sociological energies—conflict or functionalist images of society, cooperative or hostile images of the person, cultural or biological basis of sex roles, macro or micro or objective or subjective approaches, it is not either/or it is both.

In the case of the solidarity and breakdown theories, they are stated so generally and events are often so complex that both may be correct. The task before students of collective action is to show how, and the extent to which breakdown and solidarity theories may be integrated. One rather than the other may apply more clearly depending on the level of analysis and type of question asked, the stage



and type of collective action, the type of participant, the nature of the setting, and the motives of the actor, as against the consequences of the actions. Early in the book the Tillys hint at some ways the approaches might be brought together (they are different phases of the same process, or different varieties of collective action some growing out of breakdown, some out of solidarity). But this is quickly dropped in favor of solidarity theories.

I think such an integrative effort is likely to prove scientifically more productive. Yet even if it were much further along disputes would remain. This is no doubt one price paid for dealing with "big" questions about unique historical events (even if treated in a series as here). The net is so wide, the starting questions so general, the phenomena so complex and varied across cases, that reliance on consensual issues of scientific measurement can take us only so far. Appealing metaphors, selective attention, and our prior attitudes about history, society, and the groups in question take us the rest of the way.

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