

nonetheless other omissions occur. Wars required kings to find support and revenue, thus initiating or elaborating many town-monarch coalitions. Furthermore, matters of case selection recur: why not examine early state formation in Spain or Russia, where protracted wars against the Moors and Mongols clearly shaped the state?

Studying the origins of the state and the state system is a daunting task, filled with many pitfalls of which scholars of modern subjects are blissfully unaware. Spruyt's study of this difficult subject matter deserves consideration. On balance, it is an interesting work, with relevance for students of the state and social theory as a whole, but it is burdened by shortcomings that make it a less than successful offering.

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STRUCTURE, STRATEGY, AND POLITICAL ACTION

Sidney Tarrow: *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Pp. x, 251. \$59.95, \$17.95, paper.)

Guenter Roth, the great translator and interpreter of Max Weber, once argued that "most books have a foil as well as a model. They are written to criticize some books and emulate others" (Max Weber, *Economy and Society* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968], p. lxvii). Sidney Tarrow is successful—*Power in Movement* will become a classic study of political protest and take its place along side Ted Gurr's *Why Men Rebel* (1970) and Charles Tilly's *From Mobilization to Revolution* (1978)—because he has skillfully built upon an important model and three worthy foils.

The model is Charles Tilly: "Readers will recognize my debt to Charles Tilly, whose difficult but essential book, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, was the origin of much of the thinking represented here" (p. 223, fn. 34). Tarrow draws on Tilly for his dependent variable, independent variables, and larger perspective on conflict.

Tilly's explanandum is the "collective action" and "collective violence" employed by "contenders" for power. Tarrow's contender is the social movement. Because they are not formally organized, with a well-defined leadership, goal hierarchy, and decision-making entity (pp. 15-16), movements are not interest groups. Nor are they mobs—unorganized and ephemeral. Rather, social movements are coordinated and sustained collectivities that engage in "contentious collective action" (p. 2) with "elites, authorities and opponents" (p. 1).

Tarrow skillfully weaves several strands of Tilly and post-Tilly arguments into a "broad framework" (p. 2) that explains movements. He argues that social movements are "triggered by the incentives created by political opportunities, combining conventional and challenging forms of action and building on social networks and cultural frames" (p. 1). To his

key question, "How movements become the focal points for collective action and sustain it against opponents and the state" (p. 189), Tarrow thus answers that political opportunity structures activate three other sources of power in movements: conventional repertoires are sustained by the purposeful framing of collective action and the intentional mobilization of movement structures. His approach thus views social movements from a very attractive mix of Weberian structural and strategic perspectives: the political, socio-economic, and cultural stratification systems of a social order provide the resources and set the context for the struggle over power, wealth, and status.

Finally, just as Tilly moved from mobilization to revolution, Tarrow shifts from movement to the larger world which movement turns upside down. He explores the emergence of the national social movement in the West over the last three centuries. He also studies the protest cycle, suggesting that the "early risers" in movements exploit and expose changes in the political opportunity structure and hence provide incentives for "late arrivers." In addition, he examines the political struggle to reform (chap. 10) and produce policy outcomes. And Tarrow speculates about the emergence of a "movement society" (chap. 11) in which collective action is "disruptive" (i.e., permanent, transnational, and violent) rather than "conventional" (i.e., "absorbed and institutionalized into ordinary politics," p. 8, via "peaceful, orderly routines that break no laws and violate no spaces," p. 110). The issue here is whether contemporary political protest will go the way of the strike, sit-in, boycott, demonstration, petition, and political association.

Now consider Tarrow's foils: purist theories of action, culture, and structure. The main foil is action theorist Mancur Olson. Tarrow begins by challenging collective action theory, much as Tilly in 1978 began by criticizing Gurr-type deprivation approaches. He suggests that the real collective action problem is not one of overcoming individual "free riders." He maintains that the free-rider perspective is asocial; while we can begin studying collective action as a series of individual decisions made in a well-defined institutional context, we must ultimately arrive at the "'social'—coordinating, sustaining and giving meaning to collective action" (p. 16). Similarly, he complains that Olson's perspective is apolitical: "We quickly arrive at the more complex and less tractable networks of politics" (p. 26). He concludes that "although we begin with the theory of collective action, we will not get very far before we must relate collective action to people's social networks, to their ideological discourses and to their political struggles" (p. 3). In short, Tarrow prefers a structural focus on the political, social, and cultural relationships among actors to an agential focus on the actors themselves. Hence, he stresses the importance of "specific, complex and historically rooted" (p. 27) processes of distribution, conflict, power, and domination.

Tarrow's other two foils are implicit. One is the culturalists. Collective action theorists tend to limit their focus to well-defined groups acting in historically concrete situations. Dennis Chong's *Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement* is an excellent example. Culturalists wish to broaden the explanandum quite considerably. James Scott, for example, studies "everyday forms of resistance" that include such individualistic and symbolic forms of opposition as styles of speech and clothing. In short, culturalists wish to

widen the study of conflict until, in Hegelian fashion, all history and action become inexorably embodied in meaning; rationalists wish to narrow the study of conflict until the material conditions that drive interests become clear. Tarrow, as expected, positions himself between Olson and Scott. He broadens the explanandum beyond Olson and yet does not "stretch" it as far as Scott to "discursive communities" and "unobtrusive mobilization" (pp. 4, 93, 101, 108, 181, fn. 5 on pp. 219-20). Similarly, Tarrow recognizes that "meanings" are politically "constructed," but notes that social movements are not merely symbolic crusades: "We must be wary of turning mass politics into no more than a form of political theatre" (p. 119).

Tarrow's other implicit foil is the structuralists. He observes that "if variations in movement structure and strategy could be predicted from differences in state structure, then all of a country's movements would resemble one another" (p. 91). Tarrow thus offers another warning: "We should beware of simple structural answers to complex political problems" (p. 90).

Here, then, are the foils to the Tilly-Tarrow approach: The rationalists use the nuts and bolts of collective action theories—entrepreneurs, patrons, selective incentives, risk propensities, self-governing institutions, etc.—to produce a counterapproach focused more narrowly on protest organization. The culturalists elaborate ideas about hegemony, frames, identity, legitimation, and domination into a broader focus on the normative underpinnings of conflict. The structuralists dispatch the micro theorists by locating the great material conditions and power relationships that lay below surface changes and deterministically drive individual actions and collective outcomes.

In a famous review (*Journal of Social History* 4 [Summer 1971]: 416-20), Tilly criticized Gurr for having written "a sponge called *Why Men Rebel*." In responding to their challengers, Tarrow and his followers face a similar danger. Tarrow's four "powers in movement" (p. 181)—political opportunity structures, mobilization structures, frames, and conventions—are at the same time structural and strategic concepts. They represent constraints but also the opportunities for much practical work. Hence, in Tarrow's model politics appears as the strategic manipulation of political opportunity structures, society as the strategic manipulation of mobilizing structures, and culture as the strategic manipulation of frames and conventions. How much of the structure and action of politics, society, and culture can be soaked up by the sponges of political opportunity, mobilizing structures, frames, and repertoires? In other words, how much can Tarrow's "framework" accommodate attacks by partisans of structural, normative, and action perspectives?

A couple of decades ago, the key debate in studies of protest was between relative deprivation and resource mobilization approaches: Gurr vs. Tilly. Tilly won and went on to influence a generation of scholars. In a practical sense, Tarrow thus has no foils. But a monopoly of ideas is perhaps the hardest monopoly of all to maintain. Perhaps the principal reason is that the winners must figure out what exactly they have won. What are the boundaries of the Tilly-Tarrow approach? What exactly can it explain? What

aspects of conflict must remain a mystery to students of Tilly and Tarrow? And boundaries there are. Tarrow argues that Scott's students should avoid conceptual stretching (p. 219, fn. 5) and that Olson's students should avoid theory stretching (p. 219, fn. 1). Tilly-Tarrow students of social movements should also avoid mixing conceptual or theoretical apples and oranges.

But these issues lie in the future. At the moment, the Tilly-Tarrow approach exercises hegemony over the field. It is difficult to think in other ways. Tarrow has distilled this wisdom and set the agenda. His book is a masterly synthesis of contemporary structural and strategic perspectives on social movements.

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HOW TO DESIGN DEMOCRACIES

Giovanni Sartori: *Comparative Constitutional Engineering: An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives and Outcomes*. (New York: New York University Press, 1994. Pp. xi, 219. \$40.00.)

Democratic constitutional engineering is tricky, yet consequential, nowadays more than ever. I can hardly think of a better proof of this double assertion than the one provided by this, the latest book by Giovanni Sartori: possibly the most astute and passionate student of constitutional engineering, its incentive structures and its consequences for democratic governance. More than anything else, the book is a rich, but also highly condensed, updated *summa* of Sartori's studies on constitutional engineering conducted over the many years of his long career. It opens with an analysis of electoral systems, and moves to a critical survey of parliamentary, presidential, and semi-presidential systems. It concludes with a proposal for a new type of government—alternating presidentialism—which Sartori deems appropriate for difficult new democracies such as those of Latin America and Eastern Europe, or difficult old ones such as Italy or Israel. Throughout, Sartori's attention is on two aspects of proposed constitutional devices: the ease with which they can be adopted, the clear nature of their consequences. For some devices may be of easy adoption, yet of questionable or troublesome consequences, while others may present the opposite problem. Which is to say that Sartori is the first one to acknowledge, and in fact to show, how tricky constitutional engineering can be. A number of reasons emerge from his analysis.

One reason is that the expert political scientists upon which politicians may rely for advice, if they do, are often no experts. They either misunderstand the effects of specific institutional choices or they plainly do not believe that choices have independent origins and independent effects. Hurried politicians who rely on their advice are therefore led down the wrong path. This, however, is not an argument against constitutional engineering; it is an argument, as Sartori points out, against wrong engineering. And Sartori is at