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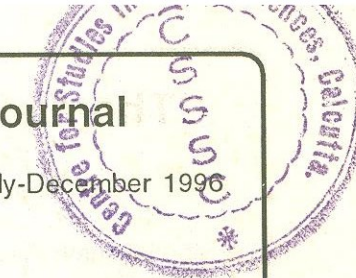
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RETHINKING NEW POLITICAL HISTORY¹

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Introduction

Writing on political history today shows substantial differences of opinion among scholars who work through social science perspectives. Their 'new political history' (which, like the 'old' political history, investigates the 'conquest, exercise and practice of power'²) is a field of contention where scepticism faces historians who are concerned with social functions³ (e.g. the 'mediating' role of parties) or social and economic phenomena whose features are established for a long term, using mass data (urbanization, class antagonism, elite cohesion etc). This form of investigation is regarded as excessively homogenizing; and the phenomena are thought to lack explanatory power; 'class, for instance, as determined in relation to the means of production, it is argued, is not only often indistinguishable; it is an 'identity' whose articulation throws open serious questions concerning its political significance. Such a challenge is, in part, a development of the position taken against established political history in the past, and which lay at the foundation of new political history, i.e. the stand that the study of 'power' and even the state itself had traditionally been excessively narrow and insufficiently nuanced in focus. That critique occasionally betrayed features of nineteenth century historicism since it counselled the use of categories which assumed models of social development; but the approach avoided the pitfalls of apriori assumptions, since new historians established their work on patterns in social behaviour observable over a long term, duly weighted for changes in time and space. The new dimension to the critique, today, meanwhile, subjects categories of 'new' investigation to rigorous scrutiny, even as it argues for a 'new historicism' which avoids the preoccupation with the present while critically working with its references.

Here, at one level, some historians demand a more firm recognition than before that the very statement of historical investigation is bound in ambiguities which require prompt and continuous examination. Such an examination is deemed to need reference to various aspects of the conceptual context in which it evolves; either to the 'discourse' in which a problem is stated, or to the linguistic framework in which it receives

enunciation. A degree of sensitivity to the language of history-writing itself is clearly placed on the historian's agenda when a problem is fixed or documents handled.⁴ Elsewhere, it is argued that the crucial focus for the examination of political history is the meaning attached to incidents and behaviour: the way groups and individuals 'imagine' or 'invest' their position, and why. Studies of 'culture' (or 'social heritage') are regarded as possessing the key to this latter study; and, more specifically, within this field, a focus on problems relating to values and language has become fashionable.⁵ However, innovators face the clear problem that documentation and history must be regarded as much as communication based on a common lexicon as a body of statements whose existence is to be determined in their 'dialogue' with each other. So, to adhere to a traditional approach in setting a problem is far from untoward, even if it requires modification. Again, the exercise of establishing meaning requires attention to the condition that is invented or imagined; therefore, earlier concerns with 'reality' and 'structures' (i.e. 'conditions which cannot be molded to the actors' purposes'⁶) are far from avoidable. In general, the issue of what is important for a narrative remains a matter of dispute among new political historians.

In such circumstances, various aspects of political history have been subject to formulation and reformulation. It is in the literature on revolutions, though, that William Sewell on the one hand and Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, on the other hand, have recently made important suggestions which focus on some of the problems associated with 'the challenge of meaning' (outlined above). They argue, in different ways,⁷ in an area crucial to political history, for due attention to 'structure' and related phenomena, together with 'meaning' in an integrated approach which is process-oriented, where no element is privileged. Given the importance of the subject, I wish, in this note, to point to the character of their intervention in the light of what new political history has come to mean. The presentation is divided into two sections. I begin with an outline of the character of new political history, through discussion of contributions to a volume edited by Rene Remond in 1988. I then state the nature of the challenge of meaning-oriented history, whose character is already evident in some of the essays in this volume. In the second section, I examine the suggestions of Sewell, McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow, which are worked out with reference to the literature on Revolutions and contentious politics.

I The New Political History, 'Meaning', And Its Challenge

(1) *New Political History*

Although a variety of monographs and articles reflect the character of the new political history of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, few essays deal as

effectively with the general features of the subject as Rene Remond's collection of 1988, in his *Pour une histoire politique* ("Towards a political history"). Here, Remond points to the refashioning of the discipline through exchange with the social sciences. The consequence, contributors to his volume show, is a variation in focus where, as in the past, the state might be part of new political history, but the latter can no longer be reduced to the study of the state.⁸ The results of the transformation, according to Remond are, in brief: a concern with connections between state and society; the use of "mass data" (population statistics, economic indicators, electoral information), to establish links between long term socio-economic features (demographic pressure, dysfunctions in an economy, religious affiliations) and the course of *politics*, a serious attention to other fundamental features which stretched beyond 'incidents' and occasions—i.e. class antagonisms, patterns of sociability etc.—to explain the outcomes of political and social movements; and, as a consequence, an interest in the "long-term" (*longue duree*), which determined the character of social tensions, as much as the immediate (*eventmentielle*).

In Remond's volume, Serge Berstein (on political parties) and Jean-Pierre Rioux (on 'the associative' in politics),⁹ point to major features of a new political history approach. Berstein draws substantially from the political science of Robert Michels, Maurice Duverger,¹⁰ Myron Weiner, Joseph La Palombara¹¹ and a host of others,¹² and he deals with the 'new' history of political parties (and the French Radical Party in particular). Here, he speaks of the 'new' interest beyond the standard range of party history (i.e. programs, party conferences and electoral performance); and he demonstrates the character of 'new' strategy, by showing his own interest in political parties as a mediating factor between social problems and the formulation of their political solutions. The intentions of actors and the meaning actions attract are subsumed within the role parties play in political systems.

Berstein differentiates between the scope of parties over time, drawing attention to the difference in the duration, geographic and social range, and aspirations of 'modern' parties which have succeeded the 'Burgundy Party' of the 15th century, or the 'party of princes' of the 17th century. He relates the tension between the self-representation of the party and its social base to the 'mediating' role of the political party in society. In the case of the French Radical Party, such tension was inherent to it, Berstein argues, since the party presented itself as the a spokesman of the undifferentiated poor, yet drew its support from the lower middle class; this drew Radicals into electoral and governmental alliances which systematically collapsed (e.g. Clemenceau's pre-First World War cabinets and the Popular Front governments of 1936-37). Berstein's study requires a proper integration of surveys of social problems as well as an examination of the meanings attributed to party programs and the variety of the response these programs attracted.

Rioux, meanwhile, shows that histories pay attention to identity and sociability in tracing the character of mobilization: a trend which finds expression in the work of Agulhon on peasant politics in Southern France in the nineteenth century.¹³ Rioux also illustrates the strategy in a discussion of Antoine Prost's examination of the commitment to republicanism among First World War veterans after 1918, and an account of the defence of the Third Republic by their groups, when faced by Fascist onslaught. Here, the new focus goes well beyond early work on links between elections and locality sensibilities¹⁴. The use of mass data is extensive, and the monographs reflect latter-day debates concerning the character of civic sensibility when such sensibility expresses itself outside the state.

Elsewhere, Antoine Prost¹⁵ shows, the way lexicology and linguistics can be used to ascertain the language strategies of politicians and political groups: the revealing contrast, for instance, of the approach of Thorez and Blum to public rhetoric, where the former repeatedly used the 'we' and the 'us' both to conjure the Communist Party and the public, while Blum focused on drawing personal sympathy and a standard communication mode. Equally important for 'new history' are evaluations of culture-related phenomena, the influence of the media or the character of religious faith. Aline Coutort shows, in accounts of religious communities, that their integration and political behaviour varied: she draws attention to the differences between Catholic communities who regard their faith as a cause for withdrawal from politics and those who find the same teachings a stimulus to participation in public life.

(2) 'Meaning' and its challenge

Recent stress by historians on 'meaning' as the determining factor in historical change (i.e. the meaning given to politics by actors and bystanders, the 'rules'¹⁶ whereby meaning is established) and texts as the key access to meaning (i.e. the representations of reality as opposed to reality itself) is a development of aspects of the agenda for historical enquiry set by Remond's contributors. Historians focus on values and value systems as factors which determine how 'meaning is established: and the 'text' as the best source for understanding 'meaning'. The material aspects of politics (the 'resources' that are crucial, for instance) may also be 'read' to establish the value system that underpin them.¹⁷ But, although there is tolerance for such a recourse, and the use of earlier 'social' and 'culturalist' approaches to the study of values (of E.P. Thompson, Levi Strauss, Malinowski, Marshal Sahlins and Clifford Geertz) there is a preference for a focus on language and text in establishing meaning¹⁸. The writing of the late Michel Foucault, and latter day discussions of how texts can be read, establish the model for this literature¹⁹.

Starting with such priorities in history writing on nineteenth century France, Francois Ewald's *L'Etat Providence* ("The Welfare State"), follows the model set by Michel Foucault for the study of meaning through tracing

the 'discourses' within which such meaning must be located. The author accords marginal significance to locating his arguments in the broad 'structural' or institutional framework of politics and policy formulation. Rather, he concentrates on tracing awareness of 'rights', 'responsibility' and 'accident' in the industrial workplace by manufacturers, judicial and administrative officials; and he links the evolution of a 'welfare system' to this widely dispersed awareness. The deciding point when inspection of factories and welfare policy came to be thought necessary was when the idea of workers' responsibility for accidents came to be rejected in the 'discourse' on accidents and when a 'technology' of insurance had become available (towards the end of the 19th century).

In the historiography on late Victorian England, meanwhile, a number of historians seek to reformulate the political history of the time with reference to the variety of meanings given socially to incident and action. Notable here are M.C. Finn, in her study of the uniting force, among conflicting classes, of national idiom in mid Victorian Britain; and Patrick Joyce, in his work on the common language of radical politicians and working classes in matters of definition of social, personal and national identity. Here, these scholars break with earlier accounts of Gladstonian politics and new conservatism, which focus on charismatic authority, 'traditions' of radicalism and class mobilization, both before and after the extensions of suffrage in 1867 and 1888; and they relate political success to the ability of the political actor to draw on a common language of the time, both in self-representation and discussion (the catholic character of Joseph Bright's language, both in public and personally, and the use by Gladstone of the vivid imagery of the press, during this Midlothian campaign, when he attacked Conservative inertia when faced with massacres in the Balkans).

II. The Literature on Revolutions: William Sewell, Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow And Charles Tilly

(1) *The Background. Structuralism, Marxism and the challenge of 'meaning'*

In the literature on Revolutions important interventions have been made to come to terms with the issues raised by variations in approach to investigations of politics. The authors, William Sewell and McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, work out of a divided field of the study of contentious politics and revolutions, where a variety of methods have featured in the examination of contests for power: some which focus on 'structure', others which deal with the importance of culture and meaning in such a contest.

In this field, until recently, most scholarship was dominated by historical sociologists, or Marxists, who worked with the 'rise of the bourgeoisie' and the radical character of the *sans-coulottes* or proletariat. While the Marxists are well known (cardinally orthodox authors of the *History of the USSR* and, in France, Georges Lefebvre, Albert Soboul and their cohort), among the

historical sociologists, the early work of Charles Tilly is especially noteworthy, i.e. his analysis of counter-revolution during the French Revolution, in the Vendee region with reference to levels of urbanization in the area. After this, Tilly linked changes in power structure to state building, capitalism, and forms of social movement.²⁰ Theda Skocpol meanwhile, working from successful revolutions (French, Russian and Chinese) and failed revolutions (Japanese and Prussian), established a framework which became a standard reference for historians: a scheme which associated the 'coming' of revolutions with the international crisis of the state, a process of reform broken by a recalcitrant elite and a process of disintegration sustained by the assertion of autonomous peasant communities. She later amended her theory from an examination of the Iranian Revolution (1979), to include 'cultural factors' which she claimed modulated the course of a revolution.²¹

These analyses drew heavily from the standard social science analysis of collective action, i.e. that work of Gurr²², Olson²³ and others; they also attempted to involve as thorough a reading of the historical literature as possible. This made their 'histories' as impressive as their insights; and this is especially so in the recent work of Jack Goldstone, whose narrative on the connection between revolutions and the social implications of population growth was underpinned by a rigorous reading on the French and English revolutions.²⁴

Historians of individual revolutions responded to such work. Hence, it was goaded by Skocpol's stress that the making of the revolution hinged on the unmaking of the state, through military weakness, bankruptcy and an unsympathetic gentry, that Lynn Hunt sought what has been left out, i.e. the event itself and the 'rules of political behaviour', where Hunt traces the essence of the French Revolution.²⁵ This response determined her major addition to traditional historiography, i.e. her elaboration of the political culture of the time in the rhetoric of the Revolution, the establishment of a revolutionary political class through networks and exclusions, and the evolution of symbols which could be used for mobilization and manipulation. Latterly, however, the field has figured interpretations which are substantially 'cultural' and which focus on the importance of values and value systems for what occurred. No longer centred on the structural accounts of Marxist and historical sociologists, M. Moaddel, in his account of the Iranian revolution²⁶ has pointed to the way in which the influence of the ulema determined the course of the revolution, pitting this against the work of Misagh Parsa, who focuses more fixedly on 'resources' and their mobilization in this case. Again, in studies of the French Revolution, K.M. Baker, in a book where the title speaks for itself, deals with the 'invention' of the French Revolution, primarily by contemporaries.²⁷

(2) William Sewell. *The structure of culture and eventful history*

Among 'new' historians, William Sewell, who is well known for his work on labour at the time of the French Revolution, has attempted to broach these

issues in articles on theory and in an account of the taking of the Bastille.²⁸ In a discussion of 'structure' in the social sciences, in a refinement of the work of Antony Giddens²⁹, Sewell calls for recognition of the importance both of meaning and actuality for any historical or social investigation; but he argues for this within a framework of 'duality', which links both and achieves an equally privileged status for them. Since both, moreover, are associated with multiple and interactive phenomena. Sewell's scheme successfully accommodates breaks and changes. Sewell argues, in general, for an event-sensitive approach, which takes adequate note of meaning and 'harder' structures (in his terms, respectively 'rules and resources'); and he concretely demonstrates his approach in a well-theorized account of a historical event—the fall of the Bastille. Beginning from a general statement of how events matter, in that they initiate and carry forward historical change, Sewell points out that they are both 'the culmination of processes long underway', and also 'tend to transform social relations in ways that could not be fully predicted from the gradual changes that may have made them possible'.

The fall of the Bastille is then located in the midst of the tensions of the time (rising bread prices, the political crisis of the French state, the calling of the Estates General etc.), and the division in justifications of authority (centred on absolutism and democracy). July 14 is placed within the framework of a variety of meanings which it attracted, after its occurrence. Hence, the event was initially seen by revolutionaries as a disaster; and later came to be re-evaluated in consequence of contingency and piecemeal reappraisal, finally assuming the shape of a transformative occasion which had resolved the problem of what kind of dispensation was to prevail in France. Throughout, while Sewell is sensitive to the 'meaning' which was given to the events at the Bastille, he is equally sensitive to the forces that led to their formulation and reformulation. Hence, the initial 'meaning' attributed to the event in the National Assembly, and among 'revolutionaries'—that it was a disaster which would convince the King of the necessity for repression—was undermined by the actions of the King (who ordered his troops away from Paris and dismissed his ministry). The National Assembly's recognition of the taking of the Bastille as an expression of popular sovereignty was determined by the welcoming behaviour of the people of Paris to the delegation from the National Assembly.

(3) McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly. *Towards an integrated, process-oriented approach*

In a recent intervention in the literature on revolutions, McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly make no bones about their position regarding the comparative merits of 'meaning' (associated with 'culture') and 'structure' in social analysis. Outright, they express a concern that 'without a solid rational base and a relationship to structural constraints, culturalists threaten to broaden conflict until, in Hegelian fashion, all politics become enmeshed in meaning'. The intervention

sets out to rethink the groundwork of method in research on contentious politics and social movements; and to use this as a basis for a reconsideration of the links between great revolutions and lesser movements. The authors establish the lineage of the literature on social movements, pointing out how structuralists, 'rational choice'³⁰ theorists and students of 'political opportunity'³¹ structures approach the subject: an exercise where McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly justify the study of social constraints and calculation in the examination of movements. Scholars of 'culture' receive due approbation for their analysis of how movement leaders 'frame' strategies and why these are successful. The authors argue that a synthesis is required, in method, and show that it should be constituted on the basis of an integrated process-oriented approach.

This is neatly extracted from a skilful discussion of the emergence of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly are clear that any discussion of what happened must refer to the structural factors which undermined the 'racial status quo' in the country. This refers to the collapse of the cotton economy (1915-1935), the demographic shift in black settlement, and its increasing urban focus, and the radical change in US foreign policy during the Cold War. These elements accentuated the state's receptiveness to arguments regarding civil rights, while, locally, adequate 'opportunities' were provided to gather a movement, and it became 'rational' for participants to come forward as the relative costs of participation decreased. Scholars of political opportunity and rational choice decisively help in showing how this came together. Such work, however, it is admitted, cannot explain the specific character of the movement as it finally occurred: its association with the black churches and its leadership. Here, due reference to the 'cultural' consequences of increasing urbanization on black congregations is deemed essential; but equally essential is an explanation of why civil rights' leaders' strategy worked. Hence, the 'meaning' of the movement for participants and bystanders is singled out for attention. The same factor is a focus for the explanation of the 'decline' of the movement, though McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly correctly point to the divisive influence of civil rights' legislation (1964 and 1965) and generational factors in the selection of such 'meaning' at the time of the ebb of the movement.

The implications are clear: that 'a single tack... whether structural, rationalist or cultural, would have provided only a very partial... account of the cycle... traced'; that what has been essential is an 'intersection of the three broad sets of factors' (i.e. rationalist, structural and cultural). Equally crucial, is that the authors urge that it is not possible 'to identify one set of variables with one phase of the process and then move on to the next set of variables for the next stage...'

III Rethinking the Writing of Political History

The significance, by way of research method, of the approach of McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly is, in part, that it is a re-assertion of the importance of issues

which occupy centre-stage in politics during transfers of authority—i.e. mobilization and the causes, processes and outcomes of social movements and revolutions. To do this the authors continue, despite current concern with 'meaning' in political analysis, to find room in political history for structural phenomena whose value is recognized but whose character has been debated; and for this, they assert the importance of insights which come from established studies of sociology, social anthropology, political economy and political science. Their intervention is valuable in that their approach is more rigorous about process and interaction of phenomena than those who follow the loose agenda set by Remond and the contributors to his 1988 volume. Hence, crucial to the McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow approach is not only the clear conviction that consistencies exist in social and political behaviour, even in the most changeable times. This is the authors' self-evident answer to the view that opportunity and structure require repeated redefinition in changing circumstances and interpretations; it is also the answer to the position that however much scholars of political opportunity or structure make allowance for such change, their concessions and asides raise serious questions about the validity of a political opportunity approach itself. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly clearly stress that some consistencies may always be isolated; and, by their standards, one might argue that while anthropological concepts such as 'liminality' raise questions concerning chronology, i.e. when does transition begin, from what to what is the transition taking place etc.—certain patterns of behaviour are clear in what takes place within a social space.

Equally important, though, in the McAdam/Tarrow/Tilly approach is the attention it draws to interactive phenomena—such as 'framing'—which deal with the instruments which assure the appeal of a movement and the methods whereby leaders convince participants of the value of collective behaviour and the grievances that require collective action. Attention to 'frames' and 'repertoires' demand the student's concern with the social conventions, 'shared meanings' and speech usages whose effective use determines the success of strategies. Such concepts draw from culturist positions, but they have a political specificity that terms such as 'values' and discourse do not have in that they are open to inclusion in political analysis of timing, specific direction and the limited strategies essential for the conquest and retention of power. Supplemented by the authors' stress on the significance of any analysis of choice in discussions of politics, this point draws attention to the importance for politics of both intellectual and cultural studies, as well as accounts of the pursuit of political opportunity. The authors also underscore the constantly changing character of the categories they deal with, provided the existence of sufficient grounds. They are emphatic on a processual account, which acknowledges stages in a course of events and the varying significance of categories of explanation, whereas Remond's authors understate this side of a historical trajectory.

In general, the approach is attractive and well-directed, raising questions about the inspecific character of ever-broadening scope of 'political history' and the current fashion of a concern with values. Among the issues the argument raises, through, is doubt regarding the categories the authors employ (such as 'structures'), which are excessively reified. Some acknowledgement, certainly, of changing definitions and interpretations is called for after the linguistic turn in the social and human sciences and the general onslaught on structure. Re-examining the McAdam/Tarrow/Tilly account of the civil rights' movement itself, for instance, the observer must be struck by the uni-dimensional thrust of 'the collapse of the cotton economy'—which was received in a multitude of ways even if a pattern might be isolated in its general impact on Afro-Americans. Categories of investigation (culture, structure or opportunity) are handled in a manner which leaves unsolved the problem that historians have always found with social science—the poor attention to multi-layered interaction between categories.

To date, a number of solutions offer themselves to such problems, other than mere circumspection about the way the focus is defined, and the varied implications it might possess (for marginal social groups, colonized societies etc.). Firstly, and most convenient for the historian, is a return to narrative—i.e. in Simon Schama's scheme,³² to present an account, contradictions and all, with interweaving levels of explanation implicit in the 'story'. This has the added advantage that it accommodates chance, as well as 'structures', interpretations and uncertainties; it also incorporates mood, which the narrator might adjust, while retaining, to some degree, 'truth claims'. The main limitation of the approach, though, is that it fails to make room for precision, and for the rigorous character of the 'structures' and 'functions' which it respects. Such accommodation, surely, has been the main meeting point of history and social science in the formation of new political history in recent times, and the achievements of interaction are lost in narrativism, despite its value. A degree of circumspection might be welcome before taking recourse to a strategy which discards convincing examinations of powerful social consistencies.

In this regard, more interesting would be a focus on the 'interface' of approaches in the course of a processual account of political change: a point which McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly take up, but which they do not develop. This would involve attention to themes which lie at the intersection between 'meaning' and 'structure' (where the latter is defined as 'hard'). It is clearly with such a perspective in mind that Sewell demands 'event-ful' analysis,³⁴ with a focus on all the uncertainties and varied interpretations which make the historical event which has cultural and material implications. Here, the position taken by Sewell clearly serves a different function from the more standard analysis of Tilly (justified by Tarrow³⁵) where a typology of great events is considered rather than the explosive potential and repeated redefinition of a specific event. Sewell, however, might argue that less well-known events are as deserving of his style of treatment as events which

have attracted public attention. An inclusion of such occasions in a study of interacting structures and cultural phenomena would indicate the ragged edges of the 'consistencies' the historian might observe. A further point of interest, in breaking and refining a structured account, would be the individual response to changing political circumstance, not merely as an example of, but also as an indication of variance with trends and structures. Already a number of essays on the 'self' have laid the foundation for taking up such a focus³⁶; but, regrettably, they rarely attempt an integration of structure and 'dissonance'. As in the case of a multi-tiered analysis of events, incorporation of a social biography into social analysis of politics would indicate both the authority of structures as well as their jagged edges.

In addition to the attention to 'process' which McAdam/Tarrow/Tilly argue for, such interventions, together with a greater respect for narrative than has been common to 'new' historians, might bridge the gulf between explanations of politics oriented towards structure and opportunity and those which focus on meaning and culture. Preserving the legacy of new history, they would come to terms with the tangible issues raised by challengers of the recent past, without a recourse to internecine bickering which by and large obscures a pointed account of a problem area. It would also preserve a major achievement of McAdam/Tarrow and Tilly—i.e. to restore the precision of change to political affairs and to recover change of from the aporia to which it is increasingly consigned.

NOTES AND REFERENCE

1. I am grateful to the USIA and Prof. Sidney Tarrow for the opportunity they gave me in Summer 1996 to discuss many issues raised in this paper, at a seminar at Correll University. The differing approaches to new political history, which are the focus of discussion here, are neatly indicated in the variety of literature on the politics of mid Victorian and late Victorian Britain. This is shown in two recent review articles. See Dror Wahrman, 'The new political history: a review essay' in *Social History*, October 1996 and David Nicholls, 'The New Liberalism—after Chartism' in *Social History*, October 1996. The books that have attracted attention as major points of departure in history writing are M.C. Finn, *After Chartism: Class and Nation in English Radical Politics, 1848-1874*, (Cambridge University Press 1993), James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A study in English Political Culture c. 1815-1862* (Cambridge University Press 1993), James A. Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political language, Ritual and Symbol 1790-1850* (Oxford University Press, 1994), and Patrick Joyce, *Democratic Subjects: The self and the Social in 19th century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).
2. The phrase is Rene Remond's. See *Pour une nouvelle histoire politique* (Seuil 1988) (hereafter PUHP).
3. The Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences' definition of the term is 'any condition or state of affairs resultant from the operation of a unit of the type' under in consideration in terms of structure'.

4. Various writers have drawn attention to the importance of considering history (and its sources) as literature or discourse. Most well known is Michel Foucault—in theory in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and in practice in his various histories but most significantly in *The Order of Things*; equally well known now is Hayden White, who sets out many of his assumptions well in *Metahistory* (Johns Hopkins 1976). The necessity for attention to statements 'in dialogue' with each other was stressed by M.M. Bakhtin, whose last statement on the subject is his 'Towards a Methodology for the Human Sciences' which appears in M.M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and other late Essays* [ed. C. Emerson and Michael Holquist] (Univ. of Texas Press, Austin, 1986).
5. Historians have been divided concerning the evaluation of meaning, and there is a substantial debate on this in the quarrels over post-modernism. In *Social History*, this occurs in D. Mayfield and S. Thorne, 'Social history and its discontents: Gareth Stedman Jones and the politics of language' *Social History* (1992, 17), J. Lawrence and M. Taylor, 'The poverty of protest: Gareth Stedman Jones and the politics of language—a reply' *ibid.*, (1993, 18), P. Joyce, 'The imaginary discontents of social history: a note of response', *ibid.*, D. Mayfield and S. Thorne, 'Reply', *ibid.*, (1993, 18), J. Vernon, 'Who afraid of the linguistic turn? The politics of social history and its discontents', *ibid.*, (1994, 19). A similar debate occurs in *Past and Present*, L. Stone, 'History and post-modernism', *Past and Present* (1991, 131), P. Joyce, 'History and post-modernism I' and C. Kelly, 'History and post-modernism II' (*Past and Present* 1991, 133), L. Stone, 'History and post-modernism III' and G.M. Spiegel, 'History and post-modernism IV', *Past and Present* (1992, 135). None of the various contributors, however, are in doubt regarding the centrality of 'meaning' and its interpretation for a proper understanding of history: they merely disagree about the business of interpreting it.
6. The phrase is M.I. Lichbach's and quoted in D. McAdam, S. Tarrow and C. Tilly, 'A comparative synthesis on social movements and revolution: towards an integrated perspective', paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, 1996. I refer to the term as sociologists use it, as a factor which is 'hard' or 'material' and therefore as primary and determining and distinguished from culture. This is in keeping with the standard definition of structure in the International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences as 'a pattern' or 'an observable uniformity in terms of which action (or operation) takes place'. William Sewell has pointed to the difference in the sociologist's use of this term and the anthropologist's in 'A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency and Transformation' in *American Journal of Sociology*, 1992.
7. Sumit Sankar has echoed these sentiments in the field of modern Indian history, See Sumit Sankar, *Writing in Social History* (OUP, 1997). In a critique of culturist mono-dimensional trends in the writing of Indian history, Sankar argues for greater attention to 'contradictions within structures' from a dialectical perspective. Regrettably, like most Indian historians, he fails adequately to deal with the complexity of 'structures', leaving himself vulnerable to well-founded criticism from 'meaning-oriented' historians and social scientists who would be correct to argue that his critique is founded on a bad reading of their texts (since the latter often accommodate the

- multivocality Sankar demands of a representation). Sankar fails to specify that understanding cannot be based merely on the 'rules' with which communities and individuals function, without due attention to the 'resources' of such communities. See Note 4 above for the discussion of these issues.
8. PUHP, *op.cit.*
9. Berstein was the author of the distinguished *Histoire du parti radical* (Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1980/1982); Rioux was the author of *La France de la Quatrieme Republique*, 2 vols. (Seuil, 1980/1983).
10. Maurice Duverger, *Les Partis politiques* (Colin 1951).
11. Myron Weiner and Joseph La Palombera, *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton University Press 1969).
12. The texts are those cited in Jean Chariot, *Les Partis politiques* (Colin 1971).
13. Maurice Agulhon, *La Republique au village* (Seuil, 1979); *Le Cercle dans La France bourgeoise, 1818-1848* (Colin, 1977).
14. Antoine Prost, *Les Anciens Combattants et la Societe francaise, 1914-1939* (Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1977).
15. Prost was not only interested in sociability, as mentioned above, but was also the author of *Vocabulaire des proclamations electorales* (Paris, 1974). Prost refers to extensive work on political vocabulary (of uneven quality), developed by Pierre Lafon at Saint Cloud and other research groups, such as the sponsors of Marie Cotteret and Rene Moreau's study of the speeches of de Gaulle (published in Paris in 1969).
16. The implications of 'rules' are discussed in Sewell (1992) and in the work of Antony Giddens (see Note 27 below).
17. Sewell (1992), *op.cit.*, p. 12-13.
18. Geertz ranges well beyond mere text to establish his 'meaning', as do Levi Strauss, Marshall Sahlins and other imaginative anthropologists. See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York, Basic, 1973); Marshall Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason* (University of Chicago Press, 1976), *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities* (University of Michigan Press, 1981), *Islands of history*, University of Chicago Press (1985); Levi Strauss, Claude, *Structural Anthropology* (New York Basic, 1963), *The Savage Mind* (University of Chicago Press, 1966). Anthropologists who have applied themselves to historical subjects have also fought shy of a textual interpretation of meaning. See Victor Turner's imaginative account of 'liminality' in Mexican interpretations of independence in *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors* (Cornell University Press, 1974). E.P. Thompson's approach was less theorized, but equally eclectic, as in his *Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1963). The critique of the latter approach was voiced in the work of Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of class: studies in English working class history* (Cambridge University Press 1983).
19. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and (New York Vintage 1972) *The Order of Things* (New York, Vintage, 1973).
20. Charles Tilly, *The Vendee* (Harvard University Press, 1964); *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Prentice Hall 1978); *European Revolutions* (Blackwell, 1993).
21. T. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge University Press, 1979) and *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

22. T. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton University Press 1971).
23. M. Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Harvard University Press, 1965).
24. Jack Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1991).
25. Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984).
26. Mansoor Moaddel, 'Ideology as Episodic Discourse: The Case of the Iranian Revolution', in *American Sociological Review*, 1992.
27. K.M. Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 1990).
28. William Sewell, 'Historical Events as structural transformations: inventing revolution at the Bastille' in *Theory and Society* 1996.
29. Giddens' writing on structures has appeared in various publications. *New Rules of Sociological Method: A Positive Critique of Interpretive Sociologies* (London, 1976); *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1979); *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism., volume 1: Power, Property and the State* (London, Macmillan, 1981). His most relevant contribution in this regard, though, is clearly, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (University of California Press, Berkeley).
30. This refers to the school pioneered by Olson (*op.cit.*), and followed recently, in the study of social movements, by Dennis Chong, which stressed the contribution of calculation of benefits (as opposed, for instance, to deprivation) to decisions to join movements, where there was the admission though, that there were also "free riders" who did not make the calculation, but whose participation went under-theorized.
31. This refers to work associated (among others) with Michael Lipsky, P. Eisinger, Sidney Tarrow and Doug McAdam, which focuses on opportunities for change in political systems of any type.
32. Elsewhere, Tarrow explains the value of 'frames' for any understanding or explanation of political behaviour. The reference occurs in Tarrow's discussion in *Power in Movement* (Cambridge, 1994) of the importance of symbols for social mobilization and the significance for the study of a political system of the 'consensus around its legitimating symbols' (Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civil Culture, Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* [Sage, 1994]). The study of such aspects of culture, Tarrow points out here, does not indicate the character of their specific link to politics and collective action. At this level, Tarrow argues, there is a value in looking at 'frames', i.e. 'interpretive schemata' which make sense of experience. These constitute an important part of the social mechanism for absorbing and producing 'cultural meanings' in the course of the making of political action. What occurs often pivots on leaders who are responsible for the 'alignment' of schemata or 'frame'.
In their argument in the APSA paper, the three authors argue for integration of the study of political opportunity and 'framing' on the grounds that framing agents and their choices deserve attention.
33. S.M. Schama, *Citizens* (New York, 1988).
34. Sewell's demands are stated bluntly in his criticism of Tilly's and Skocpol's work in 'Three Temporalities: Towards an Eventful Sociology' in Terrence

- J. MacDonald (ed.) *The Historic turn in the Human Sciences* (University of Michigan Press 1996).
35. Tarrow answered Sewell's criticisms in 'The people's two rhythms: Charles Tilly and the study of contentious politics. A Review Article', in *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 1996.
36. See Joyce, *op. cit.* The ways of approaching studies of the self are indicated in Philippe Levillain's essay in Remond, *op. cit.* and in Peter Burke and Roy Porter (ed.), *Language, Self and Society: A Social History of Language* (Cambridge 1991). The respected comprehensive study of the subject is Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge 1989). See also J.D. Lyons, *The Invention of the Self* (1978), P.M. Spacks, *Imagining a Self* (Cambridge Mass. 1976); F.A. Nussbaum, *The Autobiographic Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth Century England* (1989); R. Elbaz, *The Changing Nature of the Self: A Study of Autobiographic Discourse* (1988); P. Dodd, *Modern Selves: Essays on Modern British and American Autobiography* (1986); J. Olney, *Metaphors of Self* (Princeton 1972), Regenia Gagnier, *Subjectivities: A history of Self representation in Britain 1832-1920* (Oxford 1991); Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: the Shaping of the Private Self* (1990); M. Carrithers, S. Collini and S. Lukes (ed), *The Category of the Person* (Cambridge 1985); J. Schotter and K.J. Green (ed.) *Texts of Identity* (1989).
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19. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and (New York Vintage 1972) *The Order of Things* (New York, Vintage, 1973).
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