



EXAMINE THE INFLUENCE OF PROTEST CULTURE ON MODERN LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

In the study of Culture movements are discussed: expanding the case base beyond the Culture reform movements of encompass other regions and types of movement; a theoretical synthesis that integrates protest with institutional politics and focuses on mechanisms and processes rather than causes and effects; a growing focus on events as units of analysis; and increasing integration of Culture psychological and cultural theories of Culture construction with structuralist accounts of movements. Taken together, they promise theory that is both broader in scope and better able to address the diversity of Culture movements. Protest as we know today may not have existed earlier. But the idea represented by this term was known to the people and the poets since time immemorial. They did express their resentment against unjust economic, Culture and religious situations. It may be, because there is an inherent tendency in man to protest. If this is so, then we know that with the passage of time thin non-conformist expression have assumed the dimension of a philosophy which in its ultimate analysis is a quest for freedom, liberty, and injustice in any given society throughout human history. In a society, protest provides human alternatives for safeguarding not only ones natural rights but also to ensure Culture change. The protest of an individual is often reflected as Culture protest. Protest is the awareness that arises when man confronts an unjust and inhuman situation, and decides to get rid of it by way of raising his voice against it and acting to remove it.

KEYWORDS: Social- Culture movements, movements, Protest Culture, Modern Literature.

INTRODUCTION

The basic ingredients of protest that naturally comes into conflict with the establishment are a consciousness regarding fundamental rights, a tendency to struggle, and a sense of independence and liberty. Protest is, thus, primarily the result of intense human consciousness, which involves values. It is both a manifestation of human concern and an endeavour to add meaning to human

existence by strengthening the concepts of Culture justice, equality, and liberty.

Protest has the quality of identifying itself with the downtrodden and the oppressed. We can say that it is a process of upholding human values as they cannot be taken as eternal and unchanging.

“Most frequently we make rearrangements in our value hierarchy; values once considered crucial become less relevant

and, therefore, less important while others, once relatively lower in our estimation take on new importance. Values do not have to be eternal and unchanging in order to be values". Protest as a value and as an effective medium will serve its purpose only if it is used with relevance to real situations obtained in actual life processes. Literature is a good medium to reflect such values through protest. A writer who while struggling or confronting the condition of his times and society, earns values in a new and fresh way and explores them in the context of real life situations. The result is that new values emerge when one is imbued with new consciousness, with an understanding of the prevailing Culture norms and belief structures of the individual and society. Some writers by rebelling try to bring in new forces of Culture change as Albert Camus commented 'Man, by rebelling, imposes in his turn a limit to history and at this limit the promise of a limit is born'.

The right of protest and resistance had been known to ancient Western thinkers and philosophers. They have contributed a lot to the formulation to these concepts. Charles Darwin (1809-1882) who propounded the theory of evolution; August Comte (1798-1857) who formulated and explained three stages of intellectual development-progress from the theological mode of thought through a metaphysical mode of thought; Herbert Spencer (1820- 1903) who, influenced by Charles Darwin, propounded the theory of Culture evolution; Karl Marx (1818-1883) who based his Culture theory on class conflict connecting it to the development of technology on the one hand, and the resultant changes in the production of

goods, and services and the relation among Culture classes on the other; all these people gave significant dimensions to the concept of protest that revolutionized the ancient and the medieval thinking patterns. These developments in understanding the socio-cultural-political contexts have, undoubtedly given new meaning to these concepts whereby we enter the modern age. Protest has the property of both negation and refusal in its preliminary stages but later on it transcends. It reaches out for new values and norms. Herbert Marcuse has aptly said "The radical refusal, the protest, appears in the way in which words are grouped and regrouped freed from their familiar use and abuse" (1972:103-104). Protest is deep rooted in human nature and it is also reflected in Culture behaviour and functioning. Internal pressures and external circumstances combine together for the realization of protest. Protest in literature is more of anticipation than an expression of a society. 'Avant garde' is the product of such thinking. Protest is individual and at the same time collective. Protest transcends the boundaries of reality.

In India, from the upanishadic down to the present age 'Varna Vyavasta' continues to be the cornerstone. It was, no doubt, hierarchical because it always differentiated between higher groups and lower groups. The caste system is one expression of this Culture hierarchy. There have been persistent attempts to make this structure more open and flexible. Non-vedic creeds of Jainism and Buddhism had been such great socio-religious movements which challenged almost all the canons of the Brahmanical concepts and the rigid Culture norms. By emphasising a moral

principle of conduct for the individual rather than ritual duties, Buddhism disengaged itself from the hierarchical independence of the caste system. This was the most Culture of religions. India has a long tradition of literary protest that has changed considerably with time i.e. as man's relations with his surroundings have changed; simultaneously the very spirit of literary protest and dissent has changed. In the medieval age, attempts were made to break the caste system. Bhakti movement deviation from the ritual belief system and the orthodox philosophy of brahminical Hinduism is quite evident. The Bhakti Movement of medieval India embodied a revolt against the inequality inherent in caste as well as against the intellectualism of the traditional paths to salvation (Moksha). Saints and Sufi poets of medieval period raised their voice against idolatory, the rigours of caste and showed in their writings the futility of such practices. They believed in love that transcends all barriers. This initial literature echoes the need for Culture change and freedom from the bondage of caste apartheid. In the modern age, one can discern corresponding artistic and literary revival in almost all the artistic, literary genres, forms and styles. Socio-cultural religious renaissance created a great resurgence in literature, music, painting and sculpture. Literary protest is related to the real life and the world around it. But it does not confine to it alone. It transcends through the subversive use of language, symbols, and images. Literary protest is multi-dimensional as it upholds certain values in a specific environment and is concerned with the ironies, contradictions and paradoxes

inherent in the expression of dissent, protest and freeform. A protest writer does not necessarily; seek inspiration from religion, philosophy, or the socio-political system. Among many protest writings, the writings of the backward classes in India call for minute attention. There is a deep sense of anguish, injury and resentment in their protest movements. Their ideologies are double-edged, expressing on the one hand feeling of dissatisfaction, dissent and protest with the existing situation (with an awareness of relative deprivation) and on the other working out a positive programme for removing the malady.

PROTEST AND CULTURE MOVEMENTS:

The field of Culture movements is broad, and no article of this length can possibly do justice to every significant trend. Even with our restricted scope, we have had to cut significant material to meet the word limits of this piece. In particular, we had to drop 50% of our original references, which would have placed the trends we identify in broader context and provided more empirical examples. Despite these limits, we are confident that the trends we highlight are among the most important. We treat the first two trends more briefly, and the other two in more detail. The first trend is that the case base underlying mainstream Culture movements theory is expanding beyond the reform movements of Anglo-American and Western Europe. Regionally, "general" theories are beginning to take account of Eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Substantively, ethnic conflict, democratization movements, and revolutions have been added to Culture

reform movements as central topics of concern, and concepts of regime-movement relationships and the organization of protest have been broadened to encompass authoritarian regimes and the complex dependency relations of nations in the world economy. This broader empirical base has fed into the second trend, a broad and unfinished attempt to rework the core theory of the relation between Culture movements and politics. Older theory focusing on the inputs and outputs of Culture movements as units of analysis is giving way to new theory which views movements as imperfectly bounded sets of processes and mechanisms capturing complex relations between movements and states. Changing theory has been linked to the third trend, increased use of event analysis in Culture movement research. Analyses of the distributions of events have long been part of their repertoire of movement research, but their use is growing and has led to new research on the interrelations of different kinds of acts over time. We give special attention to methodological and theoretical issues that arise because new media are the major source of event data. The fourth trend that needs to grow involves moving past the old structuralist vs. constructionist debates and an acceleration of the rapprochement between theories grounded in political sociology on the one hand and Culture psychology and cultural sociology on the other. This involves abandoning false dichotomies such as rational vs. emotional, political vs. psychological, material vs. cultural and growing appreciation of the underlying unities. We offer what we believe are some important clarifications among concepts and levels of

analysis in this area. In selecting these trends, we have omitted many important lines of work. What unifies these is that they are parts of the general project of developing a broader, more dynamic and fluid conception of the terrain of movement processes. Protest event analysis and Culture constructionist theory may seem to be at opposite ends of a theoretical continuum—certainly specific research projects tend to work on one or the other, and specific researchers in one stream all too often disparage the work in the other— but any valid conception of Culture movements must be able to encompass both.

CULTURE:

A cultural approach is needed to address this question. How does culture matter in accounting for the origins, trajectories and outcomes of Culture movements? Under what conditions is culture a constraint or facilitator of Culture movements? Under what circumstances does culture inspire or impede collective action? The answer to these questions depends on how we understand culture. In the last two decades, we have observed what Sewell (1999: 36) considers an “academic culture mania” set in several disciplines and sub-disciplines that have produced numerous definitions and operationalization of the concept of culture. Following Sewell, there are two fundamentally distinct meanings of the term culture. The first is a theoretical category: culture (in the singular) is contrasted with some other abstract category of Culture life that is not culture, such as economy, politics or biology. In this sense, culture is a realm of Culture life defined in contrast to some other

noncultural realm or realms. The second meaning is a concrete, bounded body of beliefs and practices associated to an identifiable society or Culture group. In this sense, scholars talk of cultures (in plural) as distinct worlds of meaning.

In the first sense culture is used to mean that Culture processes are not the mere results of political, economic or Culture structures. This challenges dichotomous conceptions – such as culture versus structure, cultural versus instrumental rationality, cultural versus political goals of Culture movements – that usually emphasize the second part of the duality at the cost of the analysis of their interaction, or at least a more careful analysis of cultural dimensions.

In the second sense, culture stands for the symbols and signs, whose meaning has a generalized status, provide categories for understanding, relate and sort elements of Culture life in hierarchical orders, as well as mediate between and blend with structure and action. The meanings attached to signs and symbols are subject to contention and reinterpretation. The bounded sets of differences between the meanings of signs and symbols that stand for things and relations in Culture life constitute cultures (plural). Thus, cultures in this sense allow us to identify and pin down specific meanings a given society or Culture group attributes to things and Culture relations and analyze how they favor or constrain Culture movements and their practices at different points of its life-course.

Thus, culture is not a set of independent variables that affect certain dependent

variables. Most movement dimensions can be reinterpreted from a culturalist point of view. Movements have their origins and are shaped within dominant cultures. Movements challenge dominant meanings thus transforming mainstream culture and institutions. Movements create their own culture that may facilitate or impede mobilization, resistance, recruitment and solidarity. Movements construct ends of action within cultural templates. Movements find means ('tools') for action from host cultures. Movements perform and produce culture through the symbols they create and the public behavior of their members. Movements produce cultural goods in the form of narratives, texts and myths. States may appropriate popular culture to create a mass base for politics.

Emotions: Berezin (2001) stresses that identities have an emotional component. Few scholars of Culture movements defend the binary opposition of emotion and reason, but a full incorporation of emotions into movement theory has lagged the incorporation ideational constructions. As Benford (1997) points out, frame analysts have ignored emotions, thus failing to elaborate on the mediating role that emotions have in the communication and interpretation that goes on among movements and its publics. Older collective behavior theories assumed a discontinuity between rational ordinary behavior and emotional collective behavior, and sought to explain it. Culture movement theories built in the 1970s reacted against the "myth of the madding crowd", denied the alleged discontinuity between individual and collective action, and stressed the rationality and political goals of Culture movements. Resource

mobilization theory assumed rational actors weigh costs and benefits of participation vis-à-vis non-participation, and pursued goal-oriented action constrained and enabled by the availability of resources at their disposal. Political process models focus upon the relations between movements and the state, and generally lack any explicit Culture psychological model, but tacitly assume rational action and a direct relationship between material conditions and subjective interests. Rationalists recognized hope or “cognitive liberation” as the probability of making a difference, a necessary component of rational action.

Even as emotions are incorporated into Culture movement’s theory, that theory has to acknowledge the dichotomization of emotion and reason in much of the larger society. Feminists contend that separating passion and reason not only dichotomizes thought and feeling but also elevates ‘abstract masculinity’ over women’s standpoint. Feminist scholars have been vocal critics of the rationalist bias in Western thinking that privileges rational, independent, self-interested action over action that is driven by emotion, undertaken collectively, and motivated by altruism or the desire to affirm the group. Feminist groups try to channel emotions tied to women’s subordination (fear, shame, resignation) into emotions conducive to protest (anger). The rationalist bias pervades the culture and affects movements’ collective identities. Movements perceived as emotional are often not considered respectable. To gain respectability movement activists may develop a ‘vocabulary of emotions’ to rationalize their participation to others and

to themselves. The animal rights activists Groves (1995) studied in the southern United States reproduced organizationally the dominant gender division of emotion: recruiting men was considered a strategic device to bring credibility to the movement because men were believed less emotional and more rational than women. As a consequence, male activists were often chosen for spokesperson and leadership positions while women tended to be overlooked for those positions.

CULTURE MOVEMENTS AND CULTURE CAPITAL

While Culture movement research has consistently expanded in the last years, analyses of movement outcomes are still largely unsatisfactory. Analysts have often set themselves either tasks that were virtually impossible to achieve, such as the assessment of movements’ impact over broad Culture and political changes; or, conversely, too narrow goals, such as the evaluation of the effects of specific protest campaigns or movement organizations. Both strategies have somehow failed to grasp the complexity of Culture movements as multidimensional phenomena. As an alternative, I suggest we adopt a mesolevel perspective, focusing on changes in the structural location of movement actors (individuals and/or organizations) in broader Culture networks. This approach assumes that Culture influence is usually related to the position that actors occupy in Culture networks.

More specifically, the influence of Culture movements at a given political phase is dependent on their structural position, i.e.,

on the solidity of the linkages within the movement sector as well as—more crucially—of the bonds among movement actors, within their Culture milieu, and with cultural and political elites. The impact of a given movement or set of movements will thus be assessed in the light of changes in the relative centrality of its components in various Culture networks. Structural position will affect movement actors' impact on both political decisions and cultural production. Rather than concentrating on movements' direct effects on Culture change—very difficult to assess unless we focus on very narrow processes—emphasis should be on modifications in the structural preconditions of influence for Culture movement actors.

FORMS OF MOVEMENT-GENERATED CULTURE CAPITAL

In order to illustrate the argument presented above, I will distinguish between the political and cultural impact of Culture movements, and between their internal and external impact. By political impact I refer to the complex of activities meant to affect all stages of the political and policy process. By cultural impact I mean the even broader set of actions meant to shape the processes by which contemporary societies produce and reproduce moral standards, information, knowledge, and life practices.⁷ The "internal vs. external" distinction separates the impact of movement action on their chances to mount further challenges at later stages (internal impact) from the movement's capacity to build bridges to their Culture environment. On the one hand, movements consist of more or less

loose networks of actors who, in spite of their heterogeneity, exchange resources and information and share solidarity and beliefs. In this perspective, assessing the outcomes of a Culture movement—even better, of a sustained series of protest activities and/or countercultural initiatives—entails assessing these networks at the conclusion of a wave of collective action. The impact of collective action will be stronger where permanent bonds of solidarity have emerged during the conflict. It will be weaker, in contrast, where collective action has consisted mainly of ad hoc, instrumental coalitions, without generating specific new linkages. In the former case, the newly created Culture capital is expected to have an impact on movements' capacity to mobilize resources for political action at later stages. It will also affect the production and circulation within the movement of ideas, cultural practices, and alternative lifestyles. On the other hand, movement actors' chances to be influential will also depend on the extent and strength of their linkages to their environment, in particular to political and cultural elites. In this perspective, Culture movement impact will be higher when the conclusion of a wave of collective action will see a greater integration of movement leaders and activists within elite circles (both nationally and locally), or simply within the associational networks of their societies, than was the case before collective action started. Movement impact will be similarly higher the stronger the ties of movement intellectuals to the Culture circles (mass media, corporate cultural operators, and intelligentsia)

where dominant interpretations of reality are generated.

CONCLUSION

Culture movement analysts have traditionally treated Culture networks as predictors of collective action. In this paper I have reversed the causal order of the relationship and have focused on Culture movements' capacity to generate new ties and solidarities. In particular, I have suggested that the concept of Culture capital provides a useful analytical tool for understanding different types of movement influence, and assessing Culture movements' potential to effect political and cultural change. By facilitating communication and strengthening trust and solidarity, Culture capital increases actors' control over their own lives. There is no reason why this general principle should not apply to Culture movements. To the contrary: as political challengers and/or advocates of cultural innovation, Culture movements both rely crucially on previous Culture capital and have to be able to generate new forms of it if they are to exert a lasting influence over their Culture environment. Event-based studies should continue to grow as one of the best empirical and theoretical approaches for testing and expanding theory focusing on mechanisms and processes. Finally, structuralist and constructivist theories should become integrated. Researchers should spend less time criticizing other approaches for what they did not say, and devote attention to understanding how structures constrain Culture construction, and how Culture construction gives meaning to structures. Scholars should recognize the differences between the

Culture psychological and cultural traditions and, thus, be able more explicitly to draw on both as they develop their theories. Knowledge-building requires a division of labor. Event-based studies and Culture constructionist theory are different projects, but both are crucial to the larger complex project of developing better theory for Culture movement's processes. Nevertheless, we believe that each can learn from the other and there are likely to be points of at least partial convergence. There are qualitative researchers focused on events and quantitative researchers focused on the construction of ideas. Both events studies and constructionist studies recognize that a "Culture movement" is a loosely-bounded phenomenon that changes and evolves in dynamic interaction with other elements in a field. Breaking movements down into events is one possible way to get a research handle on unfolding construction processes.

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