

central role of the parties as political players, as well as other notions complementing it and relating socialism to freedom, justice, and solidarity.

The second section of the book addresses the learning process of the SI both at the organizational level and regarding the articulation of specifically political strategies, the focus now being placed on the Latin American context and on action taken so as to influence it and be influenced by it. With such regional democratization, it is not just the prevailing geopolitical logics that are altered; certain subjects and issues initially concerning these specific countries could also acquire a place on the international agenda. Since then, the north–south confrontation, economic inequalities, gender inequalities, development, and environmental protection have become subjects of international concern.

Although the turning point in this change was marked by the Caracas Congress and the nomination of Willy Brandt as President of the SI in 1976, Pedrosa recalls the contributions made since 1955 by the SI Latin American Secretariat under the leadership of Humberto Maiztegui who, disseminating information about the different Latin American realities and putting the social democrat leaders of Latin America in contact with one another and with their European counterparts, helped show that the best way to strengthen the SI and to have effective power was to encourage the constitution of a network of formal and informal relationships at all organizational levels.

Finally, another contribution of great importance in Pedrosa's book is its reference to the strategies deployed by the SI in Latin America, extending from the direct involvement of the SI in sending open support missions to its affiliated members in the region to the opening of the institutional flowchart in order to involve Latin American parties and political leaders in the decision-making process and to use informal relationships to meet the challenges arising in changing contexts. Thus, the SI became a flexible and influential space, still fundamentally political, with the consequence that SI internal alliance processes based on personal affinities ended up combined with consensus and conciliatory resolutions in the event of disputes, conflict, and internal divergence.

In short, *La otra izquierda* opens a new direction often ignored when social research projects are undertaken: its approach suggests that historical and political analyses cannot be limited to the specific study of events and ideas. On the contrary, for such analyses to be balanced and comprehensive, account must be taken of the political subjectivities of the players involved in a transformative project and who, for its positioning, developed intellectual, organizational, and strategic creativity.

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Those Iranian protests that make international headlines are driven mostly by popular demands for political and civil liberties. In 2011 and 2012 a number of protests emerged around a relatively new concern among Iranians. For some years, environmental organizations had warned about the shrinkage of Lake Urmia in north-western Iran

(Azerbaijan region). The lake has lost 60 per cent of its water due to the building of dams and the re-canalization of rivers for industrial and agricultural businesses. As a result, decreasing oxygen content and salt crystallization threaten one of Iran's most important ecological biosystems, which is home to brine shrimps and a variety of migratory birds such as flamingos, pelicans, and spoonbills.

These protests not only signified an increasing consciousness about environmental issues among sections of Iranian society, they also reflected the existence of civil society organizations that try to address those issues through collective action. Moreover, the active involvement of some local activists calling for the recognition of Azeri ethnic rights, and of activists from the Green Movement, which emerged after the contested results of the 2009 presidential elections, reveals the complex interaction between environmental, social, and political demands.

Given the relative newness of environmentalism in Iran and its increasing significance, Simin Fadaee's book is a timely and insightful contribution to Iranian and social movement studies. Based on her fieldwork in Tehran and the northern city of Rasht, two main centres of environmental activism, Fadaee provides an overview of the environmentalist movement in Iran in relation to two other objectives of this concise book. By exploring how modern social movements have developed in twentieth-century Iran, she identifies the new nature of the environmentalist movement. Moving from empirical to more theoretical grounds, Fadaee also examines the relevance of the theories of Alain Touraine and Alberto Melucci in explaining the new environmentalist movement in Iran as a "new social movement".

Fadaee's succinct accounts of the Constitutional Revolution (1905–1909), the movement for oil nationalization (1951–1953), the 1978–1982 revolution, and the reform movement that emerged in the period following the 1997 election provide a well-documented introduction to the history of social movements in modern Iran. However, her account of the socio-political developments of the 1940s and the nationalization movement they gave rise to omit one significant aspect. Fadaee identifies "the new middle class", "the intelligentsia", and "the lower middle class" as the "three main social groups [that] were at the centre of social changes and mobilization during this period". This is to discount the pivotal role played by workers in this period. The Central Council of Federated Trade Unions of Iranian Workers and Toilers (CCFTU) was established in 1944, and by 1946 its membership had risen to 350,000. In that year, oil workers organized mass demonstrations and strikes, publicly demanding the nationalization of the country's oil industry. In 1951 oil workers once again took strike action and were joined by other workers, providing essential clout to the oil nationalization movement. Unfortunately, this glossing over labour activism continues in the narratives of the 1978–1982 revolution and the post-1997 reform movement.

Fadaee's book is at its best when analysing the environmentalist movement. The author traces the emergence of environmentalism back to the structural changes of the 1990s that transformed the way in which "people think and act", and the reform movement that emerged in the second half of the same decade. She provides a categorized list of the most important environmental organizations, such as the Green Front of Iran and the Mountain Environmental Protection Association. Her analysis of these organizations provides a good insight into their social and individual dynamics. The strong link between environmentalism and the women's movement, for instance, is highlighted by the Women's Society for the Campaign against Environmental Pollution. In terms of social composition, these environmental groups draw their members mostly from the ranks of the educated and professional urban middle class.

During the presidency of the reformist Mohammad Khatami (1997–2005), more than 600 environmental NGOs were formed, partly due to the establishment of the Public Participation Bureau in the Iranian Department of Environment, which aimed to assist NGOs. This reflects the complex relationship between NGOs and civil society in general

on the one hand, and the state on the other. As Fadaee points out, “there is a paradoxical attitude among the actors” as they combine “hostility” and “acceptance” towards the government. Elsewhere, however, she asserts that “Iranian environmental groups are anti-systemic because their demands cannot be easily met within existing institutional arrangements”, which constitute a semi-authoritarian state. Whereas some passages suggest that civil society is a benign force in itself, others argue, correctly in my view, that civil society is a “battleground on which different conflicts” play out.

The book’s final chapter assesses Touraine’s and Melucci’s “new social movement” theories as an analytical tool for making sense of the environmental movement in Iran. According to both authors, “old social movements” were situated in industrial societies. However, with the advent of the post-industrial society, conceptualized as the “programmed society” by Touraine and the “complex society” by Melucci, the working class lost its central location in social conflicts, which became increasingly centred on post-materialist issues such as identity, culture, access to information, and ecology. In terms of goals, new social movements do not aim to achieve social transformations through the capture of power but struggle to create an autonomous social space vis-à-vis the state. In this Touraine/Melucci model, new social movements are deeply connected to post-modernity and civil society. The “subject” is seen as an offspring of modernity that the individual defends in the face of social domination. As the forms of domination alter in post-industrial society, so do the modalities of resistance. In this narrative, civil society is the field of the public space within which social movements operate.

Although accepting many of Touraine’s and Melucci’s theoretical propositions, Fadaee criticizes them for advancing a Eurocentric approach to “new social movements”. She rejects the view that modernity is a coherent socio-economic and cultural project emanating in Europe around the seventeenth century. Drawing on Shmuel Eisenstadt’s notion of “multiple modernities”, but rejecting his claim that it is a European achievement, she argues that “rational mastery” and individual “autonomy” as the two defining aspects of modernity should be interpreted in multiple ways, depending on their context. “Therefore”, she writes, “Iran’s experience of modernity was forged through a dialectical relation between the forcing powers of European modernity and the contextual realities of Iranian society”. In view of this critique, the chapter on the history of social developments and movements in Iran would have benefited from a reference to the Babi revolt of 1848–1850 – a tremendously important protest movement that gave rise to home-grown intellectual ideas that inspired prominent participants in the Constitutional Revolution.

The book’s critical stance towards the Eurocentric bias of the Touraine/Melucci model does not, however, allow it really to move beyond the model’s shortcomings when it poses the question “To what extent can a European theory explain the situation in a non-European country?”. First, moving beyond eurocentrism requires that the applicability of Touraine’s and Melucci’s theories to a European context are not taken for granted, but are subjected to critical examination. These theories have been criticized for a number of reasons. As some authors have pointed out, there is more continuity between “old” and “new” social movements than these theories allow. The peace movement and the women’s movement, for instance, predate post-industrial society. One of the most famous slogans of the workers’ movements, “bread and roses”, illustrates that material and non-material issues have often been entwined within the “old” movements. The extent and causes of their decoupling since the 1980s should be critically examined both in terms of structural and conjunctural factors, just as their rejoinder in the recent anti-globalization and anti-austerity movements.

Second, after identifying some useful aspects of the Touraine/Melucci model in the Iranian context, Fadaee makes two pertinent observations about its limited applicability. She argues that, unlike what is expended in this model, post-materialist and anti-consumption values did not play a significant role in the emergence of the environmentalist movement in

Iran. Other factors, such as the desire to achieve political change through new channels, played a bigger role. Moreover, unlike this model's assumption that new social movements function separately from the state, "the new Iranian movements were born out of the reform movement, which is a political movement initially inspired from within the government [...]. So separation of politics and civil society becomes irrelevant in the Iranian case."

Fadaee suggests that the applicability of the Touraine/Melucci model to non-European contexts would increase if we went beyond their interpretation of the concepts of modernity and civil society, because beneath the social structures lie the historical past, different trends of modernity, and various types of globalization. Although this is a fruitful line of reasoning, a problem emerges when it is advanced as a solution to the theoretical dilemma that "our understanding of social structures should either be based on a few major concepts or ideas, which are general and global, or it should limit itself to a specific region or historical context". The counter-proposition could be made, of course, that it is possible to employ general or universal concepts, such as capitalism, with due attention being paid to their regional or historical specificity. The specific ways in which state-society relations have developed in Iran, for instance, could provide a more concrete explanation for the paradoxes and ambiguities of the environmental movement and civil society in their relation to political structures.

Despite these limitations, Fadaee provides a wealth of empirical and theoretical insights into the history of social movements in Iran in general and the environmental movement in particular. This is a refreshing and necessary contribution to the Iranian studies literature that has often privileged the analysis of large political and economic studies at the expense of social dynamics and conflicts. The book's critical engagement with Touraine's and Melucci's theories, and its comparative aspect, will not disappoint students and scholars who are interested in "new social movements". Moreover, the book's straightforward style of writing and explanation of historical and theoretical issues make it recommendable to readers who are not professionally engaged with Iran or with social movements.

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