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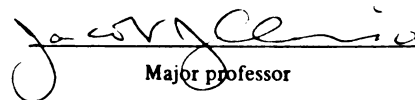
New Social Movements and Identity
In the Case of La Colonia Guerrero

presented by

Akemi Kamakura

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NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND IDENTITY: IN THE CASE OF
LA COLONIA GUERRERO

By

Akemi Kamakura

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ABSTRACT

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND IDENTITY: IN THE CASE OF LA COLONIA GUERRERO

BY

Akemi Kamakura

In this thesis, new social movements (NSMs) theory will be examined by using La Union de Vecinos de la Colonia Guerrero (UVCG), a housing association in Mexico City, as a case study. As feminist theory suggests, actors need to be situated within larger economic, political, and social contexts, thus, the background of Mexico, Mexico City, and gender characterization in Mexican society are presented. With concrete understanding of the poor Mexican women's condition, their perception change ascribed to the participation in UVCG will be analyzed. I will apply an identity paradigm which pays close attention to the process by which actors of social movements build collective identity. Women's pursuit of practical interests and the development of strategic gender interests will be elicited through women's own analysis of their changing perceptions. Based on the case study, I conclude with suggestions for the future directions of NSMs theory with regard to both identity and resource mobilization paradigms.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem	1
Approaches to New Social Movements in Anthropology	4
New Social Movements Theory	7
The Focus of Study	12
Research Design	13
Organization of the Thesis	19
II. LITERATURE REVIEW ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND MEXICO	21
Origins of New Social Movements	22
Rationale for the Emergence of New Social Movements	22
Actors	25
Orientations and Characteristics	26
Level of Struggle	30
Feminist theory	33
III. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION IN MEXICO AND MEXICO CITY	36
North American Free Trade Agreement	36
Mexican Economy	38
Quality of Life in Mexico City	43
Women, Organizing.	46
IV. LA UNION DE VECINOS DE LA COLONIA GUERRERO	50
Foundation	52
The Growth Period	54
Members	57
Organization	57
Finance	60
Activities	61
Living Condition in the Shelters	65
Problems of UVCG	69
Interview with Carmen	70

V.	REBUILDING GENDER IDENTITY	77
	Practical Interests	78
	Strategic Interests	84
	Strategic Gender Interests	86
	Interplaying Interests	90
VI.	CONCLUSIONS	92
	Suggestions	93
	Further Studies	99
APPENDIX	102
BIBLIOGRAPHY	104

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Esta marcha no es de fiesta! Es de lucha y de protesta!"

"This march isn't about a party! It is about struggle and protest!"

THE PROBLEM

Thousands of Mexicans, old, young, females, fewer males, with banners, occupied Reforma Street, one of the busiest streets in downtown Mexico City on November 8, 1995. It was a large-scale protest, demonstrating against the lack of proper housing in the city. Hundreds of police with guns surrounded the area to stop the protesters, including me, for marching toward the Mexican White House.

These protests and marches in Latin American cities have been quite visible for at least a few decades. Their movements should not be dismissed as trivial, since they often reflect large and complicated issues; at the same time, they themselves contain important analytical elements. Recently, theorists have paid more attention to the growing urban social movements; this new social movements (NSMs) theory is the theme of this thesis.

By the year 2000, more than half the population in this world will be living in large cities of more than one million residents (Thorbek 1994:10). This is partly because many cities have been experiencing rapid industrialization and commercialization and thus, have been attracting myriads of migrants in search of job opportunities. Poverty in the

rural area, stemming from "fragmentation of holdings, environmental degradation and over cropping (Barai 1993:165)", is another stimulus to rural/urban migration. According to Daksha Barai (1993), 40 percent of population growth in urban areas is accounted for by migration from rural area. Coupled with a sharp decline in death rates, populations of many cities have been mushrooming at the rate of 5 percent per year, which results in a doubling of population every fourteen years (Gilbert 1985:15). The attraction of cities has been evident for decades and it will continue into the future as well.

The most striking point about the city, Manuel Castells (1982:251) writes, is that it does not function without state intervention in the sphere of "the production, distribution, and management of the collective consumption of goods and services." Examples given as collective consumption are "housing, health, schools, transportation," potable water, garbage collection, and drainage. Moreover, the rate of states' provision of these services is not catching up with the extremely high speed of urbanization in most of the large cities, especially large cities in underdeveloped countries. Thus, people face housing shortages, extremely dense populations, degradation of their living environment, decreasing job opportunities, and increasing gaps in income distribution. In fact in the metropolitan area of Mexico City, it is estimated that 577,000 housing units are urgently needed. This is the

equivalent of 44.6 percent of the existing housing stock (Covington 1990:20). Thus, Castells came to the conclusion that cities naturally "create a basis for social protest movements (Thorbek 1994:200)." In the 1970s Mexico City saw the springing up of low-income neighborhood organizations and housing associations in response to the housing shortages. These organizations are good examples of what are now being called New Social Movements (NSMs).

This study is an attempt to examine the movements by the poor, specifically one housing association, La Union de Vecinos de la Colonia Guerrero (UVCG), in Mexico City in the context of NSMs theory as used by Tilman Evers, Alain Touraine, Doug McAdam, and others. As an anthropological study, a micro-level approach will be taken. In other words, people's own perspectives, in this case the perspectives of the members of the housing association, play a crucial role in the analysis. This approach should overcome the problem that the macro-level approach tends to fall into; that is, extreme generalization. In anthropology, generalization is sought without neglecting the uniqueness of the individual cases.

This investigation of the housing association will address the following questions:

- 1) How do members define the objectives of their movements?
- 2) What are their expectations of these associations?
- 3) How were their perceptions of themselves affected by participating in the movements?

The NSMs theorists, Arturo Escobar and Sonia Alvarez (1992:319), urged "researchers to investigate the production of meanings by movement participants and the role of these meanings in identity construction and political practices." The above questions fulfill the mandate of Escobar and Alvarez. People's own perspectives about themselves as well as my own analysis will be presented.

APPROACHES TO NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Early studies by anthropologists tended to focus on rural remote areas of the world and they also tended to treat these cultures as static. It was not until the late 1950s and early 1960s that the aspects of relatedness with other societies and of change were paid attention. Some anthropologists started to treat complex or urban societies as their focus of study and began to tackle current issues such as urbanization. Let us trace the transition of major anthropological works in the area of urbanization and social movement in order to see the contrast between earlier works and the works of NSMs theorists.

Oscar Lewis is one of the precursors who conducted anthropological research in the cities and in modern settings. In his classic works ["Five Families (1959)" and "The Children of Sanchez (1961)"], Lewis examined families who lived in Mexico City. He formed the concept of the "culture of poverty" which perceives poor families' lack of political consciousness and aspiration as products of the poor community itself. Lewis argues that the poor possess

distinct characteristics formed by the environment and that these peculiar characteristics are passed down from generation to generation.

Janice Perlman, in her work "The Myth of Marginality (1976)," strongly criticized Lewis's concept of the culture of poverty. In her study of *favelas* (or slums) in Rio de Janeiro, she found that the inhabitants were not distinct from the richer population of Rio de Janeiro in degrees of fatalism or pessimism. She excellently grasped squatters' "complex reality (1)" without falling into stereo-typing them. However, she did not perceive the dynamics of their activities to the same degree as current NSMs theorists. Hence, she did not conceptualize favela residents as actors having the potential to change the system.

In the 1970's, anthropologists also became interested in the migration of peasants to cities. William Mangin's work, "Peasants in Cities (1970)," is one example. His work was different from traditional anthropological work in its analysis of peasants in urban settings and its delving into the problems accompanying urbanization. He focused his analysis on peasants' capacities to function in the urban setting. He described Latin American squatters fighting with the police, building their own houses on invaded land, and so on. Although in his work he portrayed people's initiatives, he interpreted them as adaptations, not changes. The aspect of the people, conforming to the city, was highlighted, but the aspect of the people, struggling to

break away from the standard and to change the status quo, which NSMs theorists highlight, was not. Mangin writes that squatters "seem to gain a confidence and strength from the activity that enables them to become a functioning part of the... society... (xxxiii)."

Eric Wolf's "Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century (1969:276)" is another example of a non-traditional anthropological peasant study; it deals with a heightened stage of social movement, i.e. revolution. Peasants were not depicted as powerless, but their movements were analyzed as if they were solely a by-product of history. Initiatives from the people's side were not fully understood. For Wolf, explaining revolutions in terms of "the retention of 'tradition' or the advent of 'modernity'" is too "abstract." Instead, he advocates looking at solely "concrete historical experience."

What differentiates Wolf's view from the NSMs theory is his view of states as molders of actors. Furthermore, he views "class (xii)" as very important, which is another criticism which NSMs theorists find inadequate for analysis of current movements. For example, as Touraine (1985) points out in Marxist approaches, "actors...are submitted to a logic of domination and are unable to be real actors." Diane Davis (1994:377) also criticizes Marxist approaches and argues that they have "relied heavily on analyses of class relationships, political parties and/or the state.

None has focused on social mobilization alone to chart fundamental political outcome."

The eighties saw a focus on "practice, praxis, action" and "agent, actor, person (Ortner 1994:388)". This trend reflected the complex relationships between the system and the actors. People are not treated as passive anymore. James Scott, in his work "Weapons of the Weak (1985)," for example, attempts to elicit meanings in people's practices and beliefs. The poor's subtle but active resistance was clearly depicted. However, his analysis on the issue was restricted to class struggle.

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS THEORY

Alan Knight (1992:81) writes that "[T]he contemporary period...has witnessed the development of new social movements that represent a significant departure from their historical predecessors." NSMs theory treated people's practices as a point of departure and argues that social movements since the late sixties saw a new phase in terms of the actors and the character of their movement.

Some scholars also perceive newness in their way of approaching to social movements. Diane Davis (1994:375-376) writes "[t]he underlying theoretical premise of ...[NSMs] approach is that challenges to the state from social movements are a principal driving force of political change in modern society." Davis contends that NSMs theory takes a people-centered approach in analyzing politics and gives

credit to people for their capability of organizing and acting in order to take control of their own destiny.

Alain Touraine (1985) similarly welcomes NSMs theory for its realistic treatment of movements. Touraine was not satisfied with earlier analysis by structural Marxists, for perceiving people as "prisoners of a system (767)." He did not perceive people as totally dominated by the system and unable to act. Rather, for him, social movements are "defined as an agent of conflict for the social control of the main cultural patterns (785)." What he focuses is that culture or society is actively molded by people's practices such as social movements.

Arturo Escobar (1992:171) is also comfortable with the approach taken by NSMs theory. He writes "for the first time, (postindustrial) society is the result of a complex set of actions that society performs on itself." For him, society is both the molder and the molded.

There are two distinct paradigms in NSMs theory: the resource mobilization approach and the identity approach. Those views that perceive newness in today's social movements are primarily presented by the scholars oriented to the identity approach. Some scholars using the resource mobilization orientation even avoid using the term, new social movements. They sometimes refer to the identity approach as new social movement approach.

The resource mobilization approach, which is more prevalent in the U.S., is influenced by Mancur Olson and

focuses heavily on the "strategic rationality of collective action (Cohen 1985:677)." Its point of departure is considerably different from that of the conventional one. According to Bert Klandermans and Sidney Tarrow (1988: 4-7), in the conventional study of social movements, the existence of grievances in a society was considered to cause social movements. However, in the resource mobilization approach, "the availability of resources and opportunities for collective action were considered more important than grievances in triggering social movement formation."

Anthony Oberschall (1973:28-29), who takes the resource mobilization approach, explains that resources can range from "materials- jobs, income, savings, and the right to material goods and services- to nonmaterial resources- authority, moral commitment, trust, friendship...." According to him, "resources are constantly being created, consumed, transferred, assembled and reallocated, exchanged, and even lost." He refers to these processes as "resource management." His point is that people who make decisions weigh the positive and negative outcome and that it is possible to predict their decision by the measure of "rationality."

Klandermans and Tarrow (1988:6-7) point to expectations of success as an important unit of analysis in the resource mobilization approach. Factors such as "political opportunity structure..., the influence of sympathetic third parties..., and influential allies available to challengers"

were discussed as leading factors to successful social movements. Accordingly, this approach "began to move resource mobilization theory closer to the analysis of politics and political interaction."

An important point to note is that scholars who take the resource mobilization approach, including Oberschall (1973), perceive collective actions taken by states and by the ordinary people as sharing the same nature: rationally motivated collective actions attempting to maximize their resources.

Criticizing the resource mobilization approach, Touraine (1985:769) writes:

[t]he notion of resource mobilization has been used to transform the study of social movements into a study of strategies as if actors were defined by their goals and not by the social relationships- and especially power relationships- in which they are involved.

He "refuse[s] to separate cultural orientations from social conflicts...and [he gives] a basic role to the notion of social movements, defined as an agent of conflict for the social control of the main cultural patterns (784)." In other words, he sees fundamental differences between collective actions taken by the states for the maintenance of the status quo and collective actions taken by the ordinary people who challenge the system.

Klandermans and Tarrow (1988:9) also point out that the approach taken by the resource mobilization theory is "neglecting the structural precondition of movements- that

is, for focusing too much on the 'how' of social movements and not enough on the 'why'..." Also, it "ignores the social-psychological bases of social movements...and how new resources emerge in the production of collective action."

Ton Salman (1990:111) points out ultimate weakness of the resource mobilization approach. He states:

It proves rather difficult to *compare* the weight of different resources: often, they are of such a different nature (e.g. money, knowledge and police forces versus commitment, social legitimacy and numbers), that they cannot be weighed comparatively.

Another approach, the identity approach, differs significantly from the resource mobilization approach. First of all, it "seeks explanation for the rise of the social movements of the past two decades in the appearance of new grievances (Klandermans and Tarrow 1988:7)." This is why it is sometimes referred to as new social movements approach.

The focus of the identity approach is on "the processes by which social actors construct collective identities as a means to create democratic spaces for more autonomous action (Escobar and Alvarez 1992:317)." In a similar fashion, Jean Cohen (1985:690) argues that the identity approaches "look into the processes by which collective actors create the identities and solidarities they defend." In addition, the identity approach attempts "to assess the relations between adversaries and the stakes of their conflicts" and "to analyze the structural and cultural developments that contribute to such heightened reflexivity."

Klandermans and Tarrow (1988:7-9) list some of the key elements in the identity approach: values, action forms, constituency, new aspirations, and satisfaction of needs endangered. According to them, participants of NSMs "seek a new relationship to nature, to one's own body, to the opposite sex, to work, and to consumption," by "unconventional forms of action." "Marginalized" strata of people or people in the "new middle class" are participating with new aspirations such as "post material values" and are trying to struggle against "a loss of identity."

The identity approach is criticized for "not paying enough attention to the 'how' of mobilization (Klandermans and Tarrow 1988:9; Escobar and Alvarez 1992:317)." It does not address the resources that enabled social movements to be started, be maintained, and be expanded.

In this paper, I have chosen to focus on the identity approach. This is because one of the purposes of this paper is to show people's value changes and that people's perceptions will be more explicit by taking the identity approach. As I describe in greater detail in the following chapter, however, even among the scholars who are more inclined to the identity approach, their understandings of this approach vary considerably.

THE FOCUS OF STUDY

In my case study, the following questions are addressed: how significant is UVCG for the participants?; what is improved by the movement and how is it expressed in

household or individual strategy? Based on the identity paradigm, one would expect to see people's expanding capacity in identity building. Thus participants of the movements may have non-conservative values in the area of politics, gender, culture, society, and so on. By applying the identity approach, my study will specifically focus on the aspect of gender. Is the mother still the main figure for child rearing? Do women still stay home and take care of domestic chores? Motherhood, the relationship between husband and wife, and women's obligations will be highlighted. Feminist theory will be also applied to have further understanding of the meaning of the movements. Thus, the aspect of women's perception changes through participation to NSMs and the aspect of gender is the focus of this study. The case study is used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of NSMs theory as well. I conclude with suggestions for the future directions of the theory.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Mexico is one of the countries in which scholars have used the NSMs approach. Many works have been done by Mexican scholars but a "paucity of literature in English" is pointed out by Escobar and Alvarez (1992:5). Mexico City is one of the most populated cities of the world and its very rapid urbanization is causing serious problems such as environmental degradation and housing shortages.

Selection of the site and the population. I am a student from Japan and my interest has always been on

development. I was specifically interested in bottom-up type development, thus I made a contact with some Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which have development projects in Latin America. After studying Spanish during my undergraduate years, I traveled several Latin American countries and I always had special interests in Mexico. One NGO, S.J. House, sent me information on a Mexican NGO, Centro Operacional de Vivienda y Poblamiento (COPEVI) or Center for housing and population. This organization is concerned with the issue of urban housing. I called them and asked if they could help me to facilitate my study. They generously accepted and told me about their connection to one of the housing associations, La Union de Vecinos de la Colonia Guerrero (UVCG). UVCG turned out to be in the midst of social movements, actively engaging in the betterment of its living standard. Thus, I decided to use it as my case study.

The location. La Colonia Guerrero, where UVCG began, is located at the center of Mexico City. Its southern margin starts from Hidalgo avenue, which runs just north of Alameda Park, several blocks away from Mexico City's central post office. This colonia is in the midst of a bureaucratic, commercial, and service area. But for many years, it has encompassed many low-income neighborhoods.

Field methods. In order to understand people's perspective more fully, it was desirable to directly experience their ways of life. Therefore, on arriving, I

visited three families whom I planned to stay with: two couples with children and one single mother with children; the children helped me at first by walking around the neighborhood with me. Colonia Guerrero is basically a residential area, but on its baking-hot streets, I saw many people with oil stains on their clothes fixing cars for a living.

I needed some time to get to know people before I started collecting data. At the first general meeting I attended, the leader of UVCG introduced me to the members as a student who came to learn about UVCG. Some people looked at me curiously, and some showed no interest. After that, I attended their meetings every Saturday night. Most of my data was collected by participant observation and interviewing.

Over a thousand people who live in apartments built by UVCG are considered as members. However, they are not active anymore except a few. Most of the active members live in shelters. Therefore, I conducted my informal structured interviews with the representatives of each caseta in the shelter on Luz Street, where a little over two hundred people live.

Many residents in the shelter expressed their affection for their shelter and caseta. After living there for several years, the shelter becomes a precious part of their lives; containing their memories of happiness, hardship, sadness, and joy. In order to respect these people's

feelings, the terms "shelter" and "caseta" will be used instead of "slum" and "hut" respectively. However, by using these more neutral terms, we should not forget that these are the places that carry injustice and many contradictions of today's society. In fact, this is where social movements partly stem from and these shelters and casetas are places where members of housing associations such as UVCG originate.

By the time I started interviews in Luz shelter, I was living in this shelter, sharing a caseta with a family consisting of a single mother with four little sons. Inside of the fenced area of the Luz shelter, there are fifty two casetas, built with metal sheets and wood. Each caseta is rectangular shaped, about 4x8 meters and has a concrete floor. Each row has about eight casetas connected, only divided by thin wall made of metal sheets. One light bulb is hanging from the ceiling, but it is dark inside, so people open up one small metal sheet with a stick for ventilation and light. Forty eight casetas are occupied as living space and four as storage spaces. I walked around the shelter with a portable tape recorder and visited people from door to door. Some people were almost always occupied with their daily activities, therefore the interviews sometimes took place on the street where they sell their prepared foods. Although I was introduced to shelter inhabitants on my arrival, it took some time to get to know people. Children were often helpful, inviting me to their

casetas. Inside of the shelter area, several children followed me everywhere I went. They wanted to take a look at my portable tape recorder and also wanted to listen to it. They asked me many questions as well: where are you from?; what is your mom's name?; how do you write your name?; and do you have dogs in Japan? For most of the children, I was the first foreigner to speak to, so they were very curious. They had a great laugh out of my Spanish with Japanese accent as well. They made me say a word such as "albergue" since I have a difficulty in pronouncing "l" and "r" and they burst into laughter. When I visited each caseta with my tape recorder, parents talked with me more freely when their children took me to their casetas.

The fact that I was living among them also helped people to open their hearts to me. I directly experienced how hot it gets inside of the casetas during daytime, its coldness at night time, how inconvenient to have kitchens and bathrooms outside of the casetas, how inconvenient to face frequent water shortages, and so on. When people described their experience of being in a shower, soap all over their body, and the water flow stops abruptly or incidents of waking up in the middle of the night, debating if they should go out to the bathroom despite of coldness or endure till the morning, people knew that I fully understood. I could share the laughter, pain, inconvenience, and affection for the casetas sincerely with the people. I became their friend and they became a part of

my life. We still send letters and their pictures are hanging on the wall.

Another advantage of living there was *desalojo* (or eviction), which I will describe in detail later. When a bell rings in the shelter to let people know about an eviction, people rush to the site as soon as possible to stop the eviction. Sometimes we came back, feeling good about our deed of stopping it. Sometimes, we found all the furniture scattered on the street and the entrance sealed, which means we arrived too late. When this happens, there is nothing people can do. These evictions always happen abruptly, thus, it was a great advantage for me to live in the shelter.

Most of the interviews were conducted in the presence of many people, such as family members, neighbors, children's friends. I conducted interviews in an informal atmosphere and the participants freely carried on casual conversation, so that sometimes I was there but not gathering data at all. Thus my plan to interview all the casetas took more time than I had expected.

Aside from the interviews with the representatives from all forty eight casetas, I conducted more in-depth interviews with three young mothers and three older mothers in this shelter in order to examine the changes in their gender perspectives through participation in UVCG. As an Asian female living in U.S., I always had interests in gender relations. In addition, eighty percent of the

members of UVCG were women, thus I had more opportunity to talk with women. As a young female, I felt more comfortable, interviewing women than men as well. I also conducted interviews with the leader of the organization, a member of the women's commission, members who already obtained housing, and NGO members who are involved in UVCG.

Since neither Spanish nor English are my native languages, I had difficulty in translating Spanish conversation into English. English translation that I can think of comes from my knowledge of textbook English. I am not familiar with either English or Spanish colloquial expressions. Therefore, my translation of shelter dwellers' interviews may sound too tidy. However, I tried my best to paraphrase their own words as original as possible since it is important in anthropology that people's own words are presented in text.

In order to ensure anonymity, the names of all people in the text are pseudonyms.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

Chapter II will examine the NSMs as characterized by the NSMs theorists, representing the identity paradigm. I find my interpretation of movements' emergence, orientation, and meaning in the literature. Feminist theory is presented as well in order to better situate my case study of gender relations. Chapter III gives background data about Mexico and Mexico City in order to understand the situation of poor Mexicans. Then in chapter IV, I narrow down the scope of

the investigation to the characteristics of housing association, UVCG. This chapter examines the case study of UVCG; its history, organization, composition of members, activities, and networking, along with a description of their identity expansion. Chapter V will present examples of people's changes in gender-related perception. By employing feminist theory, this chapter will also consider the strengths and weaknesses of the identity paradigm. In the final chapter, I conclude with the analysis of the implications of my findings for NSMs theory. I consider a change that enables NSMs theory to account for data from more diverse regions, a theory which can account for the future of social movements, and more coherent theory by integrating two different paradigms.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND MEXICO.

As discussed in the previous chapter, there are two quite distinct paradigms within NSMs theory: resource mobilization and identity. Since the highlight of my study is to understand changes expressed in people's identities, a focus will be put on the latter, identity paradigm.

Definitions and interpretations of NSMs are still evolving, but most scholars identify such movements as: base communities of the Catholic church; women's movements; peace movements; environmental movements; and low-income associations (Slater 1985:1; Evers 1985:43; Mainwaring and Viola 1984:17).

In this chapter, NSMs will be analyzed from the following points: origins, rationale, actors, orientation, and levels of struggle. Contributions come mostly from scholars who use the identity paradigm. Furthermore, feminist theory will be presented in order to account for the highlight of this thesis, gender relations. A distinction will be made between women's practical gender interests or their immediate needs and strategic interests by which they attempt to change the larger political structure.

ORIGINS OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Willem Assies (1990:3) identifies the emergence of "new" social movements with the successful capitalist co-optation of working classes in the 1960s. That was when the notion of the "end of ideology" became widely accepted. But contrary to these expectations, protest movements became progressively evident. However, these movements were hardly taken seriously by mainstream authorities; they were interpreted as trivial movements of peculiar groups of people who happened to be less affected by the dominant social values. Assies writes that these are the movements that came to be interpreted as "new" social movements some years later -- the NSMs. Alain Touraine (1985:749) similarly contends that NSMs were not mainstream. He writes, "after the sixties, social movements... were identified with the counterculture, the search for 'alternative' forms of social and cultural life."

RATIONALE FOR THE EMERGENCE OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The uniqueness of the identity paradigm is that it recognizes the complex nature of the rationale for the emergence of NSMs. The tendency in the 1980s was to look at actors' contribution rather than focusing on external forces. Reflecting that, NSMs theorists such as Escobar and Alvarez (1992:318) contend that "structural changes alone cannot account for the rise of organizational and

ideological resources and the production of cultural meanings that are critical to movement emergence and development." In this vein, emphasis was put on people's autonomy and spontaneity (Assies 1990:3).

On the other hand, as Assies (1990:3-4) argues:

The new celebration of the individual actor and his/her emancipation/desalination has often led to an overtly exclusive focus on the internal process of social movements as well as to a neglect of their interactions with the 'environment' and the changes they bring about, even if these are less spectacular than a heroic societal revolution.

Thus, scholars of the identity paradigm came back to look at the "environment", but using notions of an interactive or dialectic development of the movements.

Claus Offe (1985) understands the emergence of NSMs as rational responses to modernization. Change in modes of control and domination caused consolidation of power on the side of existing political and economic institutions. This resulted in power-holders' diminished capacity to moderate or adjust to the pressures from the people. Therefore, people's discontent became intense and triggered the emergence of NSMs.

Chantal Mouffe (quoted in Slater 1985:2-3) argues in a similar vein but more specifically that since World War II, everything relating to human labor, (from products to services), has become commodified. All aspects of social reproduction have become subject to state intervention, and

every sphere of the world has come under the influence of the mass media. This has led to such forms of people's subordination as: "commodification", "bureaucratization", and "cultural massification". Mouffe locates the emergence of NSMs in people's counteraction to this hegemonic domination by late capitalism.

In their study of Brazil and Argentina, Scott Mainwaring and Eduardo Viola (1984:32) discern the foundation of NSMs, partly, in the dissolution of the military regimes. They also recognize people's skepticism toward the traditional left, and their lack of faith in populist style politics.

Joe Foweraker and Ann Craig (1990:83) examined specifically the Mexican case and argue that "In Europe, NSMs mainly represent a response to post-industrial contradictions, while in Latin America, the movements arise in response to clearly material demands."

David Slater (1985:8) also recognized that in Latin America, where the penetration of the state welfare system is less significant, there exists slightly different rationales. He calls attention to the states' centralization of its decision-making power as one of the reasons why Latin Americans expressed their dissatisfaction in the form of NSMs. In addition, the states' provision of "collective means of consumption" such as urban amenities, water,

electricity, health, transport, housing, etc. are well below adequate levels. Thus, Slater argues that people became skeptical of the legitimacy and capability of states and political parties.

ACTORS

How are the actors in these movements characterized under the identity paradigm? First of all, theorists point to the wide heterogeneity of the actors, and how characterizing them is not an easy task. Many researchers, however, do point to a non-class basis (Assies 1990:9; Cohen 1985:667). Ernesto Laclau (1985:32) saw the complexity of defining the actors as emerging from "an ensemble of subject positions (place of residence, institutional apparatuses, various forms of cultural, racial and sexual subordination)."

Offe (1985:832) also points out the difficulty of placing actors within conventional dichotomies of the political code such as left/right and liberal/ conservative, or within socio-economic codes such as working class, middle class, rural or urban populations, poor, wealthy, and so on. He identifies "the new middle class," "elements of the old middle class," and "people outside the labor market or in a peripheral position...(such as unemployed workers, students, housewives, retired persons, etc.)" as likely candidates. Instead of class or ideology, he sees identity as the binding factor of NSMs. Besides their various objectives,

actors of NSMs are struggling to construct collective identity.

ORIENTATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

NSMs widely differ geographically and address diverse objectives. Due to this heterogeneity, there are some complications in discussing orientations and characteristics of NSMs.

Differences can be seen between Western Europe and Latin America. Touraine (1985:774), drawing cases from Western Europe, contends that NSMs theory deals less with issues that Marxists would have focused heavily on. He states that:

central conflicts deal less with labor and economic problems than with cultural and especially ethical problems, because the domination which is challenged controls not only 'means of production' but the production of symbolic goods, that is of information and images, of culture itself.

Similarly, Cohen (1985:667) contends that NSMs "target the social domain of 'civil society' rather than economy or state, raising issues concerned with the democratization of structures of everyday life and focusing on forms of communication and collective identity."

On the other hand, Foweraker and Craig (1990:5-6) caution those theorists who derive data from Western Europe. By specifically examining the Mexican case, they contend that in Latin America, "class and class struggle continue to be far more important than many want to admit." They also point to "material demands of Mexico's movements" and feel

that Western European movements with "post material demands" are quite different in nature.

After geographical differences the issue narrows down to specific types of movement. For example, Mainwaring and Viola (1984:19-28), who focus on Brazil and Argentina, point to NSMs' "affective concerns, expressive relations, group orientation and horizontal organization". Even after examining Latin American cases, they came to suggest that NSMs are characterized by non-materialistic values. According to them, therefore, housing associations should be located within older style movements. They write:

A limited number of middle class associations have been oriented towards developing a sense of neighborhood and towards the affective dimensions of life, with little concern about obtaining material goods from the state. Associations whose primary purpose is to extract resources from the state are close to the paradigmatic old movements.

Tilman Evers (1985:50-51) questions their proposition of separating housing association from NSMs. He suggests that "even when the original motive [for organizing] was a material necessity like securing legal recognition for the plots of land occupied for housing," people's participation results in building collective identity. This is the key factor which emerges from NSMs and housing associations share this characteristics.

Alberto Melucci (1980:219), supporting Evers' view, also urges us to see the people's struggle as being "not only for the reappropriation of the material structure of

production, but also for collective control over socio-economic development, i.e., for the reappropriation of time, of space, and of relationships in the individual's daily existence." He states that "personal identity- that is to say, the possibility, on the biological, psychological, and interpersonal levels, of being recognized as an individual- is the property which is now being claimed and defended."

This focus on identity seems to solve theoretical conflicts of both differences in locations and in types of movements. In Latin America as well as in Western Europe, in other words in both social movements with the element of class struggle and non-class struggle, collective identity can be built as a result of participation. A focus on identity building is also applicable whether movements have materialistic or non-materialistic values.

Along with many other scholars, Evers (1985:57-8) especially focuses on the aspects of identity, democracy, and autonomy in NSMs. For instance, he identifies the novelty of NSMs in their "quest for an autonomous identity." To search for identity, according to Evers, means to attempt to recover one's sphere of control. Thus, he contrasts identity with alienation and domination. Accordingly, "any domination is a theft of identity." Moreover, he points out that identity can not be simply given or passed down. One has to struggle to obtain it or it has to be consciously constructed "from below." He perceives this spreading of the notion of identity specifically among the participants

of NSMs with their democratic modes of organization. He concludes by saying, "identity cannot be found within authoritarian structures." He believes that under authoritarian structures, people are deprived of the identity, since they are not given the freedom to construct it "from below."

Cohen (1985:694) also recognizes the significance of identity in NSMs. However, his position differs somewhat from Evers's. He argues that "asserting their identity" is not the focus of NSMs, because he views that people already possess identity that was given or more likely imposed. Rather, the focus is on the involvement of "actors who have become aware of their capacity to create identities and of power relations involved in their social construction."

Offe (1985:849-50) argues differently, saying that "values such as autonomy, identity, authenticity, but also human rights, peace, and the desirability of balanced physical environments" are nothing new and largely noncontroversial in the context of social movements. What is salient is the "'contemporaneous' character of the underlying values." His explanation is that there is no value "change" involved, but rather, the issue is "the mode of implementation of values, and the presupposed links between the satisfaction of different values." He gives us an example of the critique of modernization.

What we observe... is not a 'value change' [such as antimodernization] but an awareness of the

disaggregation and partial incompatibility within the universe of modern values... This cognitive awareness of clashes and contradictions within the modern set of values may lead to a selective emphasis upon *some* of these values..."

LEVEL OF STRUGGLE

Amongst NSMs scholars of the identity paradigm, interpretation again varies on the issue of "level of struggle".

Foweraker and Craig (1990:16) contend that "in both Mexico and Europe equally the movements tend to be characterized by the autonomy of political parties, especially those of the left." They add that in the Mexican case, movements seek institutional recognition in order to achieve their end, i.e. material improvement, more effectively, which is not the case in Europe. Thus they contend that in the case of Mexican popular movements, "autonomy cannot...be constructed abstractly as 'separateness' from the political system and as the polar opposite of political representation, but is in fact a concrete condition of such representation." Accordingly, "autonomy" carries a different nuance between Mexican and European NSMs.

Another point Escobar and Alvarez (1992:4) make is that social movements:

embody a transformative potential in at least two dimensions: first, the widening of 'sociopolitical citizenship,' linked to peoples' struggles for social recognition of their existence and for political

spaces of expression, and...the transformation or appropriation by the actors of the cultural field through their search for a collective identity and the affirmation of their difference and specificity.

Evers (1985:48-50) is one of the main figures who pays close attention to the latter dimension of transformative potential that Escobar and Alvarez discuss. He points out that the analysis of social movements should not be restricted to seemingly the political as primary. He, instead, urges us to direct our attention to the socio-cultural sphere. Ton Salman (1990:131), however, considers Evers' analysis still within the political dimension. He criticizes Evers's perception of politics and power and points out that "Evers does not define his notion of the political very well." Salman feels that Evers views power only as possession of control over others, thus when he mentions the political, he means politics happening at the level of political party. Thus, when discussing the dimension of power, such as people's capacity for resistance, Evers does not perceive it as political, which is confusing. For example, Evers (1985:48) states:

It is my impression that the 'new' element within the new social movements consists precisely in creating bits of social practice in which power is not central.

In this case, Evers means power at the level of political party. He does not intend to devalue people's power of resistance, which is clear from the rest of his argument; "the innovatory capacity of these movements appears to

lie...in their ability to create and experiment with different forms of social relations in everyday life." He continues; "this process is taking place at a level far below existing power structures."

What Evers (1985:50) contends is that he does not expect to see in NSMs a political transformation in the sphere of production, but rather he expects to see socio-cultural change in the sphere of reproduction. Evers therefore pays close attention to social expressions at the level of everyday life. Millions of everyday practices are unconsciously shaped by individuals' experiences, beliefs, perception, and interests and most of the time they result in reproducing the existing structure. Thus, Evers finds "the everyday 'do it differently' of new social groupings" meaningful. He locates significance of NSMs in their "ability to create and experiment with different forms of social relations in everyday life." This is the aspect strongly focused by the identity paradigm.

Escobar (1992:70) also states that "culture is not something that exists in the abstract; it is embedded in practices, in the everyday life of people. Culture is [made of] people's practices." The influence of the identity paradigm is visible. He continues, "[w]hen people 'practice' their everyday lives, they are thus reproducing or creating culture. We are all cultural producers in some way and of some kind in our everyday life." From his perspective, NSMs have to be viewed as "cultural struggles

over the production of meaning and as collective forms of cultural production (320)." Discussions on such topic as "survival struggles" or "struggles over 'basic needs'" do not satisfy him.

In sum, Mexican and Western European NSMs are not totally identical in terms of their origin, rationale and orientation. However, according to the identity paradigm, they seem to share similar aspects in active identity building. The same can be said for the differences in types of movement; their significance lies in participants, becoming aware of their own capacity in the identity building.

FEMINIST THEORY

In my case study, I will present La Union de Vecinos de la Colonia Guerrero (UVCG), a housing association in Mexico City. Because of the nature of the organization, their primary objective is aimed at satisfying their material needs. By applying both identity paradigm and feminist theory, however, I will attempt to analyze the objectives of these female participants from a different angle.

Feminists argue that it is important to understand the complex nature of gender relations. Maxine Molyneux (1985:232), for example, contends that the interests of women should not be considered homogenous, because "women are positioned within their societies through a variety of different means- among them, class, ethnicity, and gender- the interests they have as a group are similarly shaped in

complex and sometimes conflicting ways." As third world feminists in the U.S. point out, being a white woman and being a woman of color, for example, are quite different life situations. Thus in this case, middle-class or professional white women's objectives of achieving exclusively gender equality do not accommodate the needs of the women of color to fight against racial discrimination. In Latin America, feminist "discussions of gender differences and differences among women are situated within larger economic and political contexts (Gallin and Ferguson 1993:5)." To be a poor Mexican woman encompasses multiple hardships caused by international, class, and gender relations.

What, then, are women's common gender interests? Molyneux classifies them into two categories: practical gender interests and strategic gender interests.

According to her, practical gender interests "are usually a response to an immediate perceived need" and are inductively formulated by female participants themselves. More specifically, Molyneux suggests that "by virtue of their place within the sexual division of labour as those primarily responsible for their household's daily welfare, women have a special interest in domestic provision and public welfare." Precisely, in the case of UVCG, it is mostly women who organized to tackle the issue of housing; women constitute eighty percent of the members of UVCG.

Strategic gender interests, on the other hand, are much more far reaching. They are "derived...from the analysis of women's subordination and from the formulation of an alternative, more satisfactory set of arrangements to those which exist." Thus expected outcome by the movements with strategic gender interests are such as "the abolition of the sexual division of labor,... the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination, [and] the attainment of political equality."

How about the case of UVCG? What are UVCG members' practical and strategic interests? Are they pursuing both strategic interests as well as practical ones? How do these two interests interplay? Before going into the detailed case study, I will shift my focus, at first, to give some background as to how the poor Mexican women participating in Mexican housing associations live. As discussed above, situating actors in larger socio-economic context and understanding specific geographical information are essential. Thus in chapter III, Mexican socio-economic conditions are examined with focus on structural adjustment, debt crisis, and urbanization. Socially-defined women's subordinated position will be described as well. The following chapter IV will lay out the background of the housing association, UVCG.

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION IN MEXICO AND MEXICO CITY

In this chapter, I will discuss the context from which the Mexican new social movements arose. Mexico's economic situation, industrialization and urbanization are examined with special consideration given to the influence of the lives of poor people, i.e. actors in the social movements. Furthermore, social characteristics derived from hierarchical gender division in Mexico will be explored as well.

NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

On January 1, 1994, the Mexican government implemented North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It is ironic that on that very day, the organized peasants in Chiapas, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, rose up against the central authority of the Mexican government. Samuel Ruiz, the Catholic Bishop of San Cristobal, replied to the question whether NAFTA had a role in the uprising, "The question has many nuances. Did this happen because of NAFTA? No. But did NAFTA influence it? Yes (quoted in Nairn 1994:6)."

Many scholars had predicted that NAFTA would not lead to improvement of poor Mexicans' lives. Teresa Rendon and Carlos Salas (1993:110-118) contend that "NAFTA is a new instrument to benefit a few, while

deepening poverty and inequality in most of Mexico." They point to employment level as one of the reasons. A growth of employment level in commercial and service activities may be expected, however, "the net effect of NAFTA on the employment level in Mexico will be nil. due to jobs eliminated in small and medium-sized enterprises." Wayne Cornelius (1995), a director of center for U.S.- Mexican Studies at University of California, San Diego, reports "hundreds of thousands of jobs lost" in Mexico since the implementation of NAFTA. He and his colleagues, in fact, conducted interviews among Mexican farmers one year after the implementation and found out that "two-thirds felt they had been personally harmed by the trade agreement in some way."

Julie Erfani (1995:179) points to the Mexican government's reduced ability to interfere in the sphere of "wages, working conditions, welfare, and lives" and contends that NAFTA will result in worsening of Mexicans' standard of living. She states that:

the Mexican state is still endowed with extensive legal authority over most people's lives but minimal ability to improve most people's lives. In fact, the state's constitutional authority to intervene in the economy, to regulate commerce, and to arbitrate property rights is now substantially circumscribed and subject to dispute from private investors across the continent.

Tim Koechlin (1995:25-27), an instructor of economics at Skidmore College, examined the impact of NAFTA on Mexican workers and peasants. He states that "higher interest rates, dramatic cuts in government spending and a weak currency mean fewer jobs, lower wages and more poverty." Thus, he came to the conclusion that NAFTA is "a disaster for workers." He feels that the "Mexican economy is a world-class mess." But how did Mexico's economy reach this condition?

MEXICAN ECONOMY

Mexico saw significant economic growth after World War II partly because of booming investment from foreign countries, especially from the U.S. As a result, Mexico's industrialization became prominent among Latin American countries.

The Mexican government attempted to promote import-substitution industrialization, i.e., replacing imported products with domestically made products. In order for that to succeed, protection of domestic industry was needed. Therefore the government devalued the peso and exempted tax for the private sector. This "import-substitution industrialization...facilitated capital accumulation and increased income inequality (Covington 1990:4)."

The end of economic boom and the rise of crises in the 1980s.

The Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), the ruling party of Mexico for decades, successfully elected Lopez Portillo as president of Mexico from 1976 to 1982. According to Sally Covington (1990:4), the PRI's strategic social control has been functioning since the 1930's. She argues that the PRI has been solidifying its "corporate political structure based on the vertical integration of workers, peasants and the popular sector."

Economic recession was weakening the Mexican economy by the time Portillo was inaugurated and Mexico was accumulating its foreign debt significantly. Portillo, attempting to stimulate the Mexican economy, poured investment into the modern sectors. His strategy was made possible by obtaining more loans from abroad. He assured the world Mexico's capacity to pay back its debt by pointing to its oil reserves (Escobar and Alvarez 1992:240).

At the same time, expenditures on social welfare were cut sharply under the Portillo administration. As far as housing is concerned, rent control was abolished and state housing construction was diminished. Furthermore, squatters were evicted repeatedly during this period (Covington 1990:5).

By the end of Portillo's term, economic problems in Mexico were quite serious. Oil prices, on which Portillo relied, were falling and investment was diminishing. Capital flight became even greater and inflation was skyrocketing (Davis 1994:384). Portillo's strategy obviously failed and finally he had to announce in 1982 that Mexico would suspend some of its debt repayment, which shook the world banking system.

De la Madrid took over the presidency in the same year and adopted IMF's austerity program in order to receive financial support. As a result, government spending was cut even more significantly. For instance, the government reduced more than 80 percent of its food subsidies from 1984 to 1986 (Covington 1990). The government spending on education and health was reduced by 29.6 percent and 23.3 percent respectively in the period between 1982 and 1988 (Tanski 1993:85). According to Janet Tanski, "total per capita social spending fell by 40.2 percent." Also, the Mexican peso was devalued for the purpose of protecting domestic industry.

These government policies hit the poorest strata of Mexicans the most. According to Vivienne Bennett (1992:243), "inflation surged from 28 percent in 1981 to 101.9 percent in 1983, 132 percent in 1987." Covington (1990:6) points to "a 100 percent increase in the price

of bread and tortillas, a 60 percent increase in the price of gasoline and a 30 percent increase in the price of natural gas and electricity."

The condition of poor Mexicans.

Mexico's economic growth did not result in the betterment of economic conditions for all Mexicans. What is more, the economy became worse and the poor people's quality of life diminished even more. For example, impoverished Mexicans in the rural area have been pouring into the urban area in search of jobs. The urban/ rural population ratio of Mexico was approximately 1:1 in 1960 but rose to 7:3 in 1984 (Cubitt 1988:138).

Mexican capitalists and government have aimed at promoting capital-intensive industry. This type of industry does not create many jobs. Despite rapid industrialization, job availability did not increase significantly. According to Covington (1990:20), 37.9 percent of Mexican employees were working in the industrial sector in 1960, but that percentage decreased to 28.8 percent in 1979. Tanski (1993:84) compared the data of 1982 and 1992 and found out that "the industrial sector as a whole employs fewer people in 1992 than it did in 1982."

A high unemployment rate would be expected, but the figures are not that high. According to Tessa Cubitt (1988:149), unemployment was 7.3 percent in 1975, 4.5

percent in 1980, and 6.9 percent in 1983. Castells (1982:253) explains this contradiction by arguing that being constantly unemployed in underdeveloped nations is almost impossible. "This is so," he explains, "because, strictly speaking, unemployment, namely the absence of a regularly paid labour activity, is a privilege of advanced capitalist countries, as also of a tiny labour aristocracy in developing countries, strong enough to obtain unemployment insurance." In the case of Mexico, unemployment insurance simply does not exist. Thus, Mexicans must have some income generating strategies. However, many of them can not obtain sufficient income to support themselves. These strata of people are not considered as unemployed but as underemployed. In 1980, underemployment in Mexico was estimated at a startling 40.4 percent of the population (Cubitt 1988:150). Accordingly, people who lacked sufficient resources to meet basic needs in 1990 are estimated to represent 49.2 percent of the population (Tanski 1993:83). A report on October 15, 1991 by the Mexican government's National Nutrition Commission and the National Solidarity Program revealed that nearly half the Mexican population failed to meet basic nutritional requirements.

The wealth remained in the hands of a few; in 1986, the poorest 20 percent of Mexicans were sharing only 4 percent of the wealth (Navarrete 1994:28). Tanski (1993:84) points to the falling of real wages, which, in

August of 1992, were only 34.6 percent of what they were in 1980. Only 15 percent of the economically active population was earning more than the minimum wage (Carr and Montoya 1980:3). The minimum wage in Mexico City in 1979 was equivalent of 170 US dollars a month (Gilbert and Ward 1989:56). After the drastic peso devaluation by the new president, Ernesto Zedillo, the minimum wage presently in 1995 is approximately 100 US dollars, a fall of 41.2 percent since 1979.

QUALITY OF LIFE IN MEXICO CITY

The domination of Mexico City in the country.

The import-substitution industrialization that Mexican government promoted after World War II required two key elements for its success: protectionism and centralization. The dominance of Mexico City in the country is quite eminent and as David Cymet (1992:20) explains, centralization was needed "as a means of achieving the domestic and labor market necessary for indigenous industrialization."

Gilbert and Ward (1989:54) feel that Mexico City's dominant position in the country was already established by the 1940s. According to them, 32 percent of the total industrial product and 30.6 per cent of the gross internal product were generated in Mexico City in the 1940's. The contribution of Mexico City to the gross internal product in 1970 was 37.4 percent. "Mexico City

has been the foremost center of financial, commercial and political decision making."

The domination of Mexico City was established by designed centralization. To accelerate the process, the government laid the foundation for Mexico City: providing large amount of public expenditures such as food and fuel subsidies, road construction designed to connect Mexico City with other major cities, and concentration of government decision making agencies (Cymet 1992).

Another aspect of centralization is shown by the 41 percent of higher educational institutions and 44 percent of specialist hospital institutions that are congregated in Mexico City (Gilbert and Ward 1989:54-56). Gilbert and Ward also point out that the Federal District provides better school facilities, and thus, "children are not only more likely to attend school, but also to graduate."

Urbanization.

Because of all the "pull" effect, urbanization of Mexico City was dramatic. In 1940 Metropolitan area Mexico City (MAMC), the urban area was only 4.8 percent and rural area 95.2 percent of the country. In 1975, the urban area consisted of 32.5 percent or 6.7 times more than that of 1940 (Cymet 1992:80).

Population growth was significant as well. Many factors contributed to this. First, the lowering of the death rate, along with only a slight change of birth rate

can be listed. In Mexico City, the birth rate per 1000 from 1910 to 1921 was 45.0 and from 1970 to 1980 it was 37.0. On the other hand, the death rate during the former period was 28.0 percent and the latter period dropped to 7.3 percent (Cymet 1992:17). Another reason is of course migration. Migrants made up 73.5 percent of the population in MAMC in 1940 and 64.5 percent in 1950. Migration is decreasing, but in 1990, the percentage was still 31.1 percent (Cymet 36). Hence, the population of Mexico City in 1950 was 3.1 million; which leaped to 13.3 million in 1978 (Gilbert and Ward 1989:54). Today, Mexico City, with 18 million inhabitants, is probably the most populated city in the world (Gilbert and Ward 1989:139).

Dramatic urbanization naturally lowered the quality of life in Mexico City. First, it is well-known that the air pollution situation is very grave. Gilbert and Ward (1989:57) explain that:

Located in an upland basin, the city suffers from frequent temperature inversions which prevent the dispersal of pollutants. As a result, smog has reduced daily visibility from an average of 15 kilometers in 1967 to between 4 and 6 kilometers today.

Transport is another problem. Traffic jams in the city are constant and very heavy. Pointing out its economic cost, Gilbert and Ward write that "[o]n balance, it seems that public transport costs people more in the way of time than money."

Also, housing in Mexico City is extremely poor compared to other parts of Mexico. In MAMC, it is estimated that 577,000 units are urgently needed (Covington 1990:20). Also, statistically, people had less space in a house. In Mexico City, there were 4.9 people per household in 1950 and that increased to 6.2 people per household in 1980. Furthermore, it is estimated that 40 percent of the population in Mexico City live in one room homes (Covington 20). For 1980, Cymet (1992:2) believes that 65 percent of Mexico City inhabitants lived in *colonia populares*.

In addition, there was a strong earthquake near Mexico City in September, 1985. Many buildings fell and streets were filled with people who lost places to live. The government exhibited its incapability to manage the situation; its slow and inflexible response caused great suffering for the people and people's criticism toward the government became intense.

WOMEN, ORGANIZING

Especially during the last two decades, more women than men have become visible in the scope of social movements in Mexico. Women's mobilization around the issue of housing is significant. Some scholars reason that women are at home more than men and they feel a more keen need for housing.

Traditionally in Mexico, the concept of family carries a very important value. Cubitt (1988:101)

considers the family as "a key institution in society" and believes that is because of strong church support. Elizabeth Jelin (1990:2) believes that family "constitutes the base of the whole system of social relations." Low-income populations especially resort to family members in times of hardships (Cubitt 1988:101-103).

In Mexico, under the system of fictive co-godparenthood (*compadrazgo*), people's social obligations are sometimes extended beyond blood-tie relatives. Thus, members of fictive kinship are included within the notion of family.

Within the family, the division of labour between sexes is marked. Women are responsible for the domestic sphere, and men for the public sphere. The relation between the genders is hierarchical, which is associated with the concepts of *machismo* and *marianismo*.

Machismo is an expression of man, exhibiting his manliness. Males are supposed to attest their superiority over females and to compete with each other. Cubitt (1988:103) explains that "to fulfill macho behaviour patterns, a man must show no fear, demonstrate sexual prowess, father many children and exercise tight control over female kin."

Marianismo, on the other hand, is the subordinated role played by females. Women have the obligation of taking care of their husbands and children and motherhood

is especially idealized. "The ideal woman is gentle, kind, long-suffering, loving and submits to the demands of men, whether they be husbands, fathers, sons or brothers (Cubitt 104)."

Hence, in order to understand the situation of poor Mexican women in Mexico City, one needs to look at multiple levels of hardship. Firstly, to be a Mexican means to be a citizen of a Third World country. I have discussed in this chapter that as a peripheral country within the world capitalist system, Mexico is entangled with economic predicaments such as debt crisis and NAFTA. Secondly, citizens of Mexico City suffer from extreme lack of proper housing, an overly dense population, and a worsening of the environment. Thirdly, for the poor, a cut in the government's social spending and high underemployment will pose another burden. Finally, women are entangled in a gender hierarchy; they have to play a subordinate role.

La Union de Vecinos de la Colonia Guerrero (UVCG) is one of many housing associations organized almost entirely by women. They address the issue of housing in Mexico City, which is a prevalent topic in the context of many Latin American social movements. The fact that UVCG is concerned about housing and its nineteen years of organization became the keys for selecting UVCG as my case study. The following chapter will discuss La Union de Vecinos de la Colonia Guerrero specifically. Its

history, activities, and members' living condition will be described in detail.

CHAPTER IV

LA UNION DE VECINOS DE LA COLONIA GUERRERO

Mexico City is "home" of more than 18 million people today (Gilbert and Ward 1989:139). However, for the majority of the poor, the type of "home" is quite different from what we think of. Until the 1940's, rented houses were the only alternative for the working class population in Mexico City (Gilbert 1985:15). These rented low-income housing is called *vecindad*. This traditional form of renting rooms around courtyards can be traced back to colonial times (Cymet 1992:40). Many of these *vecindades* were overcrowded, ill-equipped, and unsanitary and they exist even today.

In 1942, rent of \$300 MP or below was frozen due to World War II. As a result, the profitability for the owners of these low-income housing declined (Cymet 1992:41). In addition, due to rapid commercialization and business expansion, land prices went up sharply, especially at the city center. Inevitably, new investment for low-income housing dropped. Furthermore, this happened at the time when the population of Mexico City was increasing rapidly. Compared to 630,000 residents in 1910, the number of the residents in 1940 almost tripled to 1.8 million (Gilbert 1985:14). This resulted in an extremely low supply of low-income housing. Colonia Guerrero, where I studied, used to have many *vecindades* and still encompasses many survivals from old *vecindades*. The condition of existing *vecindades*

deteriorated year after year because of minimal maintenance efforts by landlords. Most of the buildings are made of sun-dried brick called adobe and are quite susceptible to humidity. Once water is absorbed, adobe falls to pieces easily. Thus, many vecindades collapsed during rainy seasons and many residents were killed or injured.

Furthermore, tenants always faced the fear of eviction. Landlords attempted to evict them from vecindades so as to utilize their property for more profitable means, such as luxury housing or offices. For ordinary people, however, moving out and finding new places to live for a reasonable price was very difficult due to extreme shortages of housings. First of all, renting a small apartment in Mexico City these days costs about twice the minimum monthly salary. Secondly, people naturally are not willing to move out of the area where they were brought up and where many of their relatives are. In addition, they will face transportation problem if they move to the peripheral areas. Thus, they have had no choice but to live with fear of eviction and collapse in cracked vecindades with windows without glass.

Tenants endured but they did not just passively accept their dreadful conditions. Their awareness grew by the 1970's. Low-income housing associations were booming in Mexico City. Colonia Guerrero was part of this movement.

FOUNDATION

Conditions became so unbearable that tenants of vecindades started to organize to stand against illegal evictions in the mid-1970s. Tenants on Chetumal Street were one of the examples. They organized themselves and attempted to avoid eviction. In addition, they appealed to the authorities that the vecindad should not be left without maintenance. They also demanded that the government should plan to construct houses for poor people rather than to convert the land inside of Colonia Guerrero into offices. The authorities promised that they would build houses with the social interests of the neighborhood in mind but never made an effort to carry out the promise. Tenants frustrations increased. They had the sense that something was wrong but their articulation of the problem was not well defined at this stage.

Some other organized tenants did what they could do as well, but their efforts were put separately into each vecindad, and thus did not create strong enough power. People started to realize that they had no knowledge of their rights, and also that it was impossible to expect generosity or good will from the authorities and landlords. They started to be convinced that landlords were too greedy to invest money into maintenance of vecindades and that the authorities were not going to force landlords to fix their vecindades.

The union of these separate organizations was triggered on October 11, 1976, by the collapse of one vecindad. This happened on 68 Mar Street, where UVCG now has an office and a storage space. Although there was no human cost by this collapse, people's frustration was at its height.

A few days later, people of the neighborhood who were affected by the collapse in the past or were in danger of collapse in the future gathered at the church nearby, Iglesia de Santa Maria, and autonomously formed La Union de Vecinos de la Colonia Guerrero (UVCG), which aimed to attain a safer and more just life. This was the beginning of UVCG. It started as a group of people who fought against eviction and who cooperated in the incidence of collapse. Old members told me that they used to run and hide when they saw landlords but the first thing they learned from UVCG was not to be afraid of landlords. In other words, UVCG taught them to defend their rights as tenants. By belonging to the organization, people's awareness was broadening.

Little by little, members of UVCG fixed houses on 68 Mar Street, etc., by picking up pieces and putting walls and roofs back. Their rented rooms or apartments in vecindades were getting old, therefore, the objectives of UVCG also expanded to put their effort in reconstructing these falling vecindades. People organized themselves to help reinforce walls in danger of falling apart. At that time, there was no possibility for them to obtain their own housing. But they started to take the initiative to defend their lives

and their places to live. They were clearly aware of the power of organized people.

THE GROWTH PERIOD

The devaluation of the peso in November, 1976, affected members of UVCG significantly. The prices of primary necessities went up and rent increases happened as well. There were many cases where landlords forced tenants to sign papers for increasing rent. The tenants, of course, did so, otherwise, they would face immediate eviction; with landlords demanding the immediate termination of the contract, (if indeed there was one.) Landlords continued giving receipts for the older lower rents (or no receipt at all) so as to avoid being accused of illegal rent increase by the government.

Injustice like this continued and the influence of UVCG became stronger. Although UVCG did not always succeed in achieving its demands, people's participation grew significantly. Though participation, people realized the advantages of organizing themselves with others who faced similar problems. At the same time, they came to realize that the laws are not made to support nor protect tenants. Thus, they came to reject the legitimacy of authority.

The 1980's still saw many evictions, collapses, etc. UVCG sought to work on its networking and joined *Asamblea Nacional de Movimiento Urbana Popular* or the National Coordination Council of Popular Urban Movements (ANAMUP). According to Covington (1990:2-9), *Coordinadora Nacional de*

Movimiento Urbana Popular (CONAMUP), which became ANAMUP later, was formed in 1981 with the intention of creating a horizontal integration of locally-based organizations. Covington analyzes how CONAMUP "has sought to unite local struggles in order to strengthen its challenge to state urban development policies and forge ties with independent labor and peasant organizations in order to build a social base for fundamental structural change." Prieto (1986:81) also analyzes ANAMUP and concludes that it has shifted the level of struggle from that of production to reproduction, which succeeded in attracting "a wide range of actors in support of the revolutionary movement."

On the topic of networking, it has to be noted that UVCG has consciously attempted to reject help from political, religious, and professional groups. At the general assembly, people voted "no" for receiving financial help from Fathers of Santa Maria church and also for receiving technical help from Centro Operacional de Vivienda y Poblamiento (COPEVI), a group of architects. The reason behind it was that people believed the movements had to be carried out exclusively by the tenants themselves.

In 1985, Mexico City experienced a strong earthquake which destroyed many buildings. Streets were filled with people who lost their houses. UVCG made a kitchen and provided meals for earthquake victims. Many members came to help run this kitchen. People gained a feeling of self-worth by helping others. As an organization, the experience

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was helpful as well, since it successfully played the part which the government should have played. Success, continuing proof of government incapacity, and the feeling of antipathy against the government, all have led to greater sense of empowerment among people in Colonia Guerrero.

After the earthquake, UVCG negotiated with the government to provide shelters for homeless people. Despite the government's rejection, UVCG now has several shelters. The shelter on Blanca Street, for example, is on a space between roads. UVCG had no legal right to build a shelter there, however, people desperately needed places to live. Thus, they illegally occupied the land and built the shelter. The government tried to shut it down, but people resisted strongly since they had nowhere else to go. It still remains as a shelter. This is another clear demonstration of people's rejection of government authority.

The idea of remaining inside Colonia Guerrero is rooted deeply in members of UVCG. A leader of UVCG told me that the government has plans to transfer inhabitants of shelters to the peripheral areas. She added, "People can not be simply transplanted as if we were plants!"

After the earthquake in 1985, UVCG also started to build some apartment buildings with donations from foreign organizations such as Red Cross and the loans from the government and banks. Negotiation with the government and banks for loans have been consistently carried out. More than fifteen apartment buildings were completed and housed

over three hundred families. Currently, they are constructing a large apartment called *Sol*, which will house 152 families. Its construction is in the last stage and people had to pay deposit of 5500 pesos (approximately US\$915) by June 1995. More than half the people were able to pay only partially and some were not able to pay at all. Some people resigned their right to move in because of their economic incapacity. Once people move in, they will be paying monthly rent of 600 pesos (US\$100) for twenty-five years as their repayment. Economically, it is tough, but mentally it is a relief, because they do not have to worry about rent increase or eviction anymore.

MEMBERS

There are just a little more than three hundred members currently in 1995. About 80 percent of them are women. As I discuss more detail in the following chapter, women's participation is supported by husbands cooperation in many cases.

Members economic conditions vary. Some earn 20 pesos a day (which will come to minimum salary of 500 pesos), some are unemployed and currently looking for a job, and some earn as much as 3500 pesos per month. This demonstrates that among the poor, some are even poorer. Variation within social classes can be seen.

ORGANIZATION

Rosa has been the leader since 1988. She was elected at the general assembly after participating in UVCG for six

years. She told me that she was scared of the responsibility and that she was nervous to speak in front of the microphone at first. But she learned little by little through experience.

There are ten council members (six women and four men) but some of them are not currently working. They have a meeting every Wednesday and discuss what the subjects for general assembly will be and whether there are some issues that need to be protested, etc.

UVCG is very democratic. Councils come up with proposals or suggestions at the Wednesday meeting, but everything has to be voted on at the general assembly on Saturday nights. The leader is just like another member. Her opinion will not be approved unless people vote yes at the general assembly.

For instance, the current leader, Rosa, used to have a job in a factory, but she quit it in order to devote her time to UVCG's work. In addition, her husband was temporarily unemployed and she was in a very bad economic condition. She was assigned the right to move into an apartment that UVCG would start building soon. However, she did not have enough money to pay the deposit, like some other members. At general assembly, people voted that if they did not pay the deposit, they would lose their right to move in. Therefore, Rosa, just like other members who could not pay, lost her right and continues to live in a caseta built of wood, metal pieces, and plastic sheets.

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Commissions which are currently active are Comision de Mujeres (women's commission) and Comision de Juridica (juridical commission). The women's commission has seven members. They organize event on Mother's Day and sometimes give toys to children. They also negotiated with DIF (Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia), a government agency which is in charge of family integration and development, for rations of breakfast and basic foods for two years and succeeded in obtaining cheap rations since 1989.

Members with children under the age of twelve or seniors who are more than fifty-five are eligible for receiving breakfast. Pregnant women are also eligible and when they deliver a baby, their babies start to receive it. People have to bring birth certificates to prove their eligibility. Each child or senior receives six bags of breakfast per week. One bag contains one box of milk (250ml) and a cookie and it costs 0.2 pesos. People usually organize within the property and rotate to come to pick up the distribution. Also, there is dispensation of basic food: rice (3kg), beans (1kg), and two packets of pasta for 2.5 pesos. DIF charges one peso for the dispensation but to cover the cost of transportation and packing, members of UVCG agreed to pay 2.5 pesos to UVCG. One kg of rice alone cost three or four pesos in a store, thus 2.5 pesos for rice, beans, and pasta is quite cheap and people express their appreciation.

FINANCE

UVCG itself has almost no economic resources. First of all, UVCG does not ask fees from members. When UVCG builds apartments, it negotiates with the government agencies and banks for loans. That is how UVCG is able to provide housing for the members. For the construction of Sol, for instance, they negotiated with government agencies such as FICAPRO (Fideicomiso de Casa Propia) and FIVIDESU (Fideicomiso de Vivienda, Desarrollo Social y Urbano).

A few years ago, UVCG carried out socioeconomic studies with each family who will be moving into Sol. The banks do not lend money to someone who does not have jobs or the capacity to pay back. In order to be eligible for loans, people must have stable work with a salary that enables them to cover the expenses including rent. Minimum monthly earning of 1800 pesos is required. An upper limit is not set. Each one of them has to pay more or less 42500 nuevos pesos (or about US\$7100) to pay off their apartments in Sol within 25 years.

Outside non-governmental organizations, such as COPEVI (Centro Operacional de Vivienda y Poblamiento), do not donate money, either. Only when the earthquake hit Mexico City in 1985, did UVCG obtain donations from foreign organizations such as the Dutch Red Cross but these were spent on construction and reconstruction. Thus, UVCG is not in a good condition financially, however, this is how UVCG remains independent from any outside organization.

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ACTIVITIES

Activities of UVCG include organizing meetings every Saturday night, preventing eviction (*desalojo*) by gathering many people, the rehabilitation of houses (*jornada*), painting announcements on the walls (*pinta*), organizing marches, providing donations for the families of the deceased (*boteo*), communal cleaning (*aseo*), and guarding the property of UVCG (*guardia*), etc.

The system of UVCG is that members accumulate points by participating these activities. At the meetings or marches, members report to a person in charge of marking their presence in the notebook. The more points they have, the more likely they are to obtain housing. People who have many points, for example, are given the priority in choosing which housing they want to move in to. Those who chose Sol expect to receive housing sometime in 1996. People with fewer points are simply assigned the leftover. A minimum of two-year-participation is required to obtain the right to move in to houses. The aim of UVCG is to achieve people's dream of obtaining houses. The leader of UVCG expressed that they want this done in exchange for hard work, so that people value and take good care of their new houses. By participating in meetings and marches, people are expected to learn the importance of cooperation and hard work.

In fact, people who used to hide when they saw landlords have come long way. They are now more aware of their rights and are working hard to defend themselves. UVCG

also sent some female members to Acapulco to attend courses on feminism. Monthly publication of "*La voz de la Guerrero*" is another activity by UVCG, which also contributes to the education of members. Publication has been continued since the foundation of UVCG. In fact, the education contributed considerably for the members changes in their perception, which will be discussed in the following chapter in more detail.

Desalojo (eviction).

When I was visiting Angelica who lives in a shelter on Luz Street, suddenly a bell rang. In the shelter, a coordinator rings a bell when there is an emergency or when they have something to announce. Angelica rushed to the entrance where people gather. I waited in her caseta with her babies. She came back and told me that there was eviction at 261 Merida Street. It was about 11:00 a.m.

When UVCG started, people with bicycles let people know when there was an eviction. Then another organization taught UVCG to use three rockets (*cohetes*). People rushed to where *cohetes* were launched. Nowadays, people communicate by telephone. It costs 2000 pesos to install the telephone but a few people even in the shelter have one. Tenants who face problems often ask help from shelter residents.

Angelica could not go to the *desalojo* because of her babies, so I went with other people from the shelter. Six of us piled into the small Volkswagen beetle taxi and rushed to Merida Street. Some people came by bicycle. When we

arrived there, there were about 30 members, already arguing at the entrance of the vecindad. Rosa and Maria, council members, were among them. A man and a woman were shouting that tenants had not paid the rent for two months. People gathered there explained to me that this man and woman are not even landlords. Furthermore, they told me that tenants have been paying rent but simply do not have the receipts and that this man and woman are lying. I was not sure what to believe, since these tenants looked too poor to pay rent.

So-called landlords and members of UVCG argued at the entrance for a while, then we all climbed up to see the room that was locked and blocked by the landlords despite of protests by tenants. However, being surrounded by the mass of people from UVCG, the landlords agreed to open the house and let the tenants in. This is one example of the power of the mass. Accumulation of small people's power resulted in strong coercion.

The tenants agreed to discuss the matter that night at the UVCG office and we all left the building. People from the shelter rarely use a taxi: mostly to arrive quickly at a site of an eviction. On our way home, of course we did not take a taxi. We walked back to the shelter together. It took us about fifteen minutes.

At eight o'clock at night, the tenants came to the office to talk with the juridical commission. The leader of UVCG was also there. The situation was that the so-called landlords did not have the legal papers proving that they

were landlords. The woman claimed that her deceased father was a landlord, and therefore she is one now. However, her father did not have legal right to be a landlord either. What is more, some tenants do not even have contracts or a fixed rent. According to the tenants, the contract was made verbally. Therefore, landlords charge them various rents with the excuse of the cost for water and electricity. Current tenants pay from 150 to 300 pesos per month, but the landlords are not satisfied. They want to have wealthier tenants to be able to charge more rent. Thus, they are trying to evict the current tenants with an excuse that they do not pay rent. The tenants have been paying the rent every month but landlords do not give them receipts, thus tenants can not prove their payment. The juridical commission advised tenants to obtain proof that so-called landlords do not have legal right and also any kind of documents that can prove their points. UVCG will then question so-called landlords formally with these documents.

These tenants did not belong to UVCG. Miguel, one of two members of juridical commission, told me that tenants do not realize that there is something they can do, since they are ignorant about their rights as tenants. They also did not perceive the landlords' illegality of not giving them contracts nor receipts. Under such condition, landlords do whatever they want to do, such as evicting tenants or increasing the rent outrageously.

LIVING CONDITION IN THE SHELTERS

Currently, about 90 percent of the active members live in shelters. The largest of all the shelters is on 18 Luz Street where I temporarily lived during my fieldwork. It was, at first, built by the government for earthquake victims as temporary housing during reconstructing their vecindades. When people moved into their new houses in 1988, the government tried to shut it down to be used for other purposes. However, there were plenty of people who desperately needed a place to live. Thus, UVCG could not let the government destroy the shelter. One day, UVCG organized 17 families, invaded the shelter at night, and has been occupying it for seven years. People had to take turns to guard 24 hours at the entrance not to let police or government officials in. There is a mobile fence at the entrance of the shelter and it is still locked at night in order not to let outsiders in.

A little more than two hundred people live in this shelter currently. There are 48 casetas used as living space and 4 as storage. On average, there are five people in one caseta of 4x8-meter rectangular space, but a few were occupied by only one and a few were occupied by two or three families (totaling up to ten people!) About half the casetas were occupied by the same family for more than five years. About 20 percent came less than two years ago. People in thirty of the forty-eight casetas used to rent a house. Of the reasons given for coming to the shelter, nine

of them said eviction, eight had economic problem, seven had dwellings that collapsed, and six had trouble with their landlords. There are sixteen cases where people used to live with relatives but had trouble (either conflict or capability problem) and thus they had to come to the shelter. In most cases, people faced urgent problem of finding new place to live, thus, they could not afford to choose which organization to go to for help. Only one family tried out another organization but it did not seem to be functioning, thus they came to UVCG. Fourteen of them were from Colonia Guerrero. The rest are from outside of Colonia Guerrero, but they got to know UVCG through their relatives or friends. (See appendix)

Residents of the shelter do not pay rent. Water and electricity are free as well, but there are frequent water shortages. The cost of gas is the only expense people pay. They decided that each caseta pays the cost according to the number of people who live. For example, they pay 11 pesos every month if a caseta is occupied by one person and 30 pesos for five people.

There are two communal kitchens and four communal showers, which are not enough for two hundred people. They are both simply made with metal pieces. Men and women have two separate bathrooms each. Three people can go in there at the same time and there are no doors in between three toilet bowls, thus there is no privacy. There are two laundry spaces. Each has water taps with stone washing

boards for several people. Residents have ropes in front of their own casetas to hang their washed clothes. Some people have washing machines and bring them to laundry spaces.

Everyone takes turns to be coordinator, assistant, and treasurer. This way they all learn to run things in the organization. They also take turns to clean the communal kitchens, bathrooms, and passages. People learn to cooperate and to be responsible by carrying out these duties. If people do not do their cleaning duty, they have to clean communal kitchens, bathrooms and passages on the following day. People have set up their own rules such as these and they run their shelter by themselves. This kind of communal way of living was new experience for all the residents. It contributed to give people idea of cooperation and responsibility.

Communal kitchens and laundry spaces are places for socialization. Around three o'clock in the afternoon, kitchens are filled with women carrying vegetables, meat, tortillas, cooking oils, frying pans, cooking utensils, soaps, etc. Cooking utensils are frequently lent and borrowed. Everyone knows what other people are eating, naturally. They also told me that they can tell other families economic condition by looking at what they are cooking; if they are cooking meat, they have money; if they are eating soup, beans, and eggs, they do not have money.

In some casetas, there are new TV, stereo, beautiful tables, chairs, decorations, etc. In others, there are only

old beds, with no decoration, no dining tables, no chairs, and very little furniture. Thus, it is very obvious that people's economic capacity varies. Some had no jobs and some families have more than one person with a job. Some have a job in the U.S. Their occupations vary from office workers, taxi drivers, vendors at the market, and even professional robbers.

Although the majority of residents are quite poor, theft still happens inside of the shelter and people tend to hide their wealth, (if they have any). People often go to other casetas to borrow ten pesos (\$1 = 6 pesos) and cannot pay it back for more than a week.

At the entrance, one woman always sells fruits and sweets during daytime. At night, other women sell fried bananas, chicken legs, *tamales*, *atoles*, etc. More women join and sell their own foods at times of tight economic condition. At night, I saw people working inside of their casetas as well. Some fold cardboard boxes for the cake store. One woman told me that she earns 20 pesos by folding 1000 pieces of cardboard, which takes the whole night. Until around 1 am, many casetas have lights on and people are working or relaxing. Many people wash clothes at night. After 1 am, the shelter becomes quiet.

Some inhabitants told me about how nice it was to be able to sleep under a roof. At the same time, however, they told me about the hardship of living in the shelter. First of all, not having water in their casetas causes various

problems. It is not convenient to have to go to communal kitchen or bathroom especially during heavy rain or in the middle of the night. Families with babies and small children especially found it difficult to bathe them or feed them sanitarily. The majority of casetas are well kept. Many people wash the floors and in front of their casetas daily with water and soap, but mice and cockroaches are still present.

There is not much privacy in the shelter. Metal sheets are very thin, thus people can hear what is happening in other casetas quite well. They often experience noise problems from music, children playing, etc. Furthermore, one finds difficult to sleep, change, or study since a whole family is in one room. Most of the children go to school but some quit without finishing even the primary level. Some children work discarding garbage from other casetas to earn 1 peso, or sell cardboard picked up from the street or obtained from the stores. Numbers of places purchase one kilo of cardboard for about five pesos, which will be sold to recycling company.

PROBLEMS OF UVCG

Sometime in 1996, an apartment building, Sol, will be completed. When UVCG was building shelters, the government made them sign a document that UVCG would agree to closing all the shelters when Sol is opened. However, not everyone from the shelter can move in. What is more, there are more families waiting for an empty caseta to move in to.

Therefore, UVCG has to face these problems in the very near future. The rent for a small one-bedroom apartment is one thousand pesos. Ordinary people, in a country of 500 pesos minimum salary, are not likely to find an affordable place to live.

Secondly, UVCG does not expect extensive external support. Thus, it is not willing to set up affiliation with political, religious, or professional groups. They extend their networks only to other colonias with common interests through ANAMUP. Whether this exclusive tendency works in a positive or negative way is debatable.

Also, people's continuing participation after attaining their goal is a problem for UVCG; many people stop participating actively once they obtain housing. A man, who used to be more active before obtaining housing, expressed that "people have other trajectories of life now." How to overcome this problem is another key to the future success of UVCG.

INTERVIEW WITH CARMEN

Here, I present an interview with Carmen. Despite of having cancer, Carmen is a very active member of UVCG. She lives alone in a small caseta in front of where UVCG's weekly meeting is held. Because of her hard work, people agreed that she would receive an apartment in Sol despite of her incapacity to pay. She has not long to live; when she dies, another family from the shelter will replace her and start paying the rent.

Carmen: I came to the shelter on Luz Street in 1988. Prior to that, I was living in Colonia Santa Rosa, which is located in northern part of D.F. There was a gas leakage and the house I used to live was burnt. I lost everything and I became homeless.

I was only 15 when I got married. I had a beautiful life. My husband passed away 16 years ago. I have several children. Now I even have great grand children. My children were all grown up and have their own lives with their spouses and children in their own space. I didn't want to bother them, so I was on my own.

One of my friends said to me, "Let's go to Colonia Guerrero. They have shelters there." I did not know what to do because I had never lived in a place like a shelter. She also said to me that if we fight enough, we will be able to obtain our own house. So I went to the shelter on Luz Street. I felt terrible, because once we were in there, we were in a closed space. We were enclosed and couldn't leave. I had never lived like that.

When I went to ask if I could join them, they at first refused me because I did not have necessary papers. After a while, they finally accepted me. I was relieved. But we were still in danger. The government wanted to remove us from the property. We resisted and insisted that we stay there. But the government kept saying no. They wanted our space for the offices or luxury apartments. That is why we fight.

I was in the shelter on Luz Street for three years. I had to work very hard for UVCG. I participated in guarding (guardia) and I went to march. There were cold days and hot days, and I became sick. People took me to a doctor. He examined me and told me that I had cancer. Members of UVCG provided me with a great help. They took care of transportation to go to hospitals and also gathered money to cover my hospital expenses. I was in a critical condition. Probably my dream of obtaining my own house and the support from the *companeros* helped me survive through the operation. UVCG is like a big family to me and I am happy here.

I once thought that dreaming of obtaining a house is like trying to reach the stars in the sky. It seemed impossible. But one *companero* said to me one day, "Let's reach to the stars then!"

This movement is very beautiful. We listen to cohetes (rockets) and run to see what is going on. It is very beautiful. When you are in trouble, *companeros* will run to help negotiate and stop eviction. Holding meetings and participating in them are beautiful ways to communicate with people as well. We can get information and we can be together, united.

I lived on 221 Santiago street after leaving Luz Street. Santiago is another space that we invaded. It was idle land. The building was almost falling down. Some of the rooms made of adobe were in terrible condition. The owner was very rich and owned many other houses and

properties. We invaded to live on this land and fought with the landlord to sell us the land. He threatened to put us in jail. We went to a government agency to see if we could purchase the land. We badly needed place to live. We finally won and constructed 15 apartments in the end.

Our strength is in our great numbers. We unite, fight, and march with great numbers of people. We all are a part of the chain, a very big chain, made up with each colonia. We march by gathering various colonias. Each organization sends two people to the meetings of ANAMUP. People inform each other and make suggestions. ANAMUP transmits information about marches. In order not to be attacked by the authorities, who try to lock us up and beat us, we have support from a large organization like ANAMUP.

The government promises a lot and says beautiful things but they do not carry them out. They promised to construct some houses, for example, and it was reported in newspapers. So we ask them, "Where are you going to construct them?" They responded "we don t know yet." That's why we protested again. The government says conditions of Mexicans are improving, however, we have so much unemployment and we wear clothes with patches. What is this? We want the government to recognize our real condition. So we protest and march under ANAMUP. We organize and carry out peaceful marches. We ask for solutions. We don t want aggression.

We make our living by working. We never ask the government to maintain us. We only ask them to sell the

land to us. UVCG taught us to live together and to fight together to be able to obtain houses. The government has so many things. They have money and they have power. That is why we fight. We want only a little share that each Mexican should get from the government. They stick to their power, so we need to pressure them. We make them do things by fighting and by marching. That is why we unite. We really need to make the government understand that the first thing we need is housing. Appropriate food for our children is also very important. We want all the Mexicans to be healthy, prepared, and be with a strong volunteer spirit. But that is not possible without food. We demand our right of having mild, sugar, etc. The children of today will be men and women of tomorrow. But if we do not have employment, what are our children going to eat?

We are an independent organization. We do not have connections with any political parties. Many people in Mexico support PRI, because Zedillo said, "Vote for peace. Vote for your family. Vote for me." And this is what we have? People are suffering in Chiapas. Indigenous people are attacked. Many of our children in Chiapas are almost dying from hunger.

Isabel and Rosa reported to us about the predicament of Chiapas. Some organizations decided to take a trip to Chiapas so UVCG sent those two. That is how we know the necessity and the pain of the people in Chiapas. We were informed from UVCG, not from newspaper nor television. We

were informed from our members direct experience. We sent these two representatives to provide a helping hand to the indigenous people, our people in Chiapas. We are not economically rich but we managed to send biscuits, milk, cheese, and cans, so that our indigenous people can receive what little we have.

When they came back from Chiapas, the government said what we were telling was a lie. They said that we were lying about our trip to Chiapas, about us reaching the woods, and about the murder of the people there. It is terrible that the government like this owns the lives of powerless people such as indigenous people and those who cannot even speak Spanish. This is a big lie of the government. I do not want my children and grand children to live under a government which lies. The government of Mexico is a murderer. They are attacking every one of us.

We have diverse interests. We march, firstly, for housing, and also for the May Day. On May Day, we march because our salary is very low and is not enough to maintain anyone's life with dignity, because today, we are more restricted than before, because our children have more needs than before, and because workers do not have the protection they used to have anymore.

We are also involved in the protests which defend the rights of teachers. The government was making them work more hours with less salary. Also we were involved with the issue of workers rights; employers lack consideration of

working conditions, hours, and pay. There are many workers who became sick because of poor working conditions.

We teach our children to be careful with water. Also, we attempt to use soaps that do not pollute water. Before, we protested against the factory which was contaminating the water. We do these things not only for the Mexicans but for everyone. We are concerned with the contamination on the world scale. We have to take care of our world. Our world now is full of contamination, noise, factories, and garbage. All of these affect all of us. That is why we march and protest.

Summary.

Carmen is a typical case. Participation in UVCG made her aware of many contradictions around her. As a result, she became radicalized. As I have described in this chapter, many members exhibited similar tendencies. Participation in UVCG has enabled people to become aware of their rights, of some of the contradictions in their society, and of their capacity to change the status quo. This transformation of people's perceptions through participation is quite visible.

The following chapter will focus on the female residents of Luz shelter. Their value changes, both general and gender-oriented, will be highlighted.

CHAPTER V

REBUILDING GENDER IDENTITY

In this chapter, I delve into the shelter dwellers' perceptions of identity and gender. How have members' values changed through their participation in the social movements? Are members of UVCG pursuing strategic interests as well as practical ones? Do these two interests interplay at all? How are these interests manifested in individual or household level? To delve into these issues, perceptions of the members of UVCG, mostly women, were examined through interviews.

Interviews were conducted with representatives from forty eight casetas in Sol shelter. Seventy five percent of the respondents were females. One of the casetas is occupied by only one man. Out of forty seven casetas, fifteen of them (32 percent) did not have husbands. These fifteen women are single mothers, divorced, or their husbands are dead. Eleven of these fifteen women work either inside or outside the house. This proportion is higher than women in the shelter in general, of which is 46 percent work. Women who do not have husbands and who do not work have other outside sources such as patrons and relatives to help them economically. Fifteen households (31 percent) have children under school age. Among those fifteen, eight women (53 percent) work, either outside or

inside of the house. When they work outside, older children, relatives, or neighbor's children, take care of their small children, thus statistically, the existence of small children does not seem to affect their choice of working or not working.

At first I will present an analysis of practical interests in general. Then a focus will be shifted to strategic interests. Finally, I will specify my analysis on strategic gender interests.

PRACTICAL INTERESTS

In case of UVCG, the movement started with practical interests. People organized themselves in order to avoid eviction from 1976 to 1985 and their objectives expanded to rehabilitation of old vecindades and construction of new apartment buildings after the earthquake thanks to the financial help from other sources at first and then loans from the government agencies as shown in the previous chapter.

Every one of forty-eight shelter dwellers whom I interviewed identified obtaining housing as primary or a part of their objectives today. Asked what their expectations are from UVCG, twenty out of forty eight (42 percent) responded that they expect nothing but housing from UVCG. For a future goal of UVCG, twenty two (46 percent) responded to help people obtain housing. Asked what their

concerns are, close to 50 percent responded with nothing but obtaining housing. These fifty percent did not seem to show their concern in gender, social, nor political issues. (See appendix) According to Sandra, one of the members of COPEVI, 74 percent of marches in Mexico City in 1994 focused on issues of collective consumption. There are groups voicing lack of housing as well as lack of services of water or electricity. Thus, the context of material or pragmatic gain in people's movements is strong.

In the case of UVCG, the issues of water and electricity were no longer major concerns. Probably because of the location, a lack of provision of water and electricity is rare. Also because of the location, garbage pick-up service is provided. People usually dump garbage on the street in front of their property and government trucks come to pick it up. Thus, people's pursuit of these practical interests were not evident.

There has been an attempt to have a child care center to enable women to go out to work. Some women enthusiastically said that they are eager to go to work if that plan is realized:

It will be great if we achieve to have child care. Women can go to work without worrying, because we will know that our kids will be safe in Colonia Guerrero under the supervision of people we know.

However, as I discussed above, when they desperately need to go out to work, they manage to find someone, relatives or neighbor's older children, to look after their small children. Thus, although there is a need for a child care center, it is not urgent.

In some cases, a woman, who is a full-time housewife, looks after neighbor's children voluntarily. For example, within the apartment on Bolivar Street, Lucy looks after the children of her neighbors. She goes to elementary school to pick up her own and her neighbors' children at 12:30, walks them back to Bolivar, feeds them, and looks after them until their mothers come home from work at around three or four. Lucy said, "I just like to help." She is a *comadre* of these neighbors' children, which could explain Lucy's considerable investment in these children. She did not articulate her contribution as enabling women to have equal opportunity with men. In other words, she does not perceive the element of pursuing strategic gender interests in her action.

An attempt for demanding sanitation and health clinic was simply not evident. Asked about a community effort for a health clinic, Angelica explained that:

We get decent health care from the government. A clinic run by the government is close from here and they sometime provide us with vaccination for infants, dogs, etc. We fortunately have these services.

One aspect of pursuing practical interest was seen in their fight of obtaining breakfast. Angelica talks about solicitation to DIF, a government agency:

Women's commission organized marches to demand provision of breakfast to DIF. We learned that we had to defend our rights and our children's rights. I don't think we are behaving like beggars. We are just asking for help which is necessary to maintain healthy families. That's why we are paying a lot of taxes in Mexico City and the government should contribute to improve the lives of people with scarce resources. Yes. I learned these concept of defending our rights from UVCG. This fight is to improve our lives, not only to obtain decent housing. It is also to maintain healthy family and to defend our children.

Expansion of their interests.

Participation in UVCG brought people, who used to be isolated or who used to be struggling individually, together. They used to have little awareness of their capability to organize and their rights than they do now. People, who were not aware of the importance of uniting or organizing before and who were hiding from the landlords, now talk about how important and beautiful organizing is. Awareness of the advantage of organizing and the capacity of organized people were clearly evident. Linda says:

Before I knew UVCG, I was easily intimidated. Now, there are some things that don't scare me anymore. Well. I still have problems and it is hard to face these problems. But it seems that everybody has problems and everybody finds ways to solve these problems. Thanks to the experience of UVCG, our possibilities are opening up more and this is beautiful.

Angelica:

Before, I was fighting alone. It is very difficult to rent an apartment in Mexico City for people with scarce resources. Only by uniting, organizing, and fighting together, we are able to obtain credits from the government.

Cooperation, which UVCG is trying to promote, is crucial for a successful organization. Cooperation is also important in order to understand the expansion of people's interest from practical to strategic. Practical interests could be pursued with organized individualistic people. But for the pursuit of strategic interests, the concept of sharing or altruism may be important, because the fight is partly for themselves but also for other people who share the same identities.

For example, members of UVCG organize to support others economically. In the case of member's death, even poor people contribute what little money they have for the family of the deceased, especially when they are extremely poor. In addition, volunteers from UVCG go around the neighborhood to ask for donations to provide extra economic help.

Other activities, such as rehabilitation of old houses, guarding of property that UVCG purchased for future construction of apartments, stopping eviction, etc., too, lead to promote cooperation value. Gloria says:

I have learned to live together with the community and to help each other in order to achieve our goals against the government. Now it is clear that one person's strength is not enough. I have learned that cooperating at the community level will bring out the vital strength.

With a touch of festivity, UVCG organizes a party once a year on the day when the Santa Maria Church holds festival in August. People organize themselves and set up food stands. They cook together and sell *atole*, *tamales*, *quezadillos*, etc. Many of them told me, "It is great fun." A dance party was organized a few years ago as well. Running a food stand and organizing a dance party naturally enhances their communication and connections to one another and thus facilitate cooperation.

Cooperation naturally strengthens the cohesion of a group. When people tightly identify themselves with the group, the category of "we" is created and a creation of "we" will lead to a categorization of "they". Organizing and cooperating values have led women of UVCG to have clear understanding of 'we, the neglected citizens' versus 'they, the government.'

Their perception of fighting against "them" or "the government" is quite powerful. Miguel says:

Before, we fought against landlords. I think that the government and banks are our new opponents now. They are our new landlords, if you will.

Also Rosa says that:

We march and we protest to the government, because the government wants to leave us without decent salary, without employment, and without food that is necessary for our children to grow up. Today, we don't have possibility of providing clothes, shoes, school materials, or things youths need to progress in life under these conditions.

One example of their clear categorization is evident in people committing to evade evictions even for the tenants who do not belong to UVCG. Margarita, who proudly pointed at her glasses which one of the lenses was cracked by a blow from the landlord, says "we won!" Since she cannot afford to fix them, she has been wearing cracked glasses for two years but with the satisfaction of "our" triumph.

Now, they are aware of their organized power to change the status quo as well. Juliana told me that:

UVCG taught us that we have to take action in order to bring about changes and in order to improve our lives. We have to go out to the street to get what we want.

Rosa, the leader of UVCG, explains that:

We demonstrate to the government that with work, with effort, with firmness, with fight, with participation, and with unity of all the *companeros*, we have the strength to defend our space, our house, and our children.

In sum, new values such as cooperation and organization resulted in enabling people to solidify their identity as "we." Compared to when they were confined in house, much more social and political issues became relevant to their lives.

STRATEGIC INTERESTS

Many women showed concern for children's education. Their participation in the teacher's movement is partly from practical interests but also partly from strategic interests, because they are aware

of not only the power of education but also the greater implication of supporting the teacher's movement:

UVCG marched together with teachers, because if teachers earn better salary, well, they will teach our children better. What is more, they will contribute to the society more.

This statement clearly exhibits women's concern for both practical interests and strategic interests. Through their experience in UVCG, they came to learn and realize that they should actively demand their right and their children's right to live in a better society. Some people seem to be pursuing or ready to pursue both practical and strategic interests.

Accordingly, some people see different objectives in their participation in UVCG than mere practical interests. Juan explained:

For me, obtaining a house is secondary. Yes. We do want it. But what I see is people, helping each other and trying to survive together by cooperating. That is the ultimate goal for UVCG.

Some seemed to be even surprised to hear the question.

What do I expect from UVCG? On the contrary, UVCG is giving us a lot. It has protected us very good. So now we are here to serve UVCG.

Asked what the goal of UVCG, response from 54 percent of the people went beyond mere housing. (See appendix) Some perceived that their goals are "*grandísimo!*" Maria responds, for example,

I don't think we should have fixed goals. There are so many problems and we should get involved in many

different marches, for example, to achieve these goals. People's needs are, unfortunately, increasing.

STRATEGIC GENDER INTERESTS

Among strategic interests, let us specifically focus on the aspect of gender interests. For this purpose, more in-depth individual interviews were conducted with six mothers, living in Sol shelter: Angelica, Gloria, and Ernesta, who have little children under school age and Juana, Linda, and Juliana, who have older children. Angelica was my closest friend in this shelter because I stayed at her caseta, thus I asked her to help me select the other five women. Two categories of women were selected by the age of their children to see the difference in women at different stages of life cycle. However, I did not find any significant difference among these two categories of women. It may be partly due to their close friendship, but their responses turned out to be quite uniform. Women's analysis of self similarly exhibited the changes they have experienced through their participation in UVCG.

Women, analyzing themselves.

When asked if they see themselves as traditional mothers, every one of these six women said no. Angelica explains,

Traditionally, women in Mexico are very conservative. They, well, not all, but majority of them, think that men have to go out for work and for struggle. She thinks that he finds place to live for the family. But women in UVCG are not like that. UVCG teaches us, women, that we should also fight for obtaining better ways of life.

I asked Ernesta if she thinks female participants of UVCG are different from mainstream traditional women. She responded:

Sure. Yes. I was chatting with women who do not belong to any of these organizations the other day. These women only dedicate themselves to their houses and that's it. But women in UVCG are not like that. We dedicate ourselves to work and fight for housing and for the family. But what traditional women think of is exclusively their housework.

Asked if her perspective was changed by participating to UVCG, Juana says:

When I didn't know about UVCG, I had very different views, well, about how a life is. Before joining UVCG, I never worked outside. I was always with my children at home, taking care of them and also my husband. At that time, I was thinking that this is what the life is. Well, I joined UVCG and I changed radically, because I came to learn many things and I came to see many things. Well, what I had been doing was good, but I realized that I can do more than that.

Changes brought by the participation to UVCG affect women's role in the family as well. Some women are not solely responsible for the rigid obligation of housework anymore. Gloria says:

This participation is for all the family. In some ways, my husband and my children also have to contribute. My husband should help me.

Linda says:

Well, participation in UVCG affected my relationship with my husband to some degree. Sometimes, he comes home and the meal is not ready yet. But I don't think that I am neglecting my responsibility. It's that my time is not all for my house anymore. I have to leave to work and to fight.

Relationships between wife and husband were affected because of women's participation in UVCG. The changes were in many cases positive ones. Ernesta explains:

Sometimes, he comes home and wants to eat but I'm not home. I am out for meetings or marches. But he doesn't impose me not to go. On the contrary, he looks after the children so that I can go out without worrying about them. We learned many things by participating in UVCG and as a result, I now have more intimate relationship with my husband. This participation did not destroy our family. On the contrary, it opened our eyes and we take care of each other better.

There are some families that both husband and wife help each other to participate in UVCG. Gloria says:

I need to go out for meeting and marches frequently. Before, my husband thought that I was neglecting my family. But now he lends me hands, looking after the children when I go out. He cooperates and facilitates me. And when there are activities such as rehabilitation of houses, he participates and I stay at home with children.

Thus, woman made up eighty percent of those who attended meetings and marches, but their husbands were also involved by facilitating their wives' participation.

In the case of Juana, understanding of gender relations was accelerated by education. She was sent to Acapulco by the UVCG to attend a course called, "Feminism, politics and identity." She enthusiastically told me about what she learned from it:

Well. We women have had very wrong ideas about feminism, no? We thought that if someone was a feminist, she may be a lesbian. Or people may think that feminists are against them in all perspectives. But that's not true. I think that being a feminist

does not prevent a woman from working harmoniously with men. In fact, I think it's opposite. The idea of feminism is to search a way to harmoniously be together with men. The other thing I learned is that we women have as many rights as men do. Well, I didn't think like this before. I used to think that it was O.K. for my husband to come home late at night, drunk. I also used to think that I needed to stay at home, only looking after the children. Well, I realized that women can and should do the same as men. In other words, we can go for coffee with our friends or we can even go out for a drink.

Juliana also talked about the second aspect about being equal to men:

Before, only men worked, right? Now women also go out to work and I think that is beautiful. Women learned that we don't have to be at home all the time, cooking, and ironing. Beside these daily chores, we can go out to work. Yes. We are almost equal to men. I believe that women are as capable as men.

These new foundations of their identity have led them to be proud of who they are and enabled them to see their new values, as seen by Juana.

I was trying to..., well, actually sometimes even now, I try to maintain the virtue of feminineness. I mean, I do things the way men like. Because men believe that we should wash, iron, cook, look after children, etc. Well, doing these things nicely fit into the idea of a good woman, but men will never look at the value of me, myself. Now I, at least at my home, try to make my husband value who I am, just the way I am.

Maria, who successfully obtained her house after fighting for several years in UVCG, showed her satisfaction:

Men are looking at women fighting for decent housing and for better ways of life. If a man considers a woman's action as negative, I would say he doesn't value the effort of the woman. This kind of man doesn't know the values of the real woman. That only creates insecurity in him. As far as I'm concerned, I am very happy and very satisfied, because I, with my

work with UVCG, achieved obtaining my own house. I wasn't aware before, but now I can say that women have power!

INTERPLAYING INTERESTS

These interviews clearly portray important changes in women's values as a result of participation in UVCG. Through their experience and learning in UVCG, women started to see the strategic gender interests as well as practical gender interests. Their concern was a practical one, such as giving their family housing or obtaining breakfast. Then their perception expanded to pursue strategic interests such as abolition of sexual division of labor and equality of men and women.

Thus, dichotomization of groups that are pursuing practical gender interests and group that are pursuing strategic interests is not always applicable. As Helen Safa (1993) suggests, "women's struggles over practical interests may well be transformed into struggles over strategic gender issues in the process of collective action and politicization (quoted in Gallin and Ferguson 1993:6)."

Kathleen Logan (1990:155) points out that "low-income activist women have not yet seen a need to challenge their traditionally defined gender roles as mothers. They think of themselves as acting consistently within the confines of their role." It is evident that Logan's approach focused only on practical interests. If one extends focus to

strategic gender interests, movements by women activists come to encompass different meanings; these movements possess the element of challenging the conventionally defined gender roles.

Thus, as Escobar and Alvarez (1992) suggest, women's organization should not be looked at as merely a survival strategy. By closely examining their newly defined collective identity, it becomes evident that their new identity challenges the conventional gender relations.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, summary of preceding chapters will be given at first. Then, based on these points, the strengths and weaknesses of identity paradigm and resource mobilization paradigm will be considered. Finally, I will conclude with a suggestion for the future directions of NSMs theory with regard to both paradigms.

NSMs theory embraces two distinct paradigms: resource mobilization paradigm and identity paradigm. In chapter II, the latter approach was employed to examine different kinds of NSMs evidenced in the different continents. The discussion focused on participants' active identity building in the sphere of reproduction. Furthermore, feminist theory helped to explain the complex nature of the analysis of gender relations. Feminist distinction of practical and strategic gender interests are presented as well.

In the following chapter III, it was depicted how it is to be a Mexican, to be poor, and to be a woman. As Latin American feminist theory suggests, it is important to understand the condition of the actors of social movements in larger economic, political, and social contexts. Thus I examined Mexico's socio-economic condition as a Third World country, its effect on the poor, and the gender relations manifested in machismo and marianismo.

In chapter IV, the specific condition of members of UVCG was highlighted. Their struggle and the development of new identity in the process were described as part of the case study.

Chapter V was more detailed case study of UVCG. This time, members who live in Sol shelter, especially women, were highlighted. It was shown that the women themselves perceived the changes in their perceptions and that their recognition was reflected in their activities in society, family, and individual levels. This case study also showed women's pursuit of both practical and strategic gender interests clearly.

SUGGESTIONS

Now, I conclude with three suggestions for the future development of NSMs theory. A suggestion for further study will be given as well.

Firstly, identity paradigm's tendency to neglect historic and cultural specificity needs to be moderated. As shown in chapter III, members of UVCG experienced various economic crises and went through various political experiences in Mexico. Their history is unique as in their living conditions in Mexico City. Their case is distinct from housing associations in other Latin American countries. The degree of government's interference varies from country to country and the degree of housing shortages due to Mexico

City's population density is incomparable to other cities. What is more, as Foweraker and Craig (1990) point out, due to different stages in development, Western European and Latin American cases may present even more different data. In European context, the role of welfare state and arising postmaterialist values and antimodernistic values were implied in the analysis of NSMs (Klandermans and Tarrow 1988:7-8), however, those are quite irrelevant in the case of UVCG because Mexico has not reached that degree in its developmental stage. The identity approach especially seems not to be able to incorporate different data exhibited by organizations with distinct historic and cultural backgrounds.

The resource mobilization approach accounts for these problems because their research is developed "mainly at the group and individual level, looking systematically at the groups that organized mass protest, at their forms of action, and at the motivations of individuals who joined them (Klandermans and Tarrow 1988:2-3)." However, scholars under resource mobilization paradigm as well as identity paradigm tend to neglect historic and cultural specificity of the countries other than U.S. and Western Europe. Escobar and Alvarez (1992:14) point out that "there has not yet been a sufficiently significant effort on the part of these scholars to include work being done in other parts of

the world, such as Latin America, Eastern Europe, and India." Current theory emphasizes Western Europe and U.S. exclusively, but as I showed throughout my paper, people's objective, resources, and proponents in Mexico, for example, differ from those of Western Europe and the U.S. Both approaches of NSMs theory need to be tested its sustainability with the data from different part of the world.

Secondly, modification of the theory is expected to be able to account for the future social movements as well. Recently, children who have been brought up with the social movements are starting to actively take part in the movements. They have been witnessing their parents' predicament and participation since they were small. They unconsciously absorbed the values of organization and they are ready to express their demands in public. In the very near future, they will start to take over the social movements from the older generation. The improved theory needs to account for these participants with considerably different identity and different rationale. They may be already oriented toward strategic interests as well as practical interests. During my fieldwork, I witnessed that some children of the members of UVCG came to speak at UVCG general meeting and showed their interests in taking classes on organizational management. Also, when there are marches

in the afternoon, some high school girls run back to the shelters to take part in protests. Some of them even take a lead to shout the slogans. Thus, these moderations are hoped in the future so that NSMs theory is able to offer thorough explanation on social movements.

Finally, as Escobar and Alvarez (1992:317) point out, blending of identity and resource mobilization paradigms needs to be attained in order to account for the following two perspectives: types of organization and two interplaying interests.

Blending two paradigms.

As Klandermans and Tarrow (1988:2-3) insightfully point out, the identity paradigm tends to focus on "larger structural issues- the structural causes of social movements, their ideologies, and their relation to the culture of advanced capitalist society." In other words, it does not have the capacity to account for differences among types of social movements or organizations. NSMs encompass many different types of organizations. We find such seemingly different groups as feminist movements, housing associations, environmental movements, and peace movements. All these movements have their own distinct objectives -- such as equality between sexes, obtaining housing, or preserving nature. Those movements with non-materialistic objectives, those movements which started with materialistic

objectives that were only later accompanied by non-materialistic objectives, and those movements with postindustrial orientations may not be bundled up together as one unit of analysis.

For instance, under the identity paradigm, the appearance of new grievances are associated with the motivation for mobilization without referring to the differences among the movements. In the context of ecological movements or peace movements, the appearance of new grievances is quite likely. However, in the case of UVCG, the appearance of new grievances was not evident. They had the grievances of not having proper housing but that was chronic; nothing new appeared. Only the degree of grievances became more intense. In their case, what led to the creation of their movement was gradually built-up new perceptions about their rights and their awareness of their capability. These elements arose when isolated people came together to act in conjunction with others who had the identical problems. The crucial aspect of breaking up out of isolation cannot be accounted for by the identity approach.

On the other hand, Doug McAdam (1988:132-7), one of the chief proponents of the resource mobilization approach, precisely accounted for the emergence of movement by using the notion of "cognitive liberation." He explains that for

collective action to emerge, cognitive transformation is indispensable. He lists three tentative aspects:

First, "the system" -or those aspects of the system that people experience and perceive- loses legitimacy. Large numbers of men and women who ordinarily accept the authority of their rules and the legitimacy of institutional arrangements come to believe in some measure that these rulers and these arrangements are unjust and wrong. Second, people who are ordinarily fatalistic, who believe that existing arrangements are inevitable, begin to assert "rights" that imply demands for change. Third, there is new sense of efficacy; people who ordinarily consider themselves helpless come to believe that they have some capacity to alter their lot.

What is more, McAdam, comes to contend that these aspects of liberation are not ascribed to individual's observation or communication but to "cuings among groups of people who jointly create the meanings they will read into current and anticipated events." His analysis is quite precise in the case of UVCG. People started to feel that something was wrong and the first thing they learned from UVCG was their rights as tenants. They came to realize the power of organized people in the process. The resource mobilization approach is capable of explaining different data drawn from different types of organizations. Thus, this is one reason that blending two approaches will help improve the NSMs theory.

Next, strategic aspect needs to be modified. As Melucci (1988:329) insightfully characterizes as "actor without action," identity paradigm emphasizes the aspects of values, identity, meanings, etc. On the other hand,

resource mobilization paradigm is characterized as "action without actor." Although resource mobilization paradigm also examines cognitive aspects, the attention is paid only when those aspects were counted as resources to influence the success of collective action. In other words, their focus is exclusively on practical interests, while the identity approach focuses on strategic interests. In the case of women participants of UVCG, the aspect of more intimate relationship with their spouses, that is their strategic interests, only slightly interests resource mobilization paradigm. As a result, analysis by the resource mobilization approach tends to overlook shifting of collective identity and hidden meaning of people's action such as challenge to the conventional system.

As the case of UVCG demonstrated, social movements tend to develop both practical and strategic elements. Thus a theory which can analyze the interplay of both practical interests and strategic interests is what is expected. Currently, both paradigms are capable of exploring only one interest, therefore, blending of these paradigms is hoped for the improvement of the theory.

FURTHER STUDIES

Melucci (1988:329) sees the parallel between "Marx's old problem (how to pass from class in itself to class for itself)" and this problem of splitting the identity paradigm and the resource mobilization paradigm within NSMs theory. In my case study, six women who were chosen for the in-depth

interviews all seem to articulate strategic gender interests as well as practical gender interests. In order to better understand how these two interests develop, comparison between women who identify both of these interests and women who only identify practical interests of obtaining housing need to be carried out. Furthermore, comparison among UVCG members who already obtained housing and who have not obtained housing yet is useful to see if they exhibit different patterns in their identification of identity, gender interests, objectives of UVCG, etc. Examination between non-members and members of UVCG should be carried out as well.

Furthermore, from gender perspective, comparison between a men's identity and a women's identity should also be made. Do men also see their collective identity as men? How are they different from those of women?

Another important question to be raised is the formation of identity. How and on what level are people's identities formed? People's identification with the state, the city, and the low-income neighborhood need to be examined. If they identify themselves as Mexicans, for instance, what do they think they are entitled to as Mexican? The same questions could be asked on the level of the city and the low-income neighborhood. How do people's response for these questions vary among the members of UVCG and non-members? How do participations in NSMs contribute to expand participants' identities?: from individuals

confined within household to members of low-income neighborhood, to neglected citizens, to maltreated Mexicans?

Due to limited time frame, my study mainly focused on the aspect of active female members of neighborhood association and their development of practical and strategic gender interests exhibited in their everyday life. More extensive observation may identify the contradiction between what people say and what they actually do. Thus, further participant observation with those important questions that I raised above in mind needs to be pursued in the future study for the better understanding of NSMs theory.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Q: HOW MANY YEARS DO YOU LIVE IN THIS SHELTER?

1 year - 1	4 years- 4
2 years- 10	5 years- 5
3 years- 8	6 years- 20

Q: WHY DID YOU COME TO UVCG?

*used to live in relatives house but problem arose	16
*used to rent houses/ evicted	9
/ economic problems	8
/ trouble with landlords	6
*used to live in vecindad but collapsed	7
*used to own a house, sold it, then being cheated	1
*used to live in Sol theater	1

Q: HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT UVCG?

*born in colonia Guerrero	14
*relative's information	7
*friends are members	7
*friend's information	5
*relatives are members	4
*relatives live in colonia	2
*from other organization	1

Q: HOW DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN UVCG?

*meeting, avoiding eviction, construction, protest,
paining walls, guarding properties, etc.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR CONCERNS, ASIDE FROM HOUSING?

*none	14
*Mexican economy	9
*teacher's movements	6
*Chiapas	4
*unemployment	4
*Ruta 100	4
*salary increase	4
*feminism	3
*environment	3
*education	2
	1 each
*world peace	
*social welfare such as unemployment insurance	
*education about Mexico, Mexican culture	
*juridical issue	

- *anything happening in colonia Guerrero
- *other countries such as Cuba
- *human right

Q: WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM UVCG?

Housing (everyone) and:

- *nothing but housing 20
- *protection (landlord/ emergency) 10
- *education to members 5
- *avoiding eviction 2
- *provision of breakfast 2
- 1 each
- *organizing and uniting people who have similar problems
- *more negotiation, more construction of houses
- *companerismo

Q: WHAT ARE THE FUTURE GOALS OF UVCG?

- *Nothing but to help people obtain housing . . . 22
- *to provide housing for all the people who need.
So gaining more participation, including
people who already obtained housing. . . 4
- *to get involved more in different issues
such as politics, society, etc. . . . 3
- *child care center 3
(each) 1
- *to help people economically
- *to keep being independent from political party
- *to keep being responsible for any people who need help
- *to cooperate each other and live together
- *to bring cultural activities back
- *grandisimo. We shouldn't fix our goals.
- *to improve our situation by providing houses
- *to improve our standard of living
- *to get united with other organizations
- *to improve everyone in Mexico
- *to defend our right to obtain proper housing.

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