



RECENSÃO

Social Movement Studies in Europe.
The State of the Art,
de Olivier Fillieule e Guya Accornero (eds.),
por Cédric Masse

Análise Social, 221, LI (4.º), 2016

ISSN ONLINE 2182-2999

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FILLIEULE, Olivier and ACCORNERO, Guya (eds.)
Social Movement Studies in Europe. The State of the Art,
 Berghahn, 2016, 526 pp.
 ISBN 9781785330971

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This volume is a significant enterprise that gathers 40 academics together, scholars internationally well-known in the field of social movement studies and new promising researchers. It starts with an introductory foreword written by Jasper, which is followed by an introduction written by the editors. Both summarize well the form and general ideas of the book. Jasper notably highlights the structure of the volume. After having offered a quick overview of some classic theories and recent approaches regarding social movements and a brief history of some organizational aspects of the research on social movements in Europe and the United States, the editors state that the purpose of the book is to provide a panorama of studies on social movements in many European countries in order to stress the variety and bounty of European investigations and to make them more “visible”, notably for the Anglo-American public.

The book is divided into two major parts: a first in which each chapter (10 in total) addresses a particular type of social movement at a European scale; and a more developed second part wherein each chapter (15 in all) addresses the situation of the research on social movements in a single country. Thus, in the first part, some particular

social movements, but not all of them, are studied: the European movements of 68, mobilizations in Central Eastern Europe at the end of the Soviet era in 1989, the workers’ movement, extreme rightist movements, migrants’ social movements, precarious and jobless people’s movements, the anti-globalization and global justice movement, ecological movements, women’s movements, *Indignados* and occupiers’ movements. In the second part, without being exhaustive, the state of studies on social movements in several countries is examined, especially in Western European countries: Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Switzerland, Ireland, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Hungary, Romania, the ex-Soviet Union, and Russia. Each chapter can be read independently.

In chapter one, Neveu states that May 1968 has not been totally explained, and accordingly studies of this issue should continue, notably to criticize new social movement theory and to challenge the common opinion nurtured by some scholars. In chapter 2, through the democratization process in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s, Della Porta argues that “contentious politics” is not absent from authoritarian regimes, activists managing to generate themselves

“resources for mobilization” and eventually affecting the state of power within the polity system and the society, notably thanks to the influence of “international actors and transnational processes”. In chapter 3, Yon puts forward that nowadays social movement studies address the labor movement, whereas in the past it tended to be overlooked, because economic and non-economic dimensions are both considered. In chapter 4, Caiani and Borri claim that research on far-right movements should be developed, especially regarding the causes and definitions, although there exist three main approaches: a micro-level that focuses on activists’ psychology, a macro-level that deals with the context that determines individual actions, and a meso-level that stresses the importance of organizations. In chapter 5, Cinalli considers that studies on migrants’ social movements are mostly divided between “structuralist” and “actor-centric approaches”. In chapter 6, Giugni and Lorenzini assert that studies on unemployed and precarious people’s movements are rare because they are “invisible” when they exist and because the concerned people do not manage to mobilize, mobilizations depending on the presence of grievances, resources, and opportunities. In chapter 7, Sommier states that in the sociology of alter-globalization, academic and activist positions tend to become mixed up and that studies on this issue have drastically decreased since 2007 because the movement is less significant in Europe and is in a process of institutionalization, and because there are fewer funds for this

kind of study. In chapter 8, Kousis shows that environmental activism is tied to science and ethics, and is trans-national, as are academic studies on it. In chapter 9, Revillard and Bereni affirm that research on women’s European movements stem from political science and accordingly they focus on the links of these movements with other political actors and not on these movements in themselves, and that they are influenced by quantitative and macro-approaches at the expense of qualitative and micro-perspectives. In chapter 10, which concludes the first part of the book, Nez stresses that *Indignados* and Occupy movements are linked to previous movements, that they pay special attention to democratic practices. This is a new topic that requires further exploration.

In chapter 11, Doherty, Hayes and Rootes highlight that British studies on social movements are rather historically thin although for some decades they have spread. They have tended to be interdisciplinary, qualitative, and to emphasize movements’ contexts and agency. In chapter 12, for Haunss, studies on social movements in Germany are relatively recent, not really institutionalized within university, and performed by some scholars. They have tended to focus on new social movements and to be initially more theoretical than empirical and thereafter, conversely, more empirical than theoretical. In chapter 13, according to Duyvendak, Roggeband, and Stekelenburg, Dutch research has been achieved essentially by social psychologists and political sociologists influenced more

by Anglo-American approaches than by European new social movement perspectives. In chapter 14, in Fillieule's view, studies in France were originally self-centered and isolated from the rest of the world before becoming dynamic and open to the international academic community, especially from the 1990s, as well as to a plurality of methods and theories. In chapter 15, Bosi and Mosca argue that Italian research especially addresses the particular topics of political violence, the policing of social protest, environmental movements, global justice movements, political consumerism, students, workers, and social centers. In chapter 16, Balsiger considers that studies in Switzerland tend to be comparative, "highly internationalized", and influenced by the political process model and "activist trajectories". In chapter 17, Cox states that Irish studies have mostly followed Anglo-American and British stances. They have mainly discussed environmentalism, rural activism, and working-class community. In chapter 18, Peterson shows that the complex interactions between social movements and the State in Sweden has led scholars to wrongly claim the absence of social movements in this country. In chapter 19, Romanos and Aguilar suggest that in Spain, scholars originally studying social movements were historians who addressed the labor movement while today they are especially sociologists and political scientists embracing the political process model, also interested in "cognitive and symbolic processes" and in "collective identities". In chapter

20, regarding Portugal, Accornero refers more to studies on past movements, before and following the Carnation Revolution, and puts aside rich contemporaneous research on recent movements, notably the research achieved by young scholars through the publication of journal articles and book chapters, and the writing of master's theses and doctoral dissertations. In chapter 21, Kornetis and Kouki think that social movement studies in Greece came out in the 1990s, but they say that it is only since 2008, following urban riots, that they have occupied a significant position from a theoretical and empirical point of view. In chapter 22, for Uysal, studies in Turkey are more politicized than scientific, and accordingly this is still a country to be explored. In chapter 23, according to Buzogány, studies in Hungary appeared in the 1980s during the democratic transition that featured important protests. In his view, there are few scholars interested in the topic of social movements, and they are essentially inspired by Anglo-American and German thinking. In chapter 24, Nistor suggests that, in Romania studies were rather rare during the Communist regime and thereafter until today, apparently due to the lack of collective mobilizations. In the last chapter, Evans and Henry claim that regarding the Soviet Union and Russia, as in other countries, scholars follow the influential political process model and its underlying concepts of political opportunity structure, resources, and framing.

In conclusion, Rucht offers a synthesis that underlines the successes,

shortcomings, and stakes regarding social movement studies in Europe. Essentially, in his view the general tendency is a better institutionalization of research and a growing international collaboration among scholars belonging to diverse national contexts. Rucht points out that there is nevertheless a lack of unity between different but complementary approaches, a need for more criticism and reflection on the employed perspectives and concepts, and the necessity of macro-theories. Finally, a valuable index of key notions and people closes the book.

We can suggest that a further study could focus on social movements that have been overlooked in the first part, such as LGBTQ movements, nationalist and separatist movements, refugees' movements, and anti-war movements, among others, and that it could introduce

the state of the research on social movements in countries that are not included in the book, such as Belgium, Austria, Finland, Norway, Denmark, and most Central and Eastern European countries. In this sense, the editors of this book could be interested in publishing a second volume that highlights these aspects.

This book can be read by specialists and non-specialists, students, practitioners in the third sector, and any citizen at large who is interested in and concerned about the subject.

MASSE, C. (2016), *Book Review "Social Movement Studies in Europe. The State of the Art*, Berghahn, 2016". *Análise Social*, 221, LI (4.º), pp. 1005-1008.

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