

Introduction

“So many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable”:
European Social Movement Research in Perspective

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The emergence of social movements, ‘the sustained, organised challenge to existing authorities in the name of a deprived, excluded or wronged population’ (Tilly 1995: 144), is closely intertwined with the development of state building and nationalization, capitalism (i.e., industrialization and communication networks), urbanization and print capitalism (Anderson 1991; Gellner 1983; and Tilly 2004). This is why social movements initially appeared in Western Europe, around the mid-nineteenth century, apparently first in Great Britain (Tilly 1995: 144) and, subsequently, in the wake of the 1848 revolution, in continental Europe. Therefore, it is not surprising that all the founding fathers of the sociology of contentious politics were Europeans: German scholar Lorenz von Stein first introduced the term ‘social movement’ into scholarly discussion in his *History of the French Social Movement from 1789 to the Present* (1850); French thinkers Hypolyte Taine, Gustave Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde and particularly Emile Durkheim (with his *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* published in 1912) can be considered the ancestors of the collective behaviour paradigm; and, above all, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were the first to develop a robust theory of working-class mobilization in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) and inspired major political and theoretical contributions by thinkers such as Vladimir I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg and later Antonio Gramsci. In the United States, it was only in the 1930s that the first Chicago School, building on Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber, started to develop a specific conception of collective behaviour and social movements that dominated research for more than twenty years.

Most reviews of the literature and textbooks on subsequent developments in the sociology of social movements have followed the same script. They neglect European research while describing how American theories of collective behaviour, characterised by a psycho-sociological and normative

approach to the process of mobilization, largely ignoring macro-political and organizational factors, generally dominated the field, with prominent researchers such as Neil Smelser and Ted Gurr. The situation changed once again at the end of the 1960s, with an American paradigm shift in favour of the school of resource mobilization, and in Europe with renewed interest in social movements through the emergence of the 'new social movements' paradigm.

In the United States, the common theme uniting the various trends of the new model is the ideological legitimacy of social movement activity, perceived as the result of voluntary and intentional behaviour. Consequently, the central research focus shifts from the study of crowd movements to that of social movements, from analysis of deep-rooted causes of mobilization to a more complex study of the forms of action and goals that movements have in function of a given opportunity structure. Two major tendencies can be distinguished (Perrow 1979): one based on an entrepreneurial model (McCarthy and Zald 1973 and 1977) and another viewing collective action as nothing but the pursuit of politics by other means (Oberschall 1973; Gamson 1975; and Tilly 1978). This also extends to the field of social history, with the research of Michael Lipsky on tenants' movements (1968) and Samuel Popkin on small farmers (1979). Yet it is indeed the same theoretical substratum, that is, the utilitarian paradigm of individual rationality, and the same interest in resolving the paradox posed by Mancur Olson in 1965, which links all these works. This paradigm did not give way to a rival theory. It transformed itself from within, mostly spurred by Charles Tilly (1978) and later Doug McAdam (1982) who reintroduced the political dimension of mobilization, pushing the model to evolve towards what we currently tend to call the 'political process model'. This model emphasises the role of political opportunities, mobilizing structures and framing processes, along with protest cycles and contentious repertoires (Caren 2006).

In the European context, characterised by profound economic and social transformation (Inglehart 1977), the upheaval of May 1968 prompted renewed interest in research into social movements. These were considered 'new' movements, in view of the 'post-materialist' causes they defended, their values, forms of action and participants (Offe 1985; Cohen 1985). Most academics emphasised that this new research trend was first developed in Germany by researchers such as Claus Offe, Werner Brand and Herbert Kitschelt, owing to the development of citizen initiative groups (*Bürgerinitiativen* and *Bundesverband Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz*), and a strong ecological and antinuclear movement (Dalton and Kuechler 1990: 4). Yet this also happened in post-1968 France, with Alain Touraine (1971, 1978), and in Italy with one of his students, Alberto Melucci. This unified vision of a

'European identity paradigm', developing independently of the resource mobilization theory and uniformly inspired by a desire to explain the disappearance of the working class as a central actor in social movements, replaced by inter-classist movements concerned with post-materialist identity demands, certainly had some foundations in reality. Nonetheless, it is extremely simplistic, ignoring the diversity of social movement studies produced in the first half of the twentieth century in various social science disciplines in Europe, and especially in its homogenization of political trajectories and intellectual traditions in European countries, as though, from Lisbon to Berlin and the Shetland Islands to Sicily, a single history unfolded, in the streets and in university lecture halls.

The main objective of this book is to offer the reader a more nuanced and comprehensive account of the complex and multifaceted ways that movement theory and research agendas have evolved in a selection of European countries. We will pay particular attention to variations between countries and show that many idiosyncratic routes have been followed, making it quite difficult to speak about a European model of social movement theory, just as it is misleading to refer to a unified American academia. However, since a strong dedifferentiation process has been at work in social science for more than twenty years, we will keep one puzzling question in mind: do the varieties of European intellectual traditions reflect increasingly convergent routes defined by an overly dominant American agenda or do national traditions remain strong and, if so, with what results?

Social Movement Studies and the 'Thrust of Real History'

The obvious link between larger socio-historical processes, the development of social movements and, subsequently, of a new area of research in social science¹ stresses that it is not 'internal logics but external concerns that are vital to understanding the sociological study of social movements' (Gusfield 1978: 122). Indeed, the first hypothesis that comes to mind when reflecting on the development of the sociology of social movements and the succession of paradigms which characterised it, is that of the 'thrust of real history', as Louis Althusser wrote in *Pour Marx* (1967: 80), social reality evolving outside the theories which consider it and theories finally being altered or bypassed by events, sometimes leading to very abrupt shifts in paradigms.² It was in reaction to the threat of social revolution, which appeared at the end of the nineteenth century, that the first works on mass movements appeared. Thus, the theory of the maddening crowd owes much to the ghosts of

thinkers frightened by the progress of liberal democracy. It was again in the name of ideological assumptions in favour of political pluralism and respect for institutional rules that social movements continued to be analysed in terms of irrational phenomena responding to frustrations right up until the middle of the 1960s. This was particularly the case in the United States, which was confronted immediately after the war with the emergence of the Civil Rights Movement and the development of political unrest in African American communities.

Subsequently, the abandonment of theories of collective behaviour for a rational vision of mobilization was in part due to the scale of collective action at the time and its dissemination among large segments of society, especially university students opposed to the Vietnam War. All this gave way to the progressive incorporation of the reflections of practitioners of mobilization, such as, for example Vladimir I. Lenin, Mao Tse Tung, Martin Luther King and Saul Alinsky, in academic analytical instruments. These leaders formulated general principles and lines of action, insisting on tactical choices and the social and organizational infrastructure required for success in their struggles. Thus, it is at least in part under the impetus of the thrust of this 'real history' that the field of the sociology of mobilization, with its own analytical instruments and theoretical issues, gradually emerged.

In addition to those exogenous factors of social movement theory development, two endogenous factors contributed to the creation of the field: first, 'the prevailing matrix of social science disciplines, their intellectual division of labour, and changes in both over time'; and second, 'shifts in the broader intellectual climate that transcends particular disciplines' (Buechler 2011: 2–3). Those two factors largely explain why social movement research in America developed the way it did, especially after the Second World War, through major paradigm shifts and smaller-scale permutations in an increasingly integrated and self-referencing way (McAdam and Shaffer Boudet 2012). In contrast, 'in Western Europe, the development of the study of social movements can hardly be described in terms of a major paradigmatic change. In line with its highly diverse cultural and scientific traditions, the study of social movements in various countries also followed very different courses and patterns' (Rucht 1991: 10).

In addition to these factors, it is important to note a further two dimensions which are characteristic of the rapid and profound transformations in the academic field at the end of the twentieth century, and that may have produced a more and more integrated theoretical perspective on social movements. First, what we could call 'the narrowing of academic spaces', to use Benedict Anderson's vocabulary, is associated with new practices. The development of the Internet, with increased interaction via e-mail, access to

international literature through catalogues (including commercial services such as Amazon) and databases available online, has considerably reduced the cost of searching for information. Also, there has been an increase in study-abroad programs and research (via Erasmus programs in particular), all authorised by this other relatively recent transformation, in southern Europe, at least, which is the widespread adoption of English in academic work.

Furthermore, everywhere in Europe the criteria of academic excellence (and, thus, the paths for recruitment and, likewise, the chances of being published in quality journals) have gradually become aligned with international standards imported from the United States. To quote merely one example, this is the case of the *Revue française de science politique* or the *Revue française de sociologie*, which, in a recent editorial, announced that all articles published from now on will be translated into English and available online. From this, it follows that the journal's objective is to participate 'in the international chorus' of the discipline and, therefore, to publish works 'which by their nature will attract the attention' of professional sociologists outside of France (2012: 386). Even *Politix*, a journal of a school defending a critical approach to social sciences (that is, inspired by Pierre Bourdieu and Luc Boltanski), whose analytical framework had long been quintessentially French, finally became internationalised. In a recent article appearing on the occasion of the one hundredth edition of the journal and which reviewed its own history, Pierre Favre remarked that, when in 1991 a double edition was devoted to the 'construction of causes', the opening article could once again broach this foremost element of mobilization *without a single* English-language reference. This is no longer the case, and theme-based issues devoted to mobilization published since the year 2000 rely extensively on English references (Favre 2012). The same process is underway in most South European countries.

Globalization of Knowledge: Towards an Integrated European Community of Social Movement Scholars?

From the end of the Second World War to the late 1980s, the field of social movement research remained highly fragmented in Europe. During its incipient phase, research was strongly rooted in national traditions. It was only in the early 1990s that the scenario began to move towards one of progressive integration. As Diani and Císař stress in their study of the progressive construction of a European social movement community, in the early phase (1978–90) parallel developments in a number of European states took place, with quite a few significant collaborations across national borders; in the

intermediate phase (1991–2001), a core of European researchers in close collaboration with non-European (mostly US-based) social scientists emerged; during the most recent phase (2003–12), a European community of social movement researchers consolidated but also differentiated along several lines of fragmentation (Diani and Císař, 2014).

More precisely, it was at the point when the sociology of social movements was playing an increasing role in American social science³ that collaboration began with a small group of European and American researchers, following an initial conference held in Amsterdam in 1986 organised by Bert Klandermans. Two publications are crucial in this particular context: *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research across Cultures*, edited by Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi and Sidney Tarrow in 1988, and *Research on Social Movements: The State of the Art in Western Europe and the USA*, edited by Dieter Rucht in 1991. Both books sought to track the evolution of the field, notably in terms of the divergence between the European and American traditions.

The authors of *From Structure to Action* argue that after the intensification of contentious politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s, two new paradigms emerged: ‘resource mobilization’ in America and the ‘new social movements’ approach in Europe. In short, European scholars concentrated their analysis on major structural issues—the structural causes of social movements, their ideologies and relationship with the culture of advanced capitalist societies—whereas the focus of American research was predominantly on groups and individuals, their forms of action and motivations. Moreover, the authors stressed that, while there was some uniformity in studies conducted in the United States around the resource mobilization approach, the new social movement theory seemed to be more a convergence of different ideas than a uniform current.

Although dialogue was just starting at that time, as stressed by Bert Klandermans in his chapter, Dieter Rucht’s work identified the continued separation and lack of communication between the American and European scholars of social movements. Moreover, this author speaks of the general difficulty of institutionalization in social movement studies: ‘In comparison to sub-disciplines of, say, medicine or physics, which are well coordinated on the national and international levels and have their own established institutes, journals and congresses, the field of social movements is underdeveloped. . . . Moreover, language barriers come into play. To be sure, within a given country those people working on social movements for a longer period of time usually have knowledge of each other’s work or even meet from time to time. But there may be fascinating studies written in Dutch or Italian unknown to a French or English scholar. And from the standpoint of an

American researcher, it may be still more difficult to have a close look at the debates in this broad range of Western European countries' (1990: 10–11).

Both these books rightly aimed to address this lack of communication and encourage international reflection on the various debates and approaches to social movements, above all by considering the different focuses of research in the United States and Europe. This 'transatlantic connection' continued over a number of years with the objective of bringing the political process paradigm and European approaches together. Anthologies were published encompassing contributions from both sides.⁴ By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, one could thus confidently declare that the American sociology of social movements had definitely entered the sphere of reference of European researchers, and that American scholars are increasingly well-informed about what is going on in Europe. This is strikingly evident if one compares the *Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, edited by Snow, Soule and Kriesi (2004), and the *Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, edited by Snow and colleagues (2013), in which the proportion of European authors has increased dramatically.

While collaboration between European scholars was initially facilitated through dialogue with American researchers, the field in Europe has become relatively autonomous, mainly due to the role of the European Union's funding of international projects. This is the case, among others, for projects on the policing of protest (Della Porta and Reiter 1998; Fillieule and Della Porta 2006; Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006), environmental movements (Kousis 1994; Rootes 2003), migration and citizenship (Koopmans et al. 2005), the politics of unemployment (Giugni 2009; Chabanet and Faniel 2012), no global movements (Della Porta 2007a; Sommier, Fillieule and Agrikoliansky 2008), the emergence of a European public sphere (Koopmans and Statham 2010; Della Porta and Caiani 2009), outcomes of social movements (Bosi and Uba 2009), and for a series of projects on participatory politics and democracy (Della Porta 2007 and 2009).

Social movement studies have now become an institutionalised 'sub-discipline' with sessions and standing groups in various scientific associations in different disciplinary areas, notably political science and sociology. At the international level, the European Sociological Association (ESA) and the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) hold workshops dedicated to social movements on a biannual or annual basis. A standing group specifically dedicated to social movement studies has been created along the lines of the ESA in 1999 and the ECPR, with first and foremost Participation and Mobilization (established in 2004), but also Extremism and Democracy (1999), Internet and Politics (2009), and Political Sociology (2010), which also show a strong interest in social movements. Furthermore,

standing groups have been created at a national level. For instance the Study and Research Group on Transformations in Activism (GERMM) of the French Society for Political Science (AFSP) was launched in 1994 and operated until 2010; and the standing group on Social Movements and Political Participation of the Italian Society for Political Science (SISP) appeared following the annual congress in 2006, when there were three panels and sixteen papers presented in the section on these issues. In 2010 the section of the SISP annual conference organised by this standing group was responsible for six panels and thirty-seven papers, predominantly presented in English. In Italy too, there is COSMOS, under the wing of the European Institute (<http://cosmos.eui.eu/Projects/cosmos/Home.aspx>). The *Wissenschaftszentrum* in Berlin played a similar role in Germany, led by Dieter Rucht up to 2011 and now, along with younger colleagues, is part of the new *Institut für protest und Bewegungsforschung*, I.G. (<http://protestinstitut.eu/>). Moreover, reference should be made of the pioneer Centre for the Study of Social and Political Movements at the University of Kent (established in 1992); CRAPUL (<http://www.unil.ch/iepi/page16548.html/>) at the University of Lausanne (Switzerland), which started operating in 2002; the Forum for Civil and Social Movement Research (CSM) at the University of Göteborg (established in 2011); the Contentious Politics Circle at Panteion University and the newly created InCite research institute at the University of Geneva (<https://www.unige.ch/sciences-societe/incite>).

Social movement analysts have also been prominent in launching specific academic journals, such as *Environmental Politics*, a major publication site of research on environmental social movements; *Social Movement Studies* (2002); and, more recently, the online journal *Interface* (2012), all of which offer a valuable means of disseminating European research. Moreover, it should be highlighted that since 1997 the American journal *Mobilization* has had a European editor (Mario Diani until 2005 followed by Marco Giugni) managing European submissions. Similarly, some leading publishers have brought out series devoted to studies on social movements; for example, the Cambridge series on Contentious Politics and the Berghahn series on Protest, Culture and Society, which pay special attention to European studies.

To summarise the evolution of the last two decades of the field in Europe, it could be said that there has been an exponential intensification and expansion of social movement studies that has led to a rapid ‘acceleration’ in the growth of knowledge. There is no longer a sharp distinction between American and European approaches, in part due to the inception of a process of self-reflection on the theoretical and methodological assumptions of classic social movement studies and agenda—largely based on the ‘contentious politics model’. European diversification in social movement research

and the inclusion of new arenas and greater scope, which extend the range of classic instruments of analysis for social movements, contribute to this reflection. Furthermore, the adoption of new analytical approaches and theoretical and methodological innovations foster the diversification of the object of study. These two interdependent dynamics, one related to the object and the other to the approach, have helped to bring in innovations to this field of study and are produced concomitantly and sometimes collaboratively by both European and American scholars who are increasingly dissatisfied with the 'contentious politics model'.

Nowadays, the social movement community focuses not only on new aspects, such as different protest arenas or new geographical areas beyond a western focus, but also on institutional means of channelling protests, e.g. legal instruments. Moreover, following Jasper's innovative research agenda, renewed interest in activists' trajectories has been accompanied by particular focus on the emotional and affective aspects of the engagement and disengagement process. Additional research has also focused on the political and social effects of mobilization at the macro level of institutions. This has also highlighted the process of individual disengagement and the causes and factors which could lead to it. Furthermore, these issues are all related in some way to the debate on the effect of the repression of social movements, which could in turn be part of the wider discussion on the extent of political violence (Combes and Fillieule 2012; Bosi, Demetriou and Malthaner 2014). Finally, while the origin of social movement sociology was strictly linked, both in the United States and Europe, to the diffusion of progressive or left-wing movements, such as civil rights, student or feminist movements, more recently scholars have begun to employ these instruments to investigate conservative or right-wing mobilization. This diversification of the form of 'contentious politics' under analysis corresponds to a pluralization of approaches, both at a theoretical and methodological level. Social movement scholarship has also become increasingly diversified in recent years due to its openness to other disciplines, such as anthropology and the history of social psychology. The shifting of attention from the macrodimension of social movements and structural aspects of mobilization towards micro-level processes has also led to qualitative methods acquiring a more important role. For instance, ethnographic methods are useful to reconstruct individual trajectories or shed light on the effects of repression on groups and activists.

Moreover, some specific arenas, such as transnational movements, have spurred more cross-fertilization of approaches. Interdisciplinary and plural points of view, questions, theoretical frameworks and methodologies have converged into a harmonious, albeit 'hybrid', perspective rather than a restrictive school of thought. This is the case, for example, of the numerous

studies published on the no-global movement (see Sommier's chapter in this volume), or works viewing the transnational dimension as an indisputable characteristic of the contemporary politics of protest (Teune 2010 on the transnationalization of contemporary protests; and Flesher Fominaya and Cox 2013 on anti-austerity movements); and likewise, books adopting a historical perspective (Kouki and Romanos 2011 on contentious politics since 1945 in Europe; Klimke, Pekelder and Scharloth 2011 on European movements in the wake of May 1968; and Gildea, Mark and Warring 2013 on '68ers).

In spite of everything written above, one should not hastily conclude that the sociology of social movements has become institutionalised in the European academic landscape. While in the United States a subfield has been constructed with defined boundaries, certification institutions and, therefore, gatekeepers, this is not true of Europe. Often, this is rather less due to lack of interest and more the result of the former centrality of the reflection on social change, on collective struggles and, thus, on social movements in European social science. Here we agree with Flesher Fominaya and Cox when they stress that 'because social movements are so central to European social theory, social movement theory in itself is not readily visible in Europe as a separate field of analysis' (2013: 20).

Furthermore, increased exchanges between the American and European academic worlds on one hand and between European academic worlds on the other do not mean that there is an integrated and unified community of social movement scholars. First, while Europeans have largely taken a path that enables them to appropriate the knowledge produced by American sociology, this is rarer amongst American researchers, even though the most prominent American scholars in the field systematically pay attention to the specifics of research affected by European theoretical and methodological traditions.⁵ A glance at the table of contents of the journal *Mobilization* since it was first published is enough to observe that, while there are a number of European authors, almost all the published articles adopt a mainstream approach to contentious politics, both from the conceptual point of view and in terms of the investigative methods and modes of exposition employed. This certainly does not help the American public to become aware of the diversity and richness of European research. Instead it wrongly reinforces the notion that what is being done in Europe follows exactly the same lines as the work in the United States. Second, although today there definitely exists a group of researchers in different European countries who collaborate and engage in exchanges on the basis of a common foundation in the political process model, in each country their particular traditions endure, often resulting in research which slips under the radar of reviews of the literature.

These two observations have given rise to this book, which aims to offer a comprehensive and detailed overview of social movement studies in a wide selection of European countries.

The Book

This volume is divided into two sections. In the first, comparative chapters will provide reflections from experts on different kinds of social movements, on the state of the art of specific issues or movements, and on the way in which they have been analysed by increasingly transnational and comparative research. These are areas which have been the particular focus of research in recent years, and that international groups of researchers have repeatedly addressed, mainly thanks to European or other international research funds. The European Research Council has played a key role in fostering such international research projects and has made a significant contribution to the circulation of scholars and ideas and the development of transnational and comparative studies.

The first two chapters in the first section do not deal with a specific movement, but rather with cycles of protests involving different issues and claims. The section opens with Erik Neveu's chapter on the '68, which deconstructs the myth of this event—or series of events—as a Paris-centred cultural revolution. Neveu thus stresses the strong, and maybe stronger, relevance of the labour conflict and the broader range of types of mobilization. In the following chapter, Della Porta analyses the wave of mobilization in the context of the democratization process in Eastern and Central Europe around 1989. She stresses the lack of attention paid to grassroots politics by scholars of democratic transitions, more interested in elite-led processes. On the other hand, she points out that social movement scholars have overlooked democratizing processes, mostly concentrating their interest on democratic countries. Next, Karel Yon analyses the long and difficult process of integration of labour movements in the field of social movements theory. He stresses that, although the labour movement represents the social movement *par excellence*—around which most conflict theories have been developed—its study has long been the prerogative of other disciplines, such as industrial relations. As is the case of other movements, Caiani and Borri highlight the paucity of research on the movements discussed in their chapter. They claim that few have studied radical right-wing movements using a social movement approach. With the exception of studies on political violence and terrorism, most scholars dealing with the radical right focus on parties and elections, paying little attention to non-party organizations and subcultures.

In spite of the absence of powerful migrants' social movements, in his chapter Manlio Cinalli stresses that research in this field has been burgeoning. He depicts a landscape in which the discipline seems more 'contentious' than its object of study, and where controversies among different approaches—such as the structuralist or the cultural ones—characterised the academic debate until recent years. In the following chapter, Giugni and Lorenzini show that the situation of the movements of the unemployed and those whose employment is non-permanent is worthy of examination. Though mobilization in this field has been widespread and recurrent, according to the authors, it has been neglected by students of social movements. After emphasizing the relevance in the research of such elements as grievances, resources and opportunities, the authors underscore the lack of and need for more comparative studies. Following this, in her chapter on no global movements, Isabelle Sommier emphasises the dramatic differences between European and American research. Her words portray that European scholars saw this new and powerful movement as a chance for self-assertion and self-definition vis-à-vis American sociologists of social movements.

Kousis's chapter on research on the environmental movement stresses that, since the 1990s, this field has received major funding from the European Commission. This might explain a certain similar use of theoretical frameworks based on collective identity and political process paradigms. Bereni and Revillard deal with another 'historical' social movement, the women's movement. European research in this domain is distinguished from American research because it is less rooted in sociology. Instead it is firmly anchored in political science and focuses on the role of political institutions.

Finally, the more recent mobilizations against austerity politics are the object of the next chapter by Heloïse Nez. Here, the author describes a situation where the abundant literature produced on the wave of events is still quite uneven. At the same time, important questions still remain open, such as how can these movements be defined and why did they emerge now? Which is the relation between these and previous movements? Are there networks that connect these movements across space? A micro-sociological approach is suggested by the author in order to answer part of these questions.

The second section presents chapters dealing with national cases. In contrast to the selection made at the end of the 1980s by Dieter Rucht, our book does not concentrate exclusively on Northern European countries but includes the main southern countries (France, Spain, Portugal and Greece) and a selection of Eastern European countries (Russia, Hungary and Romania). To this we have added Turkey, which geographically belongs to Europe and whose political, economic and social history is increasingly intertwined

with the rest of the continent. Of course, the selection of cases could always be criticised for omitting certain countries but we had to make choices in order to keep the book a reasonable size and find colleagues who would be both able and willing to deliver a chapter on the countries in which we were interested.

In this second section, four main patterns in the development of social movement studies can be detected. First, we can consider a group of countries where the influence of the American literature and its successful integration with local traditions was stronger and earlier. Italy, Germany, Switzerland and Sweden all seem to have followed such a path, although in a more or less decisive way and with significant variations. On the other hand, in some countries this influence and integration seem less developed, and very specific research paths were followed in an independent fashion. The reason for this tendency can be found in the strength of local traditions of studies in social movements which continue to be very influential in countries such as France, Great Britain and Ireland. In France, for instance, the influence of Pierre Bourdieu's thought in the social sciences also extended to the research on social movements. This can be seen in the special attention given to the process of political socialization and to cultural and social factors and the implications of political commitment. This focus on sociological aspects leads to a rediscovery of the micro dimension of political engagement and the sociological effects of activism. Besides the prominent relevance of specific movements, especially that of labour, studies on social movements in Britain is deeply rooted in Marxist historiography and ethnography. The early and incisive rupture of the new left in the late 1950s also had a great influence on the discipline's evolution. This contributed to shifting the attention 'from grand narratives of social transformation to local micro-histories of dissent and dissenters'. In Irish research on social movements, four main analytical paths have been particularly important: the history of pre-independence nationalism; postcolonial studies; peasant struggles; and working-class history. Radical left-wing-engaged scholarship had also been traditionally dominant in the country. In recent years, this perspective has been vigorously developed by scholars of the so-called 'Maynooth School', whose aims include that of developing 'a Marxist theory of movements starting from an Irish perspective'. The case of social movement studies in the Netherlands seems to be at the border of these two groups and this is due to a certain local 'bifurcation' in this research area. One can thus identify two main 'schools': social psychologists at the VU University in Amsterdam and political sociologists at the University of Amsterdam (UvA). The first school, which seems to be more linked to a national tradition, was created by Bert Klandermans and applies the social-psychological approach (SPA).

The second group, created by Hanspeter Kriesi, applies the political process approach (PPA), which has a clear North American origin.

A third group is comprised of countries which have undergone recent democratization processes. Here, two main patterns can be detected. In countries which experienced right-wing regimes, such as Spain, Portugal and Greece, radical left-wing movements emerged against the dictatorship, and continue to represent an essential legacy for actors still engaging in the struggle after the fall of the dictatorship. Consequently, research on social movements like the social movements themselves seems more focused on political than on social demands and issues. Thus, democratic transitions seem to constitute a genuine turning point, not only for the implementation of new political systems but also for social movement studies. In fact, only after democratic implementation was it possible to deal with issues related to social and political conflict at an academic level. A different pattern can be discerned in countries formerly subject to communist regimes. The cases examined here—Russia, Hungary and Romania—generally pay more attention to the concept of civil society than to that of social movements, perhaps because of the echoes of ‘Marxism’ the latter still evoke. Finally, Turkey does not fit into any of the patterns. Without entering into the debate on the kind of regime in force in this country—whether a hybrid or a securitarian one—we observe that history plays a forceful role in social movement studies there (Dorronsoro 2007). Moreover, as in countries which lived for a long period under authoritarian rule, such as Portugal, Turkey’s case shows the influence of James Scott’s approach. In paying more attention to hidden forms of resistance than to open struggles against authorities, such an approach seems particularly suitable to describe peoples’ (re)actions in authoritarian contexts. In spite of these continuities among specific groups of countries, in this section we decided to adopt a geopolitical layout which seems to us more coherent and easy to read.

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Notes

The signatures of this paper appear in alphabetical order.

1. As Diani and Císař stress, the term ‘social science’ is more accurate here than ‘sociology’, because ‘in this particular area of research it is virtually impossible, not to say misleading, to disentangle work conducted by sociologists from work conducted by other researchers, most notably, political scientists’ (Diani and Císař, 2014: 172), but also historians, anthropologists and social psychologists.
2. Here we come up against the problem of boomerang effects, a thorny question in the history of science, and especially in political science, as Pierre Favre remarked: ‘Can the transformations of the real objects which a science gives itself transform this science? Can an emerging social science be committed to other issues than those initially aimed at resulting from historical transformations of the social phenomena which it is studying? Are certain objects, due to the considerable visibility they acquire at particular moments, designed expressly for investigation?’ (Favre 1989: 207–8).
3. According to a time-series of total and collective behaviour/social movement publications which appeared in the top four US sociology journals between 1960 and 2012, John McCarthy shows a dramatic increase starting in 1991–92, from a mean of less than 5 per cent to a mean of more than 15 per cent (unpublished graph shown at the CCC conference, Amsterdam, 2013).
4. For an up-to-date review of those publications, please see van Stekelenburg, Roggeband and Klandermans (2013).

5. See for example, and among others, collaborations between Daniel Cefai and Paul Lichterman (2006); Donatella Della Porta and Sidney Tarrow (2005); Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (2003); Myra Marx Ferree, William Anthony Gamson, Jürgen Gerhards and Dieter Rucht (2002).

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