



**Olivier Fillieule, Guya Accornero.** *Social Movement Studies in Europe: The State of the Art.* Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016. XVIII, 508 S. ISBN 978-1-78533-098-8.

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### **O. Fillieule u.a. (Hrsg.): Social Movement Studies in Europe**

Social movement studies is a well-established field in the social sciences much more so than in history. Thus we have several good introductions to the field penned by social scientists. See for example the excellent introductions in English by Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in Movement. Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 3rd rev. edn., Cambridge 2011; Charles Tilly / Lesley J. Wood, *Social Movements, 1768–2012*, 3rd edn., Boulder 2013; Donatella della Porta / Mario Diani, *Social Movements. An Introduction*, 2nd edn., Oxford 2006; Donatella della Porta / Mario Diani (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements*, Oxford 2015; David A. Snow / Sarah A. Soule / Hanspeter Kriesi (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Oxford 2004; Marco Giugni / Doug McAdam / Charles Tilly (eds.), *How Social Movements Matter*, Minneapolis 1999; Doug McAdam / John D. McCarthy / Mayer N. Zald (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements. Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, Cambridge 1996; Hanspeter Kriesi et al. (eds.), *New Social Movements in Western Europe. A Comparative Analysis*, Minneapolis 1995. , whereas there is scarcely anything written by historians. An explicitly historical introduction to social movements has just been published by Stefan Berger / Holger Nehring (eds.), *The History of Social Movements in Global Perspective. A Sur-*

*vey*, Basingstoke 2017. There is only one journal dedicated explicitly to the study of the history of social movements – *Moving the Social: Journal of Social History and the History of Social Movements*. See [http://moving-the-social.ub.rub.de/index.php/Moving\\_the\\_social](http://moving-the-social.ub.rub.de/index.php/Moving_the_social) (13.01.2017). Together with Sean Scalmer, this reviewer is the editor-in-chief of the journal. , whereas there are several social-science based journals including *Mobilization*, *Social Movement Studies* and *Interface*. In German, there is also the *Forschungsjournal Soziale Bewegungen*. See *Mobilization*: <http://mobilization-journal.org> (13.01.2017); *Social Movement Studies*: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/csms20> (13.01.2017); *Interface*: <http://www.interfacejournal.net> (13.01.2017); *Forschungsjournal Soziale Bewegungen*: <http://forschungsjournal.de> (13.01.2017). Hence it is not surprising that the current volume under review here is edited by two sociologists and that, overwhelmingly, the contributors to the volume also come from the social sciences. A genuine interdisciplinary dialogue between historians of social movements and social scientists looking at social movements is still outstanding. True, the volume under review here has a lot of history and there are, thankfully, many social scientists working historically, but their sense of history often remains a shallow one, hardly ever reaching back beyond the emergence

of the so-called ‘new social movements’ in the 1970s. This is a great pity, for, as Craig J. Calhoun, among others, has shown, social movements have a deep history, going back centuries. Craig J. Calhoun, *The Roots of Radicalism. Tradition, the Public Sphere, and Early Nineteenth-Century Social Movements*, Chicago 2012. Even the movements normally discussed by social scientists are not at all ‘new’ in the 1970s, as their histories often reach back at least to the second half of the nineteenth century.

Having said that, anyone interested in the history and presence of social movements will greatly benefit from the volume put together by Olivier Fillieule (Paris / Lausanne) and Guya Accornero (Lisbon). Following a crisp and to-the-point introduction by the editors that accounts for the rationale of the volume, the book is divided into two main parts. Part one discusses a range of “European Social Movements in Comparative Perspective”, including the 1968 movements, the democracy movements that toppled Communism in Eastern Europe, unemployment movements, the global justice movement, environmental movements, women’s movements and indignados as well as the occupy movements. It is particularly gratifying to find a chapter on the labour movement included here, as there still is a tendency in social movement studies to ignore the labour movement as social movement. Furthermore, this reviewer applauds the inclusion of a chapter on radical right-wing movements, another field that is often not treated as comprehensively as it should be by social movement studies researchers. Finally there is also a fascinating piece on the contentious politics of migration and ethnic relations. There are some obvious things that are missing – including the peace movements, the LGBT movements, the Arab spring movements, or a range of social movements associated with housing, health or education. As the editors themselves emphasize in their introduction, social movements have affected every corner of society and therefore it is near impossible to be all-inclusive in a single-

volume undertaking. Nevertheless, some of the gaps mentioned above are rather striking.

The second part of the volume is dedicated to the state of the art of social movement studies in a variety of different European countries, including Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Switzerland, Ireland, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Hungary, Romania and Russia / the Soviet Union. Again, the volume is not comprehensive (with obvious gaps in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe), yet it does convey a good picture of how social movement studies developed in the countries that are incorporated. The organisation of a survey of national case studies, however, has its shortcomings. Hence many of the chapters go over the same ground and recall similar stories of development. The reader will encounter many déjà-vu elements, if (s)he attempts systematically to read one chapter after the other. Nevertheless, it is very interesting to have this survey, which is unique to date, as it is precisely the unsuspected similarities and differences that are so intriguing and that are brought out very well by the concluding comparative essay by Dieter Rucht on “Social Movement Studies in Europe: Achievements, Gaps and Challenges”. Readers should perhaps start with this essay and then dip into individual country chapters depending on what spatial or thematic interest they may have.

The standards of the essays in this collection are very high throughout, and they are both insightful and a delight to read. The focus on Europe has its rationale in the editors’ belief that research on social movements in Europe is comparatively (and unjustly) neglected in comparison to American research on social movements. Yet, what the volume throughout its 25 contributions shows most convincingly is the strong interaction between European and North American research. Hence this distinction seems somewhat artificial, especially if one considers the massive exchange of people with an interest in the study of social movements between Europe and North America.

A similar scepticism creeps into this reviewer's mind when considering the notion of national case studies. Of course, the institutionalisation of social movement studies takes place in particular locations, at universities or research institutes, and the national political contexts also matter for the success or failure of such institutionalisations. But on the whole, transnational factors and developments are easily lost in the adoption of a sort of national tunnel vision in accounting for the development of social movement studies. Hence a different form of organisation, around particular bodies of theories, or around particular political agendas (that were certainly shared by particular clusters of countries) might have been a more innovative way of telling the tale of the development of social movement studies, but it would also have been one that points in the direction of the limits of a European analysis. Social movement studies, for many years now, is a global discipline practiced by many people and institutions that are increasingly interconnected. Hence the state of the art of social movement studies can only be gauged in a global and not in a European perspective. Having said that, the book under review here can still be thoroughly recommended to everyone interested in the presence and history of social movements. An enormous amount of excellent scholarship is assembled here and no one will put this book down without having gained many fresh and productive insights into the development of social movements and their researchers.

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