

# Activism and Civil Society: Broadening Political Participation

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# Activismo y Sociedad Civil: ampliando la participación política

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Paul Dekker and  
Ramón A. Feenstra (eds.)



UNIVERSITAT  
JAUME I

Departament de Filosofia i Sociologia



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**ACTIVISM AND CIVIL SOCIETY:  
BROADENING POLITICAL  
PARTICIPATION**

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**Edició a càrrec de:** Paul Dekker, Tilburg University and The Netherlands Institute for Social Research i Ramón A. Feenstra, Universitat Jaume I

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Tilburg University and The Netherlands Institute for Social Research /  
Universitat Jaume I

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# Activism and Civil Society: Broadening Participation and Deepening Democracy

PAUL DEKKER and RAMÓN A. FEENSTRA\*

TILBURG UNIVERSITY AND THE NETHERLANDS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH / UNIVERSITAT JAUME I

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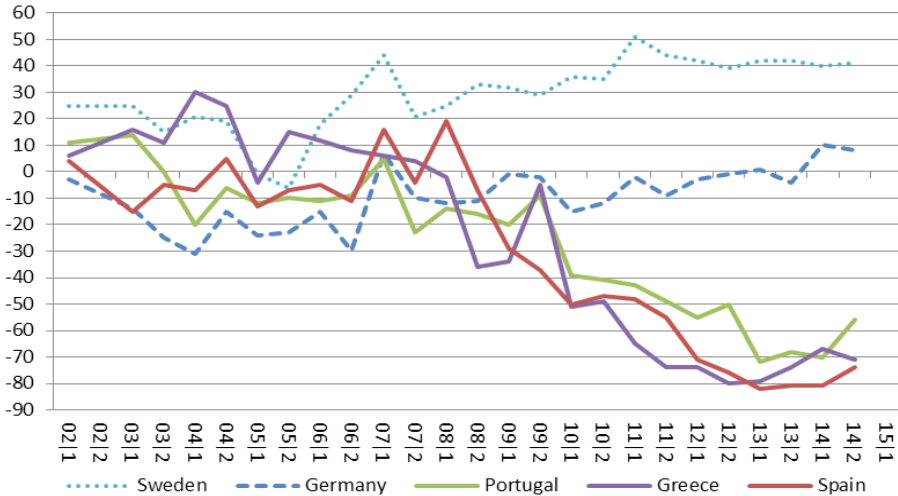
In recent years, we have witnessed the emergence of political activism through an irruption of citizen movements – 5M or Occupy–, the birth of new political platforms –5 Stelle, Zyrisa, Podemos– and the rise of new direct action groups, such as Anonymous, Stop-Evictions Movements, co-operatives, to name just a few. In some countries this activism has not just placed substantial pressure on traditional actors of representative democracy and governments, but has also opened up opportunities for structural changes in the policymaking context and procedures (García Marzá, 2012). At the same time, the emergence of new forms of citizen political involvement influences our classical understanding of the political participation concept. In political science, the term *participation* is generally, and sometimes exclusively, associated with representational structures of government (Verba and Nie, 1972). Currently, numerous examples demonstrate that participation is not limited to either choosing through elections those who form and control the government, or trying to influence their decisions. Participation transcends the act of voting, becoming a party affiliate or contacting political representatives; that is, it takes multiple, new, and both conventional and unconventional shapes, in both political and civil-society circles.

The background of the present rise of political discontent and protest in Europe is the financial economic crisis since 2008 in general, and the Euro Crisis in Southern Europe in particular. Three articles in this special issue focus on Southern Europe. In order to reflect about how different developments have been, we present a few graphs of developments in Spain, Greece (the two countries dealt with in this issue), and also Portugal, Germany and Sweden, for a comparative perspective. Figure 1 shows the development of (net) trust in parliament. It reveals very different developments, from stable or even somewhat increasing positive trust levels in Sweden and Germany,

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to enormous falls in the South. For instance, Spain goes from +19 points at the beginning of 2008 (54% tended to trust, 35% tended not to trust parliament) to -74% points at the end of 2014 (10% tended to trust, 80% tended not to trust).



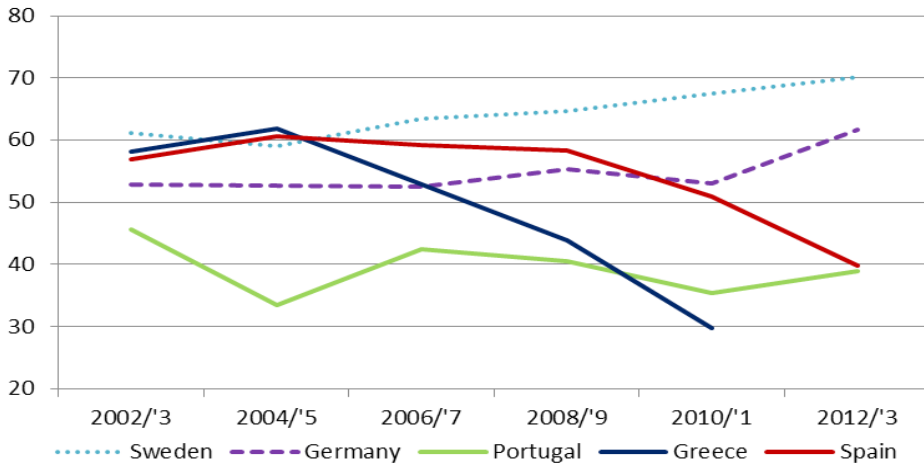
\* Presented is the percentage of people who ‘tended to trust’ minus the percentage who ‘tended not to trust’ (the lower house of) the National Parliament.

Source: Eurobarometer 57.1 - 82.3

**Figure 1**  
**Net Trust in National Parliaments,\* 2002-2014**

Figure 2 shows high, and maybe even rising, levels of satisfaction with the functioning of national democracy in Sweden and Germany, a lower, but not deteriorating, level in Portugal, and a clear decrease in Spain and Greece (no 2012/13 data).





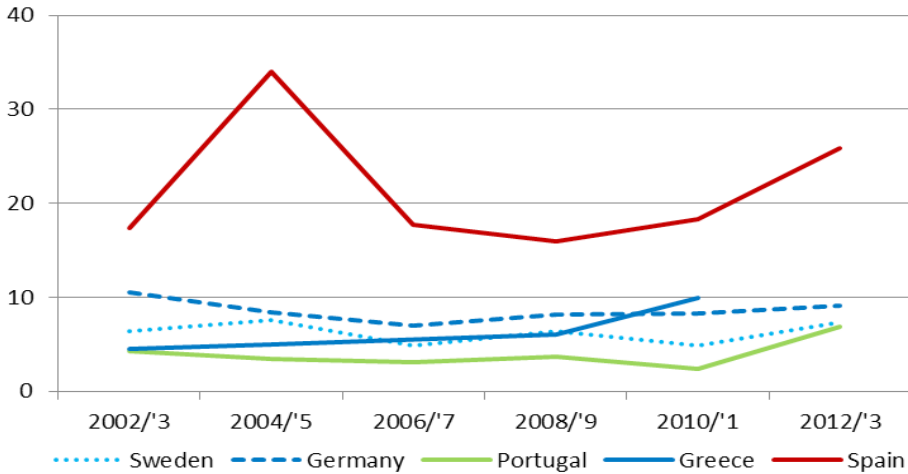
\* Average satisfaction with 'the way democracy works in [country]' on a scale from 0 (extremely dissatisfied) to 100 (extremely satisfied)

Source: European Social Survey 1-6

**Figure 2**  
Satisfaction with Democracy,\* 2002-2013

Figure 3 reports participation in demonstrations, with rather stable, but low levels of not more than 10% of the population pretending to have taken part in demonstrations in the 12 months before the interview, where Spain had overall higher levels and over 30% in 2004. That year Spain suffered the 11 March bomb attacks and Aznar's government's information manipulation about those responsible for the attacks. During the same period, there was a change of government with PSOE's electoral victory.

The 'lawful public demonstrations' of Figure 3 are only one manifestation of political protest (as we may generally assume in EU countries. Yet in North Korea, not joining a demonstration to show support for the Leader might be quite a courageous form of protest). Countries have different repertoires, which might change over time (Quaranta, 2012), just as organising social movements might do, or copying forms of action of movements elsewhere (della Porta and Mattoni, 2015).



\* % that has taken part in a lawful public demonstration during the last 12 months to try «to improve things in [country] or help prevent things from going wrong».  
 Source: European Social Survey 1-6

**Figure 3**  
**Participation in demonstrations,\* 2002-2013**

Diverse democratic systems seem to have witnessed the establishment of two key trends. On the one hand, there is growing disaffection with representation structures caused by generalised disapproval of how institutions have functioned, although the value of their existence is never denied. On the other hand, there is growing demand for civic participation among various population strata.

The new ways of action, in turn, renew and transform forms of political participation of civil society, which finds fresh alternatives, perspectives, tactics and repertoires surface around the notion of protest, activism and civil society (van Laer and van Aelst, 2010). This special issue of RECERCA includes a multidisciplinary range of articles that have one thing in common: the analysis of the meaning and dynamics of this civil society political participation renewal and reconfiguration. Previous issues of RECERCA have focussed on the meaning of civil society (Dekker, 2008; Feenstra, 2008), the importance of the common goods (Abad and Abad, 2014), or the role of social economy as an economic engine (Herrero-Blasco, 2014; Donati and Calvo, 2014; Innerarity, 2012; Ordóñez, 2014). This special 2015 issue focuses

on the field of activism and its role in reshaping the meaning of participation, and includes five articles of authors affiliated to institutions in five countries: Mexico, Denmark, Ireland, Spain and Australia.

In the first article, «The Psych-politics of Austerity; democracy, sovereignty and civic protest», Powell argues that new forms of civic protest are giving voice to people in the age of the Internet. The author poses the question of whether these new ways of anti-austerity protests form part of: (a) a long militant, and sometimes violent tradition of street politics based on class struggle or; (b) a process of deepening democracy into more participatory forms for peaceful and creative political interaction and democratic decision making. Powell considers that movements such as Occupy form part of an anti-austerity counter-fiction that is creating a participative democratic narrative in which citizens are being invited to become actors in making their own history. The author concludes by asserting that we are experiencing «the democratisation of democracy in response to the invisibility of autocratic power that seeks to discursively mould contemporary political reality, and fails».

In the next three articles, we focus on experiences in Southern Europe. In «Europeanization and social movement mobilization during the European sovereign debt crisis: The cases of Spain and Greece», Bourne and Chatzopoulou examine the Europeanisation of social movements in the European Sovereign Debt (ESD) Crisis context. These authors present the findings of a pilot study which centers on social movement mobilisation in Spain and Greece between May and June 2011. Using newspapers as a primary source of data, the authors suggest that the largest category of contentious-action events in both Spain and Greece was action that focused entirely on the domestic arena during the studied period.

The third article, «Emotional politics on Facebook. An exploratory study of *Podemos*' discourse during the European election campaign 2014», focuses on the new Spanish party *Podemos*. Following a pragmatic linguistic approach, Sampietro and Valera analyse the presence of positive Facebook messages during the campaign and the contrast of these messages with other public discourses of this political formation. The authors show a significant presence of emotions in *Podemos*' discourse

As the fourth article, González' text «Squatting movement and housing movement: similarities, differences and convergences in times of crisis» goes more deeply into another key Spanish political actor: the squatters' movement and the Platform of by Mortgage Victims (PAH, in Spanish). This text compares these two actors and their different political courses, repertoires, demands and strategies. González goes into the meaning and importance of

some of the actors who have played a more relevant role in the vibrant civil society of Spain in recent years.

Fifth and finally, in «Democracy will never be the same again: 21<sup>st</sup> Century protest and the transformation of politics», Tormey looks at the current wave of protests and demonstrations against austerity in favour of democracy and asks what they have in common and what is new. He concludes that «the revolts and rebellions that we see around Europe, and indeed the world, have in common their rejection of the logic of representative politics and representation more generally». This author analyses what he states as a crisis of representative politics, a crisis which is transforming the nature of mobilisation, contestation and politics more generally. More specifically, Tormey considers that «Politics is undergoing a Gestalt shift», on which we need to reflect as political theorists and empirical scientists.

Thus the country case studies and general reflections of this special issue highlight important aspects and profound layers of today's movements against austerity and for democracy in the Western world, particularly in Southern Europe. We hope that the questions raised may contribute to agenda-setting for democratic renewal as well as for civil society research, even if the specific protest phenomena, movements and organisations examined herein might well disappear or evaporate.

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# The Psych-politics of Austerity; Democracy, Sovereignty and Civic Protest

*Los psico-política de la austeridad; la democracia, la soberanía y la protesta cívica*

FRED POWELL

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK (IRELAND)

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## Abstract

This article argues that new (and sometimes invisible) forms of civic protest are finding a voice in the age of the Internet. It poses the questions whether these voices of protest are (a) part of a long, militant and sometimes violent tradition of street politics based on class struggle or (b) new, peaceful and creative political (and anti-political) platforms (a metaphysical revolt) offering critical and innovative insights into the possibilities of democratic renewal - as part of a process of deepening democracy into more ethical and participatory forms.

Keywords: austerity, civil society, mini-publics, Occupy movement

## Resumen

En este artículo se argumenta que las nuevas (y a veces invisibles) formas de protesta cívica están encontrando voz en la era de internet. Se plantea la cuestión de si estas voces de protesta son (a) parte de una larga, militante y, en ocasiones, violenta tradición de política de la calle basada en la lucha de clases o bien (b) nuevas, pacíficas y creativas plataformas (una revuelta metafísica) políticas (y antipolítica), que ofrece una perspectiva innovadora y crítica respecto a las posibilidades de renovación democrática, como parte de un proceso de profundización de la democracia en formas más éticas y participativas.

Palabras clave: austeridad, sociedad civil, mini-públicos, Movimiento Occupy

The metaphysical rebel protests against the human condition in general.  
Albert Camus (1962)

Saturday 3 December 2011 saw a hugely successful pre-budget 'Parade of Defiance' against the IMF-imposed cuts throughout the streets of Cork. This was a creative protest organised by Occupy Cork to show the city's opposition to austerity measures and to raise our voices together against the undemocratic forcing of these cuts on the people of this country. Between 1,000 and 1,200 people marched behind banners with messages such as 'Not my Debt' and 'This is not a Recession, this is a Robbery'.

Occupy Cork (*Issue 3*, 2011)

The Little People came suddenly. I don't know who they are. I don't know what it means. I was a prisoner of the story [IQ84]. I had no choice. They came, and I described it. That is my work.

Haruki Murakami (*The New York Review of Books*, December 8, 2011)

## INTRODUCTION

Two recent events captured the essence of our times. First, the Occupy Movement which began in Wall Street, New York City, on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011, and spread across the world. The message of the Occupy Movement is a simple one. It opposes the austerity measures imposed on ordinary people around the world, the 99% who it argues have been expropriated by the wealthiest 1% of the population. Second, the much anticipated Haruki Murakami novel published in 2011 entitled *IQ84*, while clearly inspired by George Orwell's 1984 allegory about Stalinist tyranny, takes the reader into a counterworld of unreality, where surveillance is all pervasive and the 'Little People' hide from a weirdly unsettling Lewis Carroll wonderland of horrors and the horrifying exercise of power over the mesmerized. Both the Occupy Movement and Murakami's *IQ84* illuminate aspects of the world we currently inhabit: the dominance of unaccountable and largely invisible systems of power but also the willingness of citizens to globally struggle against these dark forces. The 'Little People' have become the «unsignified signifiers» probing behind the mirror of power (Baxter, 2011: 25). In doing so they are rethinking the nature of modernity as an imaginary act. Castoriadis in his book *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (1987) redefined modernity as a struggle between a radical democratic project of autonomy (i.e. personal freedom to determine one's own future without structural manipulation) and the neo-institutional project of mastery of what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their book *Empire* identify as «a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global



realm» under «a single rule» (2000: xii). The adoption of the austerity project by the European Union, arguably, has initiated a struggle between the disciplinary agenda of what its critics caricature as the European ‘super-state’ that is being resisted by the ‘Little People’ through civic protest. But is this civic protest simply reactive and defensive against change *or* does it represent a new ethical form of democratic engagement from below? It reminds us of Albert Camus’ (1962) distinction between rebellion as an act of spontaneous protest as opposed to revolution, which implies the transfer of sovereign power to a new regime. In that sense it is very different in its objectives to the Velvet revolutions of Central and Eastern Europe and the Maghreb-Mashreq region.

In this article the author seeks to develop Haruki Murakami’s imagery of the ‘Little People’, probing behind the mirror of power in the context of popular democratic resistance to austerity policies. The author poses two questions. Is civic protest in the twenty-first century simply the latest manifestation of a long tradition of confrontational street politics, dating back to the class warfare of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries *or* does it in the age of the Internet represent a new form of participative democratic politics, that is seeking to ethically challenge elite power and reframe democratic practice?

## 1. THE WILD HYDRA OF INVISIBLE CIVIL SOCIETY

Steinhoff argues that «invisible civil society is the by-product of the decline of the late 1960’s-early 1970’s New Left protest movement» (2015:103). She contends that the stigmatization of the New Left, hierarchical organizations and unpleasant confrontations with the police led to the building of newly conceived mini-publics, made up of networks that constitute an invisible civil society. Steinhoff is commenting from a Japanese perspective, where the mass demonstration has been significantly replaced by a smaller scale organizational form, known as the *shukai* (gathering), composed of like-minded citizens (Steinhoff, 2015). Invisible civil society is also a product of the internet.

One of the defining features of the birth of new political platforms in recent times is the rise of Anonymous which can be dated from 2003 as an internet platform identified as 4chan «specialising in particularly juvenile and malevolent prankishness’ in which users hide behind pseudonyms like weev and dirk digler *or*, more often, posted as the default user: Anonymous» (Gleick, 2004: 36). Its prankster politics graduated from trolling to political activism and, latterly, hacktivism. It is essentially a youth movement (in so far

as it can be described as a social movement) virtually engaged with civil society. Anonymous in its most idealistic form is a forum or platform for the promotion of discursive ethics. But it has another side: pranking the adult world. Its form (or formlessness) leads to the «elimination of the person, and by extension everything associated with it, such as leadership, representation and status» (Coleman 2014, cited in Gleick, 2014: 37). The name (or brand) itself is entirely democratic. Anybody can claim to be 'anonymous'. It is an open participative platform that defies simplistic categorisation as a movement, organisation, party, etc. It is by its very nature ethereal – part of the communicative oxygen. It fits into the genre of invisible civil society activism because it is a communicative space. In this space citizens can safely participate in a surveillance society by wearing (sometimes literally the mask of anonymity) as a protective disguise.

The advent of hacktivism has given Anonymous a new platform, as 'the wily hydra' ever changing its disposition. Hacktivism can be highly political or simply pranksterism. Wikileaks provided a new political direction for Anonymous to express its oppositional politics, which some of its critics regard as cyber-terrorism, because it revealed classified security data about the state. It underlines the connection between Anonymous and cyberspace – the preferred terrain of its engagement. Anonymous has also used its prankster image to forge a new language that reveals a more nihilistic motivation, «I do it for the lulz» (Gleick, 2014: 36). It derives from the internet acronym LOL (laugh out loud) – lulz meaning broadly for the laughs. There is also a subterranean quality to Anonymous that is both its strength and weakness. It is nowhere and everywhere. Anonymous is spontaneous and archaic but also directionless and contentless. Some view pranking as anti-social behaviour in which a 'hacker army' of young people terrorise innocent third parties in a 'wave of cybercrime', evocative of crime and violence on the street. Others view pranking (like graffiti) as an anomic critique of democracy from an alienated youth culture but do not regard it as a serious movement for its reform, renewal or reconstitution (Gleick, 2014). More visible terrestrial social movements have sought to fill this space.

The Occupy movement, *Los Indignados (Spain)* and *Aganaktismenoi (Greece)* have emerged in this carnival atmosphere of political protest as the voice of democracy in the form of a radical civil society. It is a discombobulating mix of the theatrical and theoretical that has been called the 'multitude' (Hardt and Negri, 2004). In a global village, the local camps of the Occupy movement stand out as symbols of protest in a world of financialised capitalism. It also represents what Hardt and Negri term «the mobilization of

the common» in which «the common antagonism and common wealth of the exploited and expropriated are translated into common conduct, habits and performativity» (2004: 211-212). The internet provides the information that the official media suppresses. A painteresque truth is emerging in the sense that our world is composed of «many truths that challenge each other, recoil from each other, reflect from each other, tease each other» (Pinter, 2005). It is difficult separate truth from fiction in this virtual reality.

The Occupy movement, *indignados* and *Aganaktismenoi* have sought to contest official versions of the truth in the interests of public debate aimed at the creation of an ethical civil society, as a basis for ‘democratizing democracy’. The Occupy Wall Street Movement was inspired by the Arab Spring (Van Gelder, 2011; Greenberg, 2011). However, while the occupiers of Tahrir Square had a single and unifying demand of regime change, the Occupy movement sought to create a more metaphysical revolt, by addressing the mind. They viewed their street protest as an antidote to the pollution of our minds by «infotoxins [...] commercial messaging and the [...] financial and ethical catastrophes that loom before humanity» (Greenberg, 2011). The link to Camus’ existential humanism is direct. What the Occupy Wall Street movement and the protesters of Tahrir Square shared was a common mastering of technology through on-line networking sites that enabled them to manage their protests in a unique new way.

The Occupy movement became a global phenomenon. While the Occupy Wall Street movement has been the centre of attention, it was preceded by ‘indignant’ camps in Madrid, Athens, Santiago and Malaysia. The Occupy movements’ unifying theme is economic and social injustice – encapsulated in the slogan 99% are being expropriated by the 1%. This is a powerful message that has attracted popular support, «polls have shown almost twice as many Americans agreed with Occupy Wall Street than disagree with it. Far from alienating middle America, the movement captured the public and political imagination» (Young, 2012: 3). The success of political platforms associated with *Indignados* in local and regional elections in Spain during 2015 also suggests on-going significant popular support (*Guardian*, 6 June 2015). This electoral success is no doubt at least in part directly linked to the suppression of the movement through the closure of street camps’ politically constructing that the law as harsher on protesters than bankers, who the anti-austerity campaigners hold responsible for the Global crisis.

## 2. THE POLITICS OF EUROPEAN PUBLIC OUTRAGE

Stéphane Hessel's *Time of Outrage* (2011) calling on young people to resist alleged state oppression in a similar manner to World War II resistance movements found its answer on the streets across European cities during 2011. Greece and Spain became the main theatres of protest. In Spain *Democracia real ya!* was the slogan of Spanish *indignados* that occupied the Plaza del Sol in Madrid and Plaza de Catalunya in Barcelona and hundreds of squares across the country from the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011, calling for changes in the social and economic policies and greater participation by citizens in decision-making (della Porta, 2012). In Greece the Aganaktismenoi movement occupied Syntagma square in Athens on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011 and engaged in public debate about the consequences of the harsh austerity measures being imposed on the country. The parallels with the classical Athenian *agora*, which met a few hundred metres away, were striking (*Guardian*, 15 June 2011). The daily occupations of Syntagma square often drew crowds of 100,000 citizens to protest. In many other European cities similar protests took place organised by outraged citizens. Their sense of injustice was very real.

At the core of the perceived injustice is the belief that hundreds of millions of euros have been expended on saving commercial banks, while millions of citizens are reduced to poverty. Donatella della Porta has observed that this has led to a public perception of profound social injustice – encapsulated in the metaphor «the abduction of democracy» (2012: 66). The austerity solution to the economic crisis, according to this analysis, is generating a political crisis that is undermining trust in democratic institutions. Della Porta argues that the crisis is delegitimising the elitist model of democracy (based on political parties) because the locus of decision-making has moved elsewhere (Brussels, Berlin, New York) and is no longer responsive to popular concerns. The influence of lobby groups and shadowy powerful interests over politicians has led to perceptions of corruption at the heart of government. Political party funding systems have heightened this distrust because of the influence of ‘oligarchs’. The concentration of media ownership in the hands of wealthy media moguls has further exacerbated public anxiety. Silvio Berlusconi in Italy perhaps best personifies this link between media and politics.

The response to austerity economics has been twofold. The traditional Left has mobilised around strikes, street protests and orchestrated responses to the public expenditure cuts and erosion of labour rights. New social

movements have broadened the struggle into a debate about the nature and meaning of democracy – *Democracia Real Ya!* Their approach seeks not only policy change but greater public participation in the formulation of policy, which digitalisation makes possible. They have put Claus Offe’s meta-question of democracy at the centre of the debate by challenging the boundaries of institutional politics (della Porta, 2012). Della Porta observes:

[...] the *indignados* discourse on democracy is articulated and complex, taking up some of the principal criticisms of the ever-decreasing quality of representative democracies, but also some of the main proposals inspired by other democratic qualities beyond electoral representation. These proposals resonate with (more traditional) participatory visions, but also with new deliberative conceptions that underline the importance of creating multiple public spaces, egalitarian but plural (2012: 66).

The issue is the quality of individual citizen’s personal democratic experiences and the need for political elites to actively engage with citizens voices. The outraged movement is reportedly supported by 90% of citizens in Spain and Greece (Della Porta, 2012: 67). Trust in European institutions arguably will not be fully restored until democratic engagement takes place around the question what it means to be a citizen in the twenty-first century. This is the biggest challenge facing European civil society in contemporary reality, since it is existentially founded on the right to associate as the cornerstone of democratic practice (Powell, 2013). That is the meta-question of democracy.

### 3. THE META- QUESTION OF DEMOCRACY

Democracy is about humanity’s desire to nurture a public sphere for the common good. But there political contestation begins. Truth is shaped by ideology (Pinter, 2005). Because we live in an era when wealth is once again in the ascendant, we should not be blinded by its truths. Thomas Piketty in his best-selling book *Capital in the twenty-first Century* (2014), based on data from twenty countries and with a historic analysis reaching back to the eighteenth century, has sought to establish long-term economic and social patterns. He adopts a simple and, in social justice terms, pessimistic formula to explain economic inequality:  $r > g$  (meaning that return on capital is generally higher than economic growth). The import of Piketty’s analysis is that while the apocalyptic predictions of Karl Marx of the gradual immiseration of the population may have been avoided by economic growth and the diffusion of knowledge, inequality is growing. The logic behind Piketty’s argu-

ment suggests that the optimism that accompanied the welfare state, as a social compromise between capital and labour, was not founded on a solid long term redistributive base. The pessimism of Piketty's analysis raises existential questions for democracy in general and social democracy in particular. If it is impossible to create greater equality, what is the point in democracy? Is the elite model of representative democracy undemocratic? Is there a crisis of trust at the core of institutional politics, which is corrupting our political institutions from the inside? What is the truth behind Offe's (1985) meta-question of democracy in terms of citizen's capacities to change the boundaries of institutional politics? Is political agency simply a Quixotic fantasy that should be disregarded as hopelessly idealistic at best and anomic pranking of the system at worst? Or does democratic protest speak truth to power by articulating the two-sided nature of sovereignty, which involves constant struggle (Hardt and Negri, 2004).

John Keane in his important book *The Life and Death of Democracy* locates its origins in Ancient Athens (2009). The *agora* (a site of political assembly or marketplace) became a metaphor for Greek civil society as Greece evolved into city states from about 700 BC. Keane concludes «through their public encounters in the agora, Athenians could feel their power, their ability to speak to each other, to act with and against their fellow citizens, in pursuit of commonly defined ends» (2009:14). The *agora* enabled mini-publics to participate in the democratic process. This made it immediate, accountable and transparent. Steinhoff in a comment on the benefits of political participation through the agency of protest in contemporary society argues: (1) participation fulfils deep psychological needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness, and (2) social movement research indicates that participation «generates collective identity, solidarity, and commitment, which in turn produces social and emotional well-being» (2015: 101-104). Civic protest also goes to the core of the democratic project, as a two-sided dialogue between the people and power that is in essence an on-going political drama about sovereignty.

Drama, like democracy, is a product of Ancient Greece in terms of our contemporary understanding of it as an art form involving a performance and audience. There are two dramatic forms: tragedy and comedy. The three great Greek tragedians were: Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, who successively moved the focus of their art from the divine to the human. Greek comedy is divisible into 'old comedy' and 'new comedy'. Aristophanes (c444-385BCE) was the master of old comedy who wrote forty-four plays, eleven of which survive. His satirical drama combines risqué wit and humour with

intense invective against his enemies in a search for truth. While a conservative by disposition, Aristophanes used the dramatic form to expose abuses of power and privilege. On the other hand, the 'new comedy' more closely resembles comedy as human paradox and farce that we associate with much of modern apolitical comedy. But political comedy is still very much alive.

The most current example of political drama is the victory of the radical-minded Syriza party in the 2015 Greek General Elections. It was an epic political event dubbed 'the Red Spring'. The Syriza leader, Alexis Tsipras (as Greek Prime Minister) compared his political movement's victory to the inexorable forward force of an ancient Greek drama (*Guardian* Editorial 31 January 2015). Invoking Aristotle's analysis he argued that the tragedy of austerity (the hubris of neo-liberalism) would be followed by nemesis (EU political failure) and ultimately catharsis in the form of democratic renewal. Alexis Tsipras proclaimed: «Because Greece is the county of Sophocles, who taught us with his Antigone that there are moments in which the supreme law is justice» (*Guardian* 31 January 2015). He was referring to Antigone's defiance of the king (her uncle) that her dead brother should be denied the civility of a burial. Her actions are justified on the basis that power can be trumped by the higher law of justice. In Sophocles' Greek tragedy Antigone speaks truth to power by her brave defiance of the king.

The parallels between Antigone's struggle for justice and Syriza's challenge to the EU austerity policies is unmistakable. Alexis Tsipras has attracted the world's attention by speaking truth to power in the cause of social justice. Of course, there is wide speculation that Syriza's defiance will end as another Greek tragedy. Yet this contemporary political drama reminds us that there are deep roots in European civilisation that lead back to Athenian democracy. Civility emerged in classical culture as the basis of community, social stability and mutual dependence. Citizens internalised social and cultural codes of behaviour that enabled them to communicate non-violently with neighbours and strangers – agreeing to disagree – in conflict-free communicative zones (Anheier, 2010). Civility is the cornerstone of civil society because of its association with the civilising process (Elias, 1994). Anheier concludes that «civility creates predictability and builds social capital through successful encounters» (2010: 477). In summary, civility provides the communicative competencies and spaces upon which civil society is constructed. Aristotle (384-322BCE) in both his *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* identifies political community as supreme (Molnar, 2010). Greek democracy became the defining event in European political formation. Its rootedness is the fundamental human right to association, which has, argu-

ably, been lost in the era of representative democracy dominated by elites. However, a vibrant set of social movements is challenging European political elites in new dramatic forms.

#### 4. AUSTERITY, POLITICAL FICTION AND DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

Ireland as another ‘Bailout’ state that is also at the epicentre of the European austerity programme. While the country successfully ended the terrorist war in Northern Ireland through the 1998 Belfast Agreement, economic hybris had created a new crisis of unparalleled proportions. During the Celtic Tiger imaginary, arguably the Irish became self-absorbed subjects (consumer citizens) rather than active citizens engaged in society. It was a perfect fantasy land – beyond the reach of reality, in which Ireland borrowed from the future in a wager that it lost. Prosperity transformed Ireland from an under-development to Asian Tiger style economy (Powell, 1992; Powell and Geoghegan, 2004; Powell, 2012).

Unlike Greece, Ireland has responded to its ‘Bailout’ with the fatalistic resignation of a sinner and accepted its creditors imposition of ‘responsibilisation’ for the country’s debt, rather than allocating responsibility to the European commercial banking sector that has arguably caused the crisis in peripheral nations through profligate lending. Apart from the Occupy Movement there was initially very limited opposition to the draconian policies of the ‘Bailout’ imposed on domestic social expenditure, leading to: cuts in public sector pay; increases in teacher: pupil ratios in schools; lengthening hospital waiting lists and rising health insurance costs, rising unemployment (over 14% of the workforce) and retrenchment in social welfare payments.

A general election in 2011 resulted in the Fianna Fail/Green Coalition being ejected from power. Fianna Fail (a populist centre-right party) was reduced to a parliamentary rump. The Greens were wiped out losing all of their seats in the Dail (parliament). But they were replaced by Fine Gael-led government supported by a minority centre-left Labour Party. Fine Gael like Fianna Fail is also a centre-right party. Both share a common history in the nationalist Sinn Fein (Ourselves) movement, having split following the partition of Ireland in the early 1920s. The Fine Gael-Labour government promised a ‘democratic revolution’ based upon political reform. Labour had been elected on a Syriza-style promise of ‘Labour’s way, not Frankfurt’s way’. However, any renegeing on bondholders was quickly ruled out. The new govern-



ment accepted the terms of the 'Bailout' without equivocation from the start of their tenure in office.

This strategy has been supported by the political fiction that the 'Bailout' has been a success. Ireland can afford to repay its debts. In 2014 Ireland paid 7.5 billion to service debts of 214 billion compared with Greece, which paid 8 billion to service debts of 315 billion (O'Toole, 2015). The political fiction is underpinned by the myth that Ireland is a rich Northern European country that is prudently paying the costs of the failure of its private banks. In reality, the previous government (allegedly under pressure from the European Central Bank) transferred private bank debts to the citizens in a decision that raises fundamental questions regarding democratic process. The result of this decision transferred Ireland's sovereignty in terms of taxation and fiscal policy to the Troika (EU, ECB, IMF).

The consequences have been draconian as the Irish government seeks to combine major cuts in public expenditure with rises in taxation. The introduction of a property charge led to significant protest. But it was the introduction of a water charge (tax) during 2014 that finally galvanised public opinion against austerity policies. Several hundreds of thousands of citizens took to the streets in a series of protests that have continued into 2015. Streets protests were accompanied by a sharp decline in support for mainstream political parties and a growth in support for left-wing populist parties and independents. Many citizens are experiencing a profound disenchantment with politics and political institutions. The water charge has been significantly scaled back with bills arriving on a quarterly basis to minimise their impact. Many citizens have refused to register for the water charge as a protest against austerity. More significantly, there has been a significant erosion in the electoral dominance of the main stream political parties, with one-third of the electorate opting for independent candidates in recent opinion polls.

In post Celtic Tiger Ireland, the citizens are experiencing what Slavoj Žižek calls 'The *real real*' (2011), which he likens to the horror in a horror film. The line between politics and fantasy has become blurred in Ireland's contemporary reality. This presents citizens with a series of questions:

- How can they overcome being subjects?
- How do they restore content to the democratic imaginary?
- How do they deal with the legacy of the 2008 crash?

The Irish President, poet and intellectual Michael D. Higgins, advocates as an alternative to the deeply compromised status quo a creative society constructed from the bottom-up:

[...] the creative society cannot be imposed from above; it is built on creativity made possible by sustainable communities. Properly respected, the cultural space can be an invitation to push the boundaries of the possible – enfranchising us all in our capacity for living, and enriching the social and economic life of the nation (Higgins, 2011: 22).

The President argues that the alternative is Žižek's (2011) apocalyptic vision, outlined in his book *Living in the End Time*:

Should the adjustment in economic and social assumptions prove to be incapable of being made, we probably face an unmediated confrontation between the excluded and those who chose to be unconcerned. Such a point is the one at which the dark prescriptions of Slavoj Žižek become relevant. Around the world there is evidence that such an outcome is achieving momentum, and some support (Higgins, 2011: 62).

The challenge that President Higgins has presented is essentially about the need for a new political project in post-Bailout Ireland to take the narrative of democracy forward. It is very clearly framed within the language of civil society: community, inclusive citizenship and sustainability.

Arguably, President Higgins' vision of a political rupture generated by bottom-up forces within civil society points to the social left, as opposed to the political left, as the drivers of change in post-politics society. The Occupy movement (which experienced suppression in New York, London and Dublin) is the most visible contemporary manifestation of the social left as an actor in redefining politics. In response to the eviction of protestors from the grounds of St Paul's Cathedral the *Guardian* (29 February 2012) declared on its front page:

You cannot evict an idea. Such is the message of defiance from Occupy. But it is not entirely true. For the whole point of Occupy is that it's not just an idea bouncing around the internet. Occupy is stubbornly about the physical reality of space. Others may write books and organise seminars. Occupy puts up tents. It takes up space. It is there.

Sarah van Gelder likens the Occupy Movement to the Arab Spring and argues that its name identifies the cause of the current crisis: «Wall street banks, big corporations, and others among the 1% are claiming the world's wealth for themselves at the expense of the 99% and having their way with governments» (2011: 1). What is refreshing about the Occupy Movements is their determination to link their political critique of capitalism to practical

welfare initiatives aimed at the socially excluded. Despite their chaos they genuinely represent a search for truth through civic protest and metaphysical rebellion.

President Higgin's concept of a 'creative society' has been taken up by the Cork Occupy Movement as a philosophical basis of their protest:

A hugely important aspect of the protest was the involvement of Cork Community Art Link, who brought a real creative and artistic colour to the demonstration. This combines the importance of our presence on the South Mall in the heart of the city with an appreciation of the need to move in more creative directions, opening up the Occupy movement to all. This is about making the movement accessible and welcoming to all, and bringing that together with the principles of equality and democracy that are central to what we do. In a time where there is such an overwhelming amount and range of advertising constantly being forced down our throats, we need to work in ways that really engage with people, and the wide and open nature of the Occupy movement is bringing something really new to the table.

Creative protests such as the Parade are testament to a DIY ethic producing our own culture, one that can be defiant through creativity, but this shouldn't be seen as the be-all and end-all of how we're to organise ourselves for this fight. We should not feel bound to the past to feel we owe today's struggle to those who've come before us – we should try to see ourselves within the tradition of human beings standing up for potent ideas of justice, equality and dignity. How we interpret that challenge of building a new society should be across the whole spectrum of human capacity – the creative and cultural shouldn't be seen as opposed to the political, to the practical task of organising and mobilising in cooperation with one another, against those whose interests are currently served by our rights being stamped on (Occupy Cork, Issue 3, 2011: 11).

The Occupy Movement is part of an anti-austerity counter-fiction that is creating a participative democratic narrative in which citizens are being invited to become actors in making their own history. It suggests that we are experiencing 'the democratisation of democracy' in response to the invisibility of autocratic power that seeks to discursively mould contemporary political reality and fails. It fails because democracy is foundationally constructed on dialogue between citizens within the *POLIS*.

## 5. STRONG DEMOCRACY: BEYOND POLITICAL ZOOLOGY

Benjamin Barber laments the erosion of democracy from within, through the triumph of thin (representative) democracy – which in his view marginalises citizens from the decision-making process and undermines popular sovereignty. He likens this process to 'politics as zookeeping', in which «de-

mocracy is undone by a hundred kinds of activity more profitable than citizenship; by a thousand seductive acquisitions cheaper than liberty» (Barber, 1984: xvii). Thin democracy shifts popular power to distant elite representative institutions, far from communities where citizens live. Instead of participation in decision making, citizens are reduced to a passive state like animals in a zoo waiting for their keepers to decide their lives for them. Strong democracy envisages the participation of all the citizenry in at least some aspects of governance at least some of the time. It is an act of «democratizing democracy» (Santos, 2006). Civil society opens up the public realm to the possibility of participative democracy because it embraces the mobilization of the sovereignty of 'the commonwealth' in the form of people power (Hardt and Negri, 2009).

Strong democracy offers society the choice of taking responsibility for the democratic restoration that has the potential to give substance to the somewhat hackneyed slogan 'power to the people'. Prugh, Constanza, and Daly have asserted that strong democracy offers immediate advantages over the 'thin democracy' of the representative variety, emphasising (i) the sociality of the conception of a social 'us' inherent in notions of community; (ii) the dispersal and redistribution of power away from special interests; and (iii) engaging citizens in the challenges and problems of governance (Prugh et al., 2000). They add: «we need politics of engagement, not a politics of consignment» (Prugh et al., 2000: 220).

We live in a world where many active citizens are concerned to address the democratic deficits that have arisen in the period of globalisation. Participation has become a pivotal concern. Young (2000: 9-10) asserts that «beyond membership and voting rights, inclusive democracy enables participation and voice for all those affected by problems and their proposed solutions». In essence, this is a statement of strong democracy. It promotes participation and inclusion. In contrast, thin democracy leaves it to political elites to speak for us and represent our interests. There is a fundamental issue of political equality and republican respect in question here. Moreover, there is an issue of trust and toleration that defines pluralistic democracy. The reality is that not everybody is given equal voice in liberal democratic societies. Monarchy survives in its exalted role a wholly undemocratic institution based on the most extreme form of exclusion – blood lineage. But perhaps more troubling is the role of the oligarchies of power and wealth in manufacturing consensus, through their capacity to monopolise the media and purchase political influence. In this hierarchal world of power, exclusion is rife. As Young puts it, «perhaps the most pervasive and insidious form of

external exclusion in modern democracies is what I referred to as the ability for economically or socially powerful actors also to exercise political domination» (2000: 54). She asserts that «one task of democratic civil society is to explore and criticise exclusions such as these, and doing so sometimes effectively challenge the legitimacy of institutional rules and their decision» (Young, 2000: 55). The above critique of the limits of democratic inclusion begs the question, 'Is there any point in participation?' Some commentators suggest that there may not be any value in participation and add that it is unreasonable to push people in that direction (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). They view the postmodern political landscape as barren and civil society as a meaningless concept. On the other hand, Ramirez contends that in the task of confronting global hegemonic forces and forging a new grammar of democracy to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, local and popular movements are opening up new democratic spaces for participation that are effectively counteracting the more extreme forms of exclusion and erosion of citizen's political, social and economic rights (2006).

## CONCLUSIONS

'Austerity' now has a ring of a funeral dirge for democracy. The undertakers have come in the form of the Troika (EU, ECB, IMF). The grief reaction among the citizens for their lost sovereignty has varied from denial through, anger (Greece) to despairing acceptance (Ireland). There is a rupture with the welfare state but with no clear vision of the future that isn't profoundly anti-democratic. In the circumstances, Benjamin Barber (1984) has advocated to citizens that they have the power to construct their own future by replacing thin democracy by strong democracy. His democratic vision is for a bottom-up renewal of popular sovereignty. He wants citizens to forge their own democratic narrative, in which they once again become sovereign in making our own history. We are invited by Barber to deepen our democracy, think for ourselves, and shape our own destiny. Oddly, this sounds strangely counter-intuitive. Like Benjamin Barber's caged animals, we don't like to leave the comfort of the cage. Somehow, we remain mesmerised like the characters in Haruki Murakami's novel, *IQ84*. But there are voices of protest: *the Akanaktismenoi*, *Los Indignados* and the Occupy Movement. The Occupy Movement has attracted public support because its members dared to step outside their personal cages and enter the public sphere. Syriza has been elected to power in Greece. Podemos challenges for power in Spain.

They have been making democratic noises, which their critics within the European elite judge to be an unreasonable provocation of the citizens. Despite their public support, their protest is being challenged by European Union. The anti-austerity movement resembles those campaigns for the right of association that gave birth to democracy during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That resulted in the twentieth-century welfare state, the purportedly good society that benefited citizens, even if it failed to stem long-term inequality. It too is being suppressed in the era of austerity economics, however successful and compatible with a burgeoning economy and socially affordable. Social justice is a forbidden language in the twenty-first century. The Troika undertakers – those global civil servants – point toward the cages, where the living dead are to be consigned. But the citizens have started to climb out and seek freedom through greater social justice.

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# Europeanization and Social Movement Mobilization during the European Sovereign Debt Crisis: The Cases of Spain and Greece

*Europeización y movilización de los movimientos sociales durante la crisis de la deuda soberana europea: los casos de España y Grecia*

ANGELA BOURNE and SEVASTI CHATZOPOULOU  
ROSKILDE UNIVERSITY (DENMARK)

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## Abstract

The article addresses Europeanization of social movements in the context of the European Sovereign Debt Crisis. Europeanization occurs when movements collaborate, or make horizontal communicative linkages with movements in other countries, contest authorities beyond the state, frame issues as European and claim a European identity. The article presents a theoretical framework and research design for measuring the degree of social movement Europeanization followed by results of a pilot study on mobilization in Spain and Greece during 2011. While many contentious action events studied only encompassed the domestic arena, the pilot study showed a relatively high degree of Europeanization in the Greek case, suggesting the viability of future research.

Keywords: Europeanization, European Union, Financial Crisis, Social Movements

## Resumen

El presente artículo aborda la europeización de los movimientos sociales en el contexto de la crisis de la deuda soberana europea. La europeización se produce cuando los movimientos colaboran, o establecen vínculos horizontales, con movimientos de otros países, contestan a las autoridades más allá de los límites del Estado-nación, identifican cuestiones como europeas y reclaman una identidad europea. El artículo presenta un marco teórico y un diseño de investigación para medir el grado de europeización de los movimientos sociales seguido por los resultados de un estudio piloto de la movilización en España y Grecia durante el año 2011. Mientras que muchas de las acciones de protesta estudiadas solamente apelaban al ámbito doméstico, el estudio piloto muestra un relativamente alto grado de europeización en el caso griego, lo que sugiere la viabilidad de futuras investigaciones.

Palabras clave: europeización, Unión Europea, crisis financiera, movimientos sociales

## INTRODUCTION

In this article we examine the Europeanization of social movements in the context of the European Sovereign Debt (ESD) Crisis. We argue that Europeanization of social movements occurs when movements collaborate, or make horizontal communicative linkages with movements in other countries, contest authorities beyond the state, frame issues as European and claim an European identity. An interest in the possible Europeanization of social movements emerged in the mid-1990s as scholars observed EU-oriented grass roots mobilization by established movements such as the environmental movement and more spontaneous grass roots mobilizations on issues ranging from EU fishing rules, agricultural subsidies, unemployment in the EU and plant closures in transnational companies (Tarrow, 1995; Imig and Tarrow, 2000; Rucht, 2002; Marks and McAdam, 1996). It also grew out of work by social movement scholars on the transnationalization of protest in the context of globalization (Tarrow, 1995; Della Porta and Tarrow, 2005; Reising, 1999; Smith, 2002 and 2007). Moreover, since the start of the international financial crisis in 2008, a large, interdisciplinary literature has addressed the global wave of contention incorporating the Arab Spring, Occupy movements but also many European anti-austerity movements (among others) (eg. Castells, 2012; Flesher and Cox, 2013; Tejerina, 2013; Worth, 2013; della Porta and Mattoni, 2014; Flesher, 2014).

A common theme of these literatures is that the degree of social movement Europeanization tends to be rather low. In their protest event analysis surveying social movement actions in 12 EU member states between 1984 and 1998, for instance, Imig and Tarrow showed «most people, for most issues, continue to protest against national or subnational targets about domestic issues» (2000: 84). Only about 5% of protest events during that time were categorized as European protests (Imig and Tarrow 2000). Koopmans, Erbe and Meyer draw similar conclusions, albeit employing different methods – cross-national, semi-structured interviews with social movement organizations (and other domestic and supranational actors) from seven countries (2010). They argue that the strategic repertoire of national political actors, including both ‘inside’ strategies addressing public administrations, parliamentarians and the courts, and ‘public-related strategies’ focusing on the media, public information campaigns and protest, are still primarily focused on the national level (Koopmans, Erbe and Meyer, 2010: 234). Della Porta and Caiani’s study, compiled from the same data set as that used by Koopmans, Erbe, and Meyer (2010), also supports the conclusion of ‘low

Europeanization' of the domestic public sphere (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009). Similarly, various scholars examining the global wave of protest following the international financial crisis, have argued that unlike the earlier, paradigmatic case of transnational collective action, the global justice movement, the current global wave of contention mostly intends, as Flesher put it, «to reclaim the nation state as a locus and focus of action» (2014: 183, see also Kaldor and Selchow, 2013; della Porta and Mattoni, 2014). We contend, however, that there are good reasons for re-examining the case that social movement Europeanization is insignificant.

In the first place, data pointing to low social movement Europeanization is now fairly old. Imig and Tarrow's research examined data from 1984 to 1988 while Koopmans *et al* and Della Porta and Caiani use data from 1990, 1995 and 2002-3 (Koopmans and Statham, 2010). Furthermore, even though a large portion of the literature on the recent global wave of mobilization examines European anti-austerity movements, it tends to neglect processes of Europeanization. Rather, studies that look beyond the domestic arena tend to focus on *transnational* dimensions of collective action, with a predominant interest in transnational diffusion, addressing the spread of mobilization frames (e.g. calls for 'real democracy'), tactical repertoires (e.g. occupation of public spaces), slogans (e.g. 'We are the 99%') and movement labels (e.g. *Indignados* and Occupy) (della Porta and Mattoni, 2014; Flesher, 2014; Kousis, 2014; Tejerina *et al.*, 2013). And yet, a specific focus on the Europeanization of social movements is necessary to understand Europe as a movement space on its own terms (Flesher and Cox, 2013; Stratham and Trenz, 2013), while a focus on a broader range of Europeanization dimensions than diffusion will provide a better way of gauging the significance of 'Europe' in social movement mobilization.

Moreover, in the context of the ESD crisis, it is reasonable to expect, *a priori*, a more significant degree of social movement Europeanization. In the first place, the accumulation of decision-making authority at the EU level is perhaps the most cited rationale for a reorientation of social movement activity to that level (see for example, Tarrow, 1995; Imig and Tarrow, 2000; Rucht, 2002; Della Porta and Caiani, 2009, Statham and Koopmans, 2010), and the EU has, through the course of ESD crisis, become one of the key crisis actors. Initially, member states, in cooperation with the Commission and the ECB, set up two temporary funds: the European Financial Stabilization Mechanism (EFSM) and the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) (May 2010-June 2013), with a total lending capacity of 500 billion euros. In autumn 2012, the EFSF was replaced by the permanent European Stabilization Mecha-

nism (ESM), solidifying the EU mechanisms of economic crisis management. Member states also changed the ‘no bail-out’ clause in the Treaty of the European Union, paving the way for the first EU and IMF bail-out for Greece in 2010, which was followed by bailouts for Ireland (2010), Portugal (2011) and Cyprus (2012). Spanish banks were also given EU loans in 2012. Loans were granted on the condition that governments implement severe austerity measures, supervised by EU and IMF experts. These measures led to increased coordination between the European Commission, ECB and IMF - referred to as the ‘Troika’. In addition, EU member states agreed a number of measures for closer surveillance and coordination of budgetary and economic policy among Eurozone states. These include the so-called ‘six pack’ of legislative measures, entering into force in December 2011, which covered fiscal and macroeconomic surveillance and strengthening the Stability and Growth Pact, and the ‘European semester’, whereby member states coordinate their economic policies while national budgets are still in preparation. In 2012, twenty-five EU member states (but not UK and the Czech Republic) signed the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance, which introduced new more stringent surveillance and coordination rules for economic policies.

Furthermore, some of the obstacles to social movement Europeanization may have been mitigated, if not overcome. Imig and Tarrow, for instance, have argued that «movements are most likely to take root among pre-existing social networks in which relations of trust, reciprocity and cultural learning are stored» (2000, 79). As such, while it is ‘plausible to think of transnational identities developing around parallel claims in widely differing sites of conflict’, this is more difficult than more local process of identity formation - «embedded in everyday life» and involving family, friends neighbors and work (Imig and Tarrow, 2000: 80). Furthermore, they point to the obstacle of high «transaction costs of linking [groups in different countries experiencing similar problems] into integrated networks across national boundaries» (Imig and Tarrow, 2000, 80). However, it may be that technological innovation facilitating communication between actors across national boundaries (Castells, 2012), as well as the experience gained from the development of new networks among social movements prior to the crisis could help overcome some of these obstacles. As we spell out in more detail below, Della Porta and Caiani’s work on European social forums provides evidence to suggest that some sense of collective identity, social networks of trust, reciprocity and learning may have already taken root among participants in certain pre-crisis European protests, which addressed issues not dissimilar to those at the center of many anti-austerity protests (2009).

In order to examine the significance of social movement Europeanization, the article begins by presenting a theoretical framework, built on, but extending, the work of previous studies, to measure the degree of social movement Europeanization. We then turn to present the outline of a research design which can be employed to examine empirically the degree of social movement Europeanization. In the final section we present the findings of a pilot study, which focused on social movement mobilization in Spain and Greece between May and June 2011 and reflect on avenues for future research. In this section we observe that the largest category of contentious action events in both Spain and Greece was action focusing entirely on the domestic arena during the period studied. However, in an indication of the viability of further research on the Europeanization of social movements in the context of the ESD crisis, we see in the Greek case evidence to suggest a relatively high degree of Europeanization, given that the percentage of events which exhibited at least one dimension of Europeanization was higher than the number of events strictly focused on the domestic arena.

## 1. DEGREES OF EUROPEANIZATION: MOVEMENT STRATEGY, IDENTITY AND HORIZONTAL REFERENCING

### 1.1. Previous work on Europeanization of Social Movements

A major preoccupation of the literature on the Europeanization of social movements hitherto has been with movement strategy. More specifically, researchers have been particularly interested in the extent to which the gradual accumulation of decision making and management authority at the EU level has been accompanied by changes in social movement mobilization from that principally involving fellow nationals and focused on state actors, on the one hand, to also involve and target actors and audiences from other states and the EU, on the other hand (see for example, Tarrow, 1995; Imig and Tarrow, 2000; Rucht, 2002; Della Porter and Caiani, 2010; Statham and Koopmans, 2010). These studies have helpfully distinguished between ‘non-Europeanized’ grass-roots collective action which does not address EU issues at all and various forms of Europeanized social movement action.

Imig and Tarrow distinguish between four types of European protests: 1. *Typical Domestic Protests* «in which national actors target domestic opponents», effectively non-Europeanization. 2. *Coordinated Domestic Protest*, involves a transnational coalition of actors against a domestic political target

(such as a national government). 3. *Domestication of conflict* occurs when «national actors protest at home against policies of the EU». 4. *Transnational contention*, in which «transnational coalitions of actors target the EU or other supranational or transnational actors in response to EU policies» (Imig and Tarrow, 2000: 78). This last category is subdivided into three further categories: a. *International Cooperation*, where «actors from various countries join together in linked and coordinated protest campaigns in each national setting against a shared antagonist» b. *International Conflict*, where «protesters have targeted, rather than joining with, their competitors from other nations»; and c. *Collective European Protests*, which are «major protest events [which] draw the participation of citizens from across the EU» (Imig and Tarrow, 2000: 86-7).

Della Porta and Caiani's conceptualization of social movement Europeanization builds on and extends Imig and Tarrow's early approach (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009). Firstly, Della Porta and Caiani identify a 'nation-state' model of Europeanization, where European actors emerge to challenge decision-makers in a European polity in parallel to mobilization by strictly national actors mobilizing only at the national level. More variegated strategies where social movements simultaneously address various territorial levels can take different forms. They may take a *domestication* path, which along the lines of Imig and Tarrow's (2000) conception cited above, social movements only mobilize at the national level in order to pressurize national governments to negotiate on their behalf in EU bodies (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 14). A second type of variegated strategy involves *externalization*, where national actors «target the EU in an attempt to put pressure on their own governments» (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 15), a strategy which may be particularly attractive to actors who feel marginalized in domestic politics. And finally, *European social movements* may emerge, involving 'loose networks of national (and even local) and transnational groups' which simultaneously target and address claims to various polities, including domestic and European-level decision-makers (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009).

Patterns of mobilization identified by Imig and Tarrow, Della Porta and Caiani need not be limited to contention arising in EU politics. For instance, Della Porta and Tarrow employ the concepts of *domestication*, *externalization* and *transnational collective action* (defined as coordinated international campaigns by networks of activists mobilizing against international actors, other states or international institutions) in work on transnational movements active on issues of global reach (2005).

Implicit in studies such as these is the idea that the degree of social movement Europeanization varies in intensity, with *domestication* strategies addressing domestic authorities on EU issues arguably displaying a lower degree of Europeanization than the emergence of *European social movements*. Nevertheless, overlap in the way in which these typologies distinguish between different forms of mobilization provides the basis for conceptualizing varying degrees of social movement Europeanization with greater precision. The typologies principally focus on variation in 1) *targets* of social movement mobilization, or whether targets are principally domestic authorities, European authorities (including EU institutions and state authorities abroad), or both; 2) the nature of movement *participants*, or whether movement actors take action predominantly alongside fellow domestic actors, fellow European actors or both. A third dimension concerns *issue framing* and whether or not the issues provoking mobilization are conceived as predominantly domestic, or predominantly European or a combination of both.

Beyond a focus on movement strategy, the literature on Europeanization suggests two further elements that are relevant for assessing the degree of social movement Europeanization. The first concerns issues of *identity*. As mentioned above, Imig and Tarrow argue that one of the main the obstacles to transnational protests was the absence of common identities, a sense of solidarity and «pre-existing social networks in which relations of trust, reciprocity and cultural learning are stored» (2000: 79-80). This was because «social networks provide the interpersonal trust, the collective identities and the social communication of opportunities that galvanize individuals into collective action and coordinate their actions against significant others in a social movement» (Imig and Tarrow, 2000: 80). However, Della Porta and Caiani provide evidence to suggest that some sense of collective identity, social networks of trust, reciprocity and learning may have already taken root among participants in certain joint European protests centred on issues not dissimilar to those at the centre of anti-austerity protests (2009). In their study of European Social Forums and EU counter summits, Della Porta and Caiani address the role of social movements in the construction of collective European identities through discourse and processes of communication (2009). The authors argue that the European arena offers social movements «opportunities to meet, build organizational networks, coordinate activity, and construct supranational discourses» and that «growing interaction facilitates the development of common, more or less, European identity» (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 96). Social movements and non-governmental organizations tended to privilege ties with

similar civil society organizations rather than those with institutional actors or interest groups and this tight network of links also «favours the emergence of shared goals and collective identities on European issues» (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 80). Social movement organizations and non-governmental organizations are not only more critical towards the EU than other groups in their country, they are also more likely to frame Europe in their claims in identity terms by emphasizing «non-material aspects of the integration process, referring to an identity discourse (such as references to Europe as a community of values) and constitutional principles (especially democracy)» (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 80).

In contrast to much of the literature on European identity, which tends to equate identification with positive assessments of European integration (Bourne, 2015), the authors argue that social movements and non-governmental organizations develop the foundations of a common identity through critiques of contemporary institutions and the desire to construct an alternative Europe. Interview data showed that the emerging critique was not about «too much Europe», but «not enough social Europe» (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 119). They also expressed criticisms of the perceived democratic deficit of the EU, focusing on the limited powers of the European Parliament, lack of transparency, distance from civil society and accessibility for citizens. Furthermore, most civil society groups interviewed expressed support for a «different Europe» built from below by a «European movement» (Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 123).

A final element draws on the concept of '*horizontal Europeanization*' (Koopmans and Statham, 2010). This concept is drawn from work on the Europeanization of communication, which the authors argue is a central component of «Europe's ongoing search for a public» (Koopmans and Statham, 2010: 3). Horizontal Europeanization «consists of communicative linkages between different European countries» (Koopmans and Erbe, 2003: 6). There is a strong and a weak variant: «In the *weak* variant, the media in one country cover debates and contestation in another country, but there is no communicative link in the structure of claim-making between actors in different countries» (Koopmans and Statham, 2010: 38). It involves, for instance, the reporting of events in other countries. In the stronger variant, there is such a communicative link, and actors from one country explicitly address or refer to actors or policies in another European country'. Here the communicative link may take the form of external actors commenting on domestic policy developments or comparison across countries. Given our



focus on social movements, rather than the media, the strong variant of horizontal Europeanization is of particular interest in this research.

## 1.2. A new framework for measuring the degree of Europeanization

These five dimensions of social movement mobilization – targets, participants, issue framing, identification and horizontal referencing can be combined to produce a new scale identifying six degrees of Europeanization.

*Non-Europeanization* involves national actors targeting domestic opponents and the issues provoking mobilization are conceived predominantly as domestic issues. There is no horizontal referencing to other movements or policies in other countries and no identity claims encompassing groups beyond the boundaries of the state. At the other end of the scale, *very high Europeanization* occurs when cross-nationally organized social movements in Europe target European actors and frame issues as European issues. Elements of the movement make cross-national references to policies or actors in other countries and make identity claims encompassing groups in other parts of Europe. *Very high Europeanization* does *not* require that social movement, participants, targets and issue framing are *exclusively* European in scope. Such movements may, for instance, simultaneously involve domestic and transnational actors, targeting domestic, EU and transnational authorities. Nevertheless, this conception of Europeanization is more demanding than that employed in previous work on social movement mobilization, insofar as it also requires evidence of horizontal referencing and identification. In between *non-Europeanization* and *very high Europeanization* are four additional categories: *Very low Europeanization* occurs when any one of the five dimensions of social movement mobilization - targets, participants, issue framing, identification and horizontal – occurs. *Low Europeanization* occurs when any two of the five dimensions of social movement mobilization occur. *Moderate Europeanization* occurs when any three of the five dimensions of social movement mobilization occur. *High Europeanization* occurs when any four of the five dimensions of social movement mobilization occur.

**Table 1**  
**Degrees of Europeanization**

Degree of Europeanization	Number of Social Movement Europeanization dimensions (any of targets, participants, issue framing, identification and horizontal referencing)
Very High	5
High	4
Moderate	3
Low	2
Very Low	1
Non-Europeanization	0

The advantage of this approach is that it provides a more explicit, and quantifiable, means of measuring social movement Europeanization, and one which takes into account a broader range of dimensions than previous studies. We acknowledge that this scale is rather abstract in its formulation and that there may appear to be a measure of arbitrariness in the selection of dimensions included in the scale. This is difficult to avoid entirely. We have tried to mitigate this problem by careful attention to a full range of what existing work on Europeanization suggests are relevant dimensions of social movement Europeanization. Moreover, we considered whether some dimensions of Europeanization ought to be given more weight in the calculation of the degree of Europeanization. Weighting one or other dimension more heavily is likely to have changed our findings. However, there does not appear to be a strong theoretical rationale to attribute, *a priori*, greater significance to one or other dimension. We hope further empirical analysis will provide greater insights in this regard.

## 2. METHODS AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

A variety of methods can potentially be employed to examine social movement Europeanization in the context of the ESD crisis (Bourne and Chatzopoulou, 2015). However, a good starting point for examining the degree of social movement Europeanization is to employ Political Claims Analysis (PCA)

(Koopmans and Statham, 1999; Koopmans and Rucht, 2002). This method uses newspapers as a primary source of data to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on a) targets, participants, issues and forms of contentious action (among other things) and b) the semantic content of claims made in the public sphere over time and across countries. The units of analysis are «public acts of claim making», or the strategic demands made by collective actors «within a specific contested issue field» (Koopmans and Statham, 1999: 206). Instances of claim making involve demands, criticisms or proposals related to the subject of inquiry. Data is collected on the behavior of both non-state actors, including civil society groups, such as labor unions and political parties, as well as state actors, such as the police, courts, legislatures and local, regional and supranational institutions. As Koopmans and Statham argue, this focus on a broad range of actors has the advantage of shifting «the focus on inquiry towards the coalitions, networks and conflict lines that connect and relate the different types of collective actors in a multiorganizational field» (1999: 206). PCA examines all forms of claim-making, whether routine or non-routine, conventional, or non-conventional, 'physical' (for example public demonstrations outside public buildings) or discursive (issuing press releases, consciousness-raising). This has the advantage of permitting analysis of the range of action repertoires employed, in contrast to protest-event analysis which is too «protest centric» and permits «appreciation of public discourse as a medium of social conflict and symbolic struggles» (Koopmans and Statham, 1999: 205).

PCA rests on the assumption that newspapers provide a «continuous record of public events and the visibility of the claims of actors» (Koopmans and Statham, 1993: 203). Newspapers are also seen as a medium through which social movements articulate political challenges in the public domain and by which actors «assign meaning to issues» in the public sphere (Koopmans and Statham, 1993: 203). They provide better and more detailed coverage than radio and television and reach a broad audience (Koopmans and Rucht, 2002), even if they do not provide the discursively richest source of analysis compared with other documents (Koopmans and Statham, 1999). It is also one of the few sources that can be used to build up systematic and long-term databases on contentious action (Caiani, Della Porta and Wagerman, 2013: 34; Koopmans and Rucht, 2002). Nevertheless, there are various problems arising from reliance on newspapers as a primary source of data, including systematic bias in coverage of the types of demonstrations covered (e.g. large and violent demonstrations more likely to be covered than smaller ones) and issues around which mobiliza-

tion occurs (eg. protest on issues resonating with ‘media issue attention cycles’ are more likely to be covered than those that are not) (McCarthy et al., 1996; Koopmans and Rucht, 2002).

Various strategies can be employed to limit the impact of such problems. One response to selection bias is to code events reported in multiple newspapers, identifying, matching and combining information on events reported in different newspapers (Koopmans and Rucht, 2002). Another response is to employ other sources of data in tandem with newspaper records.<sup>1</sup> An additional response to the problem of selection bias is to delimit the nature of claims made on the basis of newspaper data. This is an approach used by Della Porta and Caiani who reduce the risks of selection biases introduced by the practices of journalism by delimiting their research interest specifically to «public claim making – thus in the claims that reach the pages of a newspaper» (2009: 29). Without denying that some actors are more dependent on the media than others, they argue that «the printed media are one of the most important areas of public claim-making, and that most actors, will, at one stage or another, try to make their views public» (2009: 30). In a similar vein, Koopmans and Statham argue that claims made in newspapers are the result of «actual strategic actions of the claim makers in the public sphere» (1999: 216), while Della Porta *et al.* argue:

With precaution and many interpretative caveats, press-based protest event analysis allows for controlling, if not the real amount and forms of protest, at least the associations among specific characteristics of protest repertoires as well as very general trends (Della Porta, Caiani and Wagerman (2012: 34).

## 2.1. Pilot study

We use PCA in a pilot study of political claim making events in May and June 2011 in Greece and Spain. The purpose of the pilot study is to clarify procedures for operationalizing key concepts, discussed below, and to examine the feasibility of undertaking further investigation on the Europeanization of social movements. Specifically with regard to the latter, we selected two country case-studies and a time period in which mobilization

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<sup>1</sup> Police records have been one important alternative sources of data on protest events (McCarthy et al., 1996; Koopmans and Rucht, 2002), although as Koopmans and Rucht argue, police records may themselves be subject to selectivity biases (2002, 251). Moreover, as comparisons between reporting of events from newspapers and police records show, correlations of events reported in newspapers and police records over the longer term are high, suggesting newspapers may be more reliable than is sometimes thought (Koopmans and Rucht, 2002, 238).

around issues of the ESD crisis were very high. In Spain, mobilization against austerity crystallized around the *Indignados* (the outraged) movement, also known as 15M, signifying the date of the first mobilization on 15 May 2011. On this date tens of thousands of citizens joined demonstrations around the country in protest against the Spanish government and EU responses to the global financial crisis, especially cuts in education, welfare and social problems and expressing frustration at their exclusion from an elitist political system dominated by the two main center-left and center-right parties, international organizations and financial institutions (Castañeda, 2012; Hughes, 2011). After the 15 May protests, many stayed on and occupied public squares around the country for a few weeks, with the biggest demonstrations in the *Puerta del Sol* in central Madrid and *Plaza Cataluña* in Barcelona. Although large scale anti-austerity protests in Greece had taken place earlier, new austerity measures were announced in May and June 2011 which again provoked the mobilization of the civil society and triggered more street protests. These protests are often referred to as the Greek 'indignados' or 'outraged citizens', in a clear reference to the example of the Spanish movement. Incidents of violence against public buildings, and physical and verbal attacks against public figures (i.e. the President and the chair of the Parliament) took place on various occasions, especially in the area in front of the Parliament (Psimitis, 2011). Given the intensity of anti-austerity mobilization in Greece and Spain during the time period examined – and the fact that the EU played a high profile role in the promotion of austerity programs – we can consider these cases as 'crucial cases' (Eckstein, 1979). That is, they are cases in which we could expect to find a significant degree of evidence of social movement Europeanization if it could be found at all. We consider social movement Europeanization to be significant if there are more events with at least one dimension of Europeanization (targets, participants, issues, identities, horizontal referencing) than those without any Europeanization at all. If we did not find this evidence, then there would be grounds for considering that further study into social movement Europeanization may not be very fruitful.

In the pilot study data was retrieved from two national newspapers for each country (*Kathimerini* and *Avgi* for Greece and *El Mundo* and the online newspaper, *Publico.es* for Spain). These newspapers were chosen because they tend to present political affiliations broadly from the center right or left in ideological terms. They also represent mainstream and non-mainstream media outlets. They are published and read by national audiences and have a good reputation for their consistent and extensive cover-

age. From these newspapers we compiled and analyzed a sample of contentious actions. We searched for articles on contentious action in the international and national news sections of the four newspapers. For each newspaper we read and coded articles for two editions each week (on Tuesdays and Fridays). We selected articles for analysis if the title or first two paragraphs indicated they were likely to provide relevant data. We did not keep a record of events where the target, participants or issue at the heart of a protest were not clear. We used computer software (MAXQDA) for managing coded data. Using MAXQDA, we were able to using open-coding to keep a record of different types of targets, participants, issues, identity statements and horizontal references, as well as information on the forms, size, place and other features of protest.

In total we observed and coded 163 events for Spain and 148 for Greece - in total 311 events. We focused on protest by non-state actors, but we also code protests by representatives of public authorities from multiple territorial levels (domestic, EU and transnational) when they collaborate with those non-state actors. We included a broad range of contentious action forms, which ranged from public demonstrations, occupation of public spaces, theatrical events, legal action, public statements and speeches as well as acts of civil disobedience and violence against property or persons. In future research, we will address issues of social movement mobilization using other sources of data, including twitter feeds and internet publications.

### *'Bottom-up' Europeanization approach*

One final methodological point needs to be made. In Europeanization research, the distinction between top-down and bottom-up approaches has long been considered significant from a methodological point of view (Lyngaard, 2011; Radaelli, 2004). *Top-down* studies address the impact of EU integration on the domestic level and usually concentrate on how specific regulatory frameworks trigger change at the domestic level. On the other hand, *bottom-up* Europeanization research designs start from the domestic level and examine actors, ideas, rules and styles and how they change through time (Lyngaard 2011). This study is a bottom-up Europeanization study insofar as we focus analytical attention on movements in Spain and Greece and their relationships with other domestic, European and transnational actors and arenas. This tends to be a distinctive characteristic of re-

search on the Europeanization of social movements in general (eg. Della Porta and Caiani, 2009: 25).

More fundamentally, one of the advantages of selecting a bottom-up research design over top-down ones is that it permits us to address one of the principal critiques of Europeanization research, namely the tendency to overestimate the importance of the EU as an explanatory factor for observed changes in domestic behavior (Radaelli and Pasquier 2007: 40). In other words, the problem is that if researchers only focus on European developments they may spuriously attribute changes to European-level events and processes. Put differently, changes such as the emergence of social movements may in fact be due to a variety of factors – such as domestic corruption scandals, changes in political culture, such as declining trust in political institutions and political parties, or international factors related to globalization and transnationalization of politics. Our bottom-up research design permits us to be sensitive to domestic explanations for social movement mobilization and to deal with transnational dimensions of social movement mobilization. Specifically with regard to the latter, therefore, we code contentious action where targets, participants, issues, identities and horizontal references are *transnational*, in addition to where these dimensions of social movement mobilization can be observed as *European*.

## 2.2. Operationalizing theoretical concepts

Operationalizing varying ‘degrees of Europeanization’ was a complex process. As mentioned, one of the main objectives of the pilot study was to develop clear procedures for coding data relating to these five key variables, namely targets of contentious action, participants in that action, how issues mobilizing protest were framed, identities and horizontal referencing. For the first four variables, we started by differentiating predefined ‘closed’ categories of ‘domestic’, ‘European’ and ‘transnational’. Differentiation among the *types of targets* (e.g. governmental executive, business, EU institutions etc), *types of participants* (e.g. NGOs, platforms, trade unions, unorganized citizens), *types of issues* (e.g. ESD crisis-related, and non ESD crisis-related) and types of identities (e.g. national identities, movement identities, European identities, cosmopolitan identities) was not predetermined. We used open-coding – and frequent communication between the coders – to add new codes as they emerged from data. By definition, the concept of horizontal referencing could only be coded as either European or transnational (see below).

We coded as ‘targets’ of contentious action organizations, institutions or arenas with decision-making capacity or political influence which appeared from information provided in the newspaper articles to be either implicitly or explicitly the subject of contentious action. They correspond to what Koopmans and Erbe (2003: 9) define as an ‘addressee’, or the actor held responsible for implementing the claim (if agreement could be obtained), or who is the target of criticism or support. Targets are differentiated according to whether they correspond to domestic, European and transnational or any of the combinations (e.g. domestic and EU simultaneously). Targets were almost always named and this made categorization relatively straight-forward. Examples of targets included both governmental and non-governmental actors such as the state executive, police, judiciary, local and regional governments, trade union, churches, local and transnational-companies, banks, EU institutions like the Commission or the Council, or international bodies like the IMF or the TROIKA. For example, in the case of a protest by local government employees in Greece - who were facing unemployment or were not being paid their salaries because of budget cuts (due to the crisis) - the local government was coded as target because protestors specifically directed their attention to this body.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes there were multiple targets. If protest focused on a decision taken by the government as a response to a demand by EU institutions - such as an increase of working hours in the public sector or decrease in public spending for salaries in order to receive the EU bailout - the targets are coded as both national government and EU institutions.<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned above, in our study we focus on protest by non-state actors, but we also code protests by representatives of public authorities from multiple territorial levels when they collaborate with those non-state actors. Participants correspond to what Koopmans and Erbe call the ‘claim maker’ or ‘claimant’, or the actor who makes a demand, proposal, appeal or criticism (2003: 9). The most common form of participants were - not surprisingly - non-governmental organizations, interest groups and platforms. There were also examples of spontaneous events where participants were often individual citizens. Different types of participants could take part in the same event. For example, the big demonstration on 5 May 2011 in Greece included mem-

2 Meeting among Kaminis and employees under contract (Συνάντηση Καμίνη με συμβασιούχους) (Καθημερινή-Kathimerini 3/05/2011); Kaminis will meet with employees under contract today (Συνάντηση με τους συμβασιούχους θα έχει σήμερα ο Γ. Καμίνης, (Αυγή *in english* Avgi), 3 May 2011.

3 First of May with lay offs and fragmentation (Πρωτομαγιά απολύσεων, περικοπών και... πολυδιάσπασης) (Αυγή *in english* Avgi), 3 May 2011.



bers of trade unions (ΓΣΕΕ, Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Εργατών Ελλάδος – the national trade union of workers; ΑΔΕΔΥ, Ανώτατη Διοίκηση Ενώσεων Δημοσίων Υπαλλώλων – the national trade union of civil servants); participants from political parties, from the left (eg. ΣΥΡΙΖΑ); as well as pensioners, unemployed and unorganized citizens.<sup>4</sup> Participants were categorized according to whether they corresponded to domestic, EU and transnational or any of the combinations (e.g. domestic and EU simultaneously). Most participants mentioned in newspaper articles were domestic actors, who limited their critiques and campaigns to the national arena. Where the domestic branch of a European or transnational participant (such as Amnesty International or Anonymous) predominated, we coded as both domestic and EU/or transnational. A participant was coded as European or transnational if its title or aims covered either the geographical scope of Europe or for transnational participants, beyond Europe. Participants were also coded as European if membership clearly extended to groups in other European countries. They were coded as transnational if that membership clearly extended beyond Europe. Mixed categories involved participants from various territorial arenas, for example, a conference on the ESD crisis which included academics, activists, unionists, artists from domestic, European and transnational arenas.<sup>5</sup>

Issues were perhaps the most difficult dimension to code as either domestic, European or transnational in a consistent manner. An ‘issue’ can be defined as ‘the substantive content of the claim, stating what is to be done (aim) and (why?)’ (Koopmans and Erbe, 2003: 9). In many cases, the territorial scope of the issue frame was clear from the way in which participants targeted their claims to authorities in particular territorial arenas or from the membership of the organizations set up to campaign on particular issues. Other times, the territorial scope of the issue was extrapolated from the claims made by activists themselves. In some instances issues were articulated in one arena, but had clear relevance beyond it. For example, the actions of the Spanish organization *Plataforma Afectados por la Hipoteca* (Platform Affected by Mortgage), which campaigned for the rights of Spanish mortgage holders, dealt with an issue that potentially related to policies enacted by local, regional, state, EU and international authorities and the conduct of domestic, European and transnational banking organizations. The

4 Dynamic participation in the gathering in Thessaloniki (Δυναμικό «παρών» στις συγκεντρώσεις της Θεσσαλονίκης), (Αυγή *in english* *Avgi*), 3 May 2011.

5 The onerous Greek debt in the microscope of the international conference (Το επαχθές ελληνικό χρέος στο μικροσκόπιο του διεθνούς συνεδρίου), (Αυγή *in English* *Avgi*), 6 May 2011.

broad scope of the issue at the heart of the organization's objective was particularly apparent in the context of the *transnational* financial crisis, where EU authorities played a crucial role and in a *state (Spain)* which was so seriously affected by the ESD crisis. However, protests outside the homes of people facing eviction organized by PAH and (often supported by M-15 activists) were coded as a domestic issue, because the acts themselves primarily targeted Spanish authorities and banks in Spain, and sought to highlight injustices in Spanish banking practices.<sup>6</sup> In short, we considered an issue as domestic if it was specifically linked to a domestic decision or a domestic political arena even if it could, in general, be related to a broader EU or transnational issue (other examples include rights of children, political violence or xenophobia).

We coded identity statements from reported speeches of activists. Identity statements included references to solidarity, communities of fate and interest and included both territorial identities and social identities formed around cleavages including class, gender, generations, but also movements themselves. Identity statements were categorized as domestic, European and transnational depending on the content of those statements. In some instances, speakers specifically referred to territorially defined identities, such as references to the plight of 'young Spaniards' by the platform *Juventud Sin Futuro* (Youth Without Future), or reports of placards in the Plaza del Sol occupation in May 2011 referring to 'Peoples of Europe, rise up'. Transnational identities referred more generally, for example, to 'all humanity' or all those who inhabit 'the world'. Other times, the territorial scope of identity statements were less explicit, but could be gleaned from other information provided by the context in which identity statements were made. This was most common for statements categorized as domestic identity statements. For instance, statements by 15M activists on movement identity – such as claims that the movement was non-violent and non-partisan – were coded as domestic when made in the context of protests targeting domestic institutions or referring to domestic events. Movement identities were also coded as domestic if made by organizations primarily operating in the domestic arena, such as those by activists of the various victims of terrorism associations in Spain.

As mentioned above, we only coded instances of what Koopmans and Statham define as strong horizontal Europeanization (and transnationalization) because this concept focuses on communicative linkages between ac-

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<sup>6</sup> Riera, J 'Activistas del 15-M vuelven a impedir dos desahucios judiciales', *El Mundo*, 17 June 2011.

tors at different territorial levels. As it will be recalled, horizontal referencing of this kind occurs when there is also 'a communicative link in the structure of claim-making between actors in different countries' or 'actors from one country explicitly address or refer to actors or policies in another European country' (Koopmans and Statham, 2010: 38). When references were made to groups, policies or events in another European country (or groups of them) we coded these as European. Most horizontal referencing was made by Spanish or Greek activists to activists in other countries. When references were made to groups, policies or events in countries (or groups of them) beyond Europe we coded these as transnational. In some instances, horizontal referencing took the form of direct interpersonal communication, learning and exchange of information between activists from different countries. For example, when a newspaper article reports protestors in Greece making references to the *Indignados* in Spain, these references were coded as horizontal Europeanization.<sup>7</sup> However, it was not necessary for activists to be Spanish for horizontal referencing to occur and we coded as such. For example, manifestations in Paris to protest against eviction of protestors occupying the Plaza de Catalunya in Barcelona were coded as horizontal Europeanization.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. FINDINGS OF THE PILOT STUDY

As Figure 1 shows, the largest number of events in both Spain and Greece were characterized as non-Europeanized, which occurs when all dimensions are characterized as domestic. In Spain a total of 144 out of 163 events examined were classed as non-Europeanized. In other words, the pilot study shows that non-Europeanized events were not only the largest category, there were many more events in which there was no Europeanization (88%) than there were events with at least one dimension of Europeanization (12%). In Greece, the largest category of events examined were also classified as non-Europeanized, with 55 out of 148 events. However, in contrast to the Spanish case, in Greece many more events exhibited at least one dimension of Europeanization (63%) than the number of those that exhibited no Europeanization at all (37%). In other words, Europeanization is significant in Greece, but not in Spain.

7 Spain: Crash of the Socialist in the polls (Ισπανία: των σοσιαλιστών στις κάλπες), (Αυγή *in English Avgi*), 24 May 2011.

8 'Los desalojados del 15-M de Lleida denunciarán a los Mossos', *Publico.es*, 31 May 2011.

The results of the pilot study are presented in Figure 1.

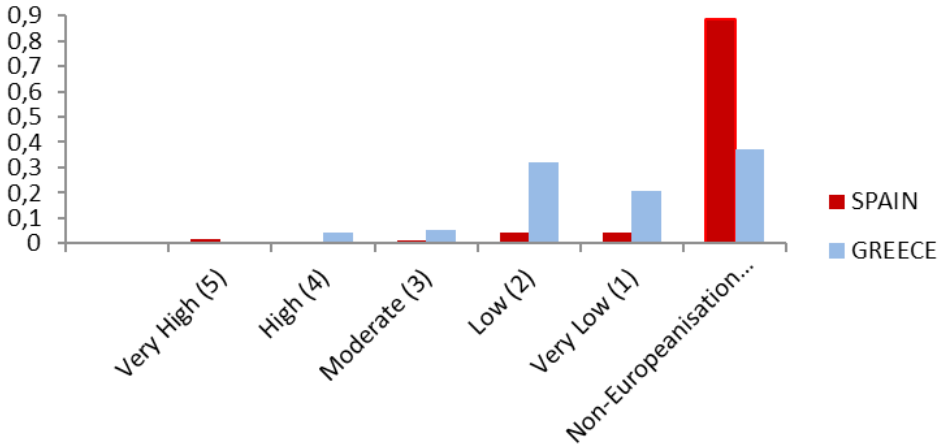
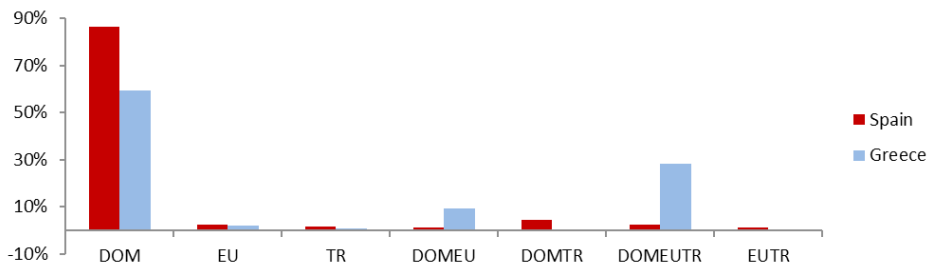
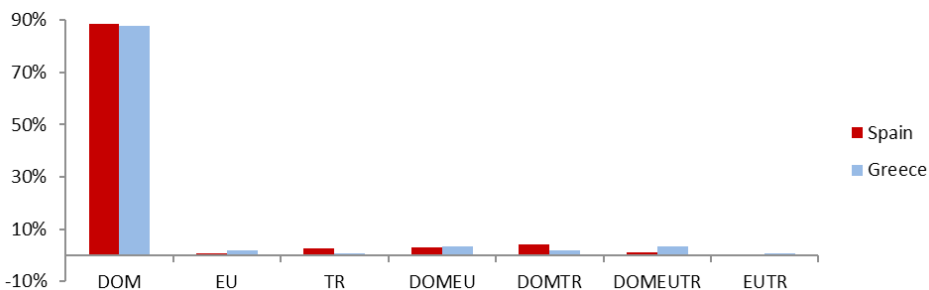


Figure 1  
Degrees of Europeanization (in Percentages)

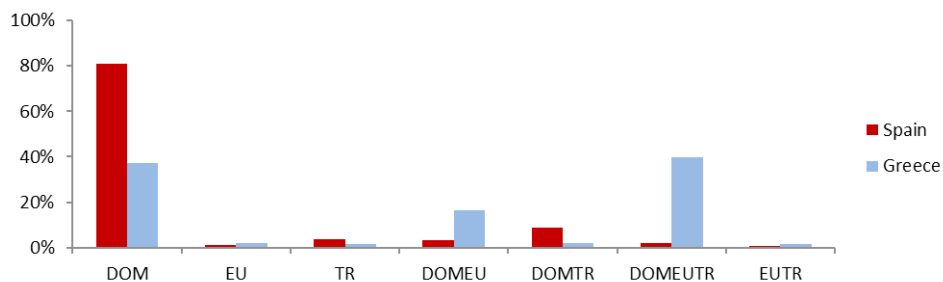
We can begin to account for this finding with reference to disaggregated data presented in Figure 2.



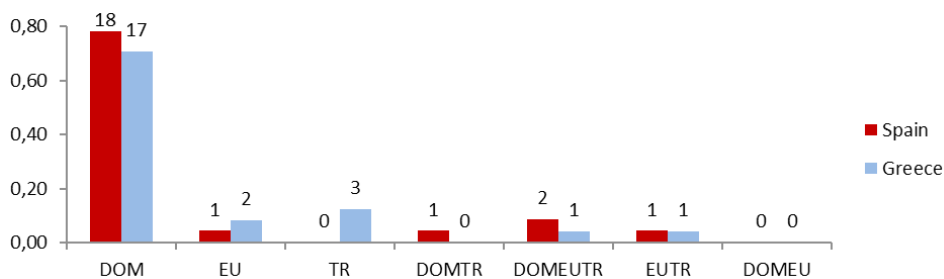
Participants (percentage of events)



Issues (percentage of events)

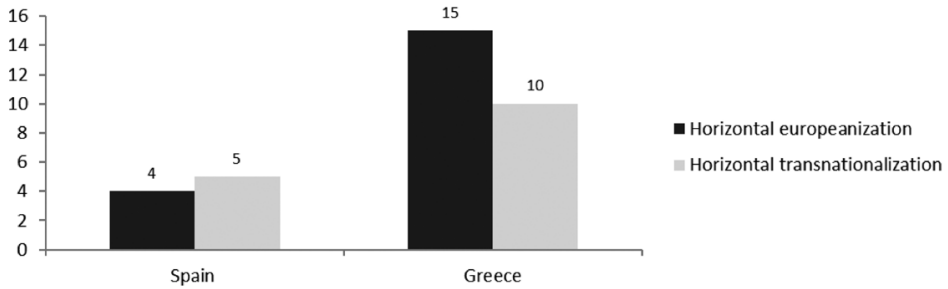


Identification (percentage of events)



DOM=Domestic; EU=European; TR=Transnational; DOMEU= Domestic and European; DOMTR=Domestic and Transnational; DOMEUTR=Domestic, European and Transnational and EUTR=European and Transnational.

Horizontal referencing (number of events)



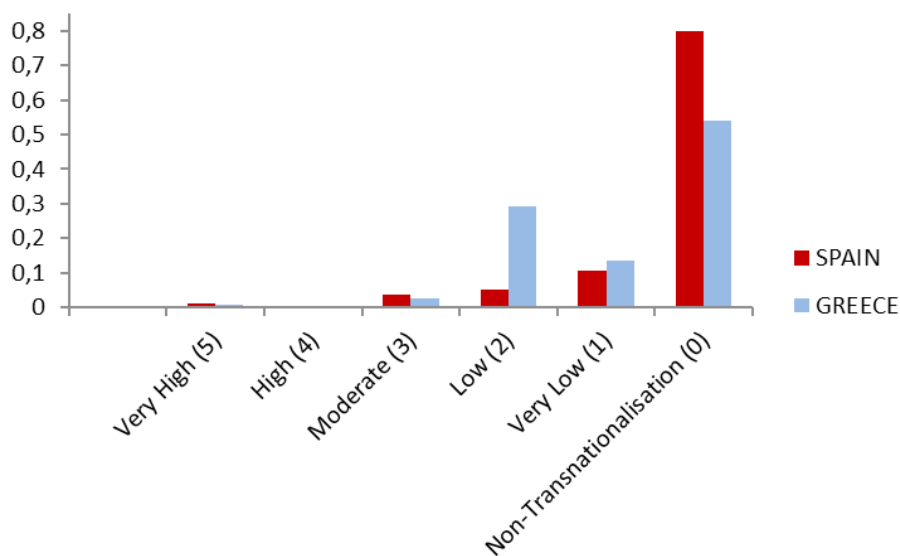
Note: The numbers on top of each column indicate the total number of events with identity statements.

**Figure 2**  
**Territorial dimensions of social movement targets, participants, issue frames, identification and horizontal referencing**

This data shows that for almost all of the dimensions, social movement activity can be largely characterized as domestic in orientation. In both Spain and Greece social movements targeted domestic actors in their protests more often than other kinds of actors, although it is notable that in Greece, the second highest target type is a composite category, where social movements targeted domestic, EU and transnational actors simultaneously. In both Spain and Greece most participants were characterized as domestic actors while identity statements, when made, mostly referred to identities territorially bound by the state, such as national identities, or movement identities. Regarding issues, it was most common for social movement actors in Spain to frame issues as domestic. However, in an indication of the source of significant differences between the two cases it can be seen that in Greece, the most common kind of issue framing was a composite category, where issues were framed simultaneously as domestic, European and transnational. We found very little evidence of horizontal referencing, perhaps reflecting the observation that newspaper articles are not the discursively most rich source of data (Koopmans and Statham, 1999: 216).

Our last finding picks up on the above-mentioned methodological critique that Europeanization research tends to overestimate the importance of Europe as an explanatory factor for domestic changes. As mentioned previously, and as Figure 2 shows, there is a non-negligible number of events where all three territorial arenas are relevant in a single dimension. This is

most apparent for the issues dimension, where 40% of events were categorized as domestic, European and transnational simultaneously in Greece (although only 4% of events for Spain). It is also relevant in the targets category for Greece, where 28% of events were categorized as domestic, European and transnational simultaneously, although again at a lower level in Spain with 2%. Figure 3 also shows that Europeanization of social movements has been accompanied by processes of transnationalization.



**Figure 3**  
Degrees of Transnationalization (in Percentage)

It also notable that there are some parallels in the frequency with which events are categorized as a different degree of Europeanization and Transnationalization in each of the two countries. Figures are too low to meaningfully compare 'very high', 'high' and 'moderate' categories in each of the two countries. However, Spanish events categorized in the 'very low' category were similar - 4% of events have a Europeanization dimension and 1% have a Transnationalization dimension - while in the 'low category' 4% of events

were categorized as Europeanization and 5% as Transnationalization. Similarly, in Greece, 21% of events correspond to Europeanization in the 'very low' category while there are 14% for Transnationalization. In the 'low' category the percentages for Greece were 32% and 29% respectively. This suggests that separating out Europeanization and Transnationalization processes may be problematic, but that more work is needed to conceptualise how the two processes are interrelated.

#### 4. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In the first place, our research suggests that the Europeanization of social movements in the context of the ESD crisis is worthy of further research. This is because in at least one of the cases – Greece – there were more events with at least one dimension of social movement Europeanization than those that showed no dimensions of Europeanization. Further research will need to determine whether the periods under examination in both countries represent broader trends. It may be that Europe becomes more or less important at different times. In order to focus on the importance of the ESD crisis in mobilization, it will be necessary that this extended time frame include periods before and after the crisis. It would also be fruitful to examine a broader range of cases, including states that have emerged through the course of the crisis as creditor countries (such as Germany or Denmark) and debtor countries (such as Portugal, Cyprus or Ireland).

The very clear variation between the Spanish and Greek cases – both in the 'eye of the storm' of the ESD crisis, at least during the period studied – suggests particular attention should be paid to accounting for variation among the cases. In our pilot study, for instance, a careful reading of newspaper articles in the sample indicated that differences in the degree of Europeanization might be explained by the different roles played by EU institutions and the IMF in managing the ESD crisis in the two countries. At the time of the sample (May and June 2011), many protests in both countries focused on the economic crisis and its consequences, such as budget cuts, housing evictions, or changes to working conditions. Greece had obtained the first of three bailouts from the EU and the IMF and was negotiating a second, while Spanish banks were only given a bailout, under much softer terms, at a date later than the time of our sample. While social movements in both countries did focus critical attention on the activities of the EU (and transnational) organizations in their protests, it was much more



common for Greek activists to claim that the domestic, EU and transnational political elites were equally responsible for the crisis and its management. The frequent visits of the Troika to Greece at this time, which coincided with negotiations for a second bailout, were the focus of many protest activities. In contrast, crisis-related activism, particularly mobilization by movements such as 15M, focused much more attention on critiques of the democratic credentials of the political class. Other explanatory hypotheses for variation among the cases that could influence case selection for future studies could reflect the hypothesis that varying degrees of social movement mobilizations may reflect varying degrees of Euroscepticism in the member states or that mobilization outside the state may be more common where domestic opportunity structures are more closed to civil society penetration. And finally, analysis of different kinds of data can be employed to supplement that of newspapers, especially from websites of specific organizations and social media postings. This is particularly important for examining the significance of the dimensions of 'horizontal referencing' and 'identification' which newspaper articles did not address in much detail. Analysis of this kind of data may also generate new hypotheses about the relationship between Europeanization and Transnationalisation, which our data suggests are both prevalent to a significant extent in contentious action, at least during the period we examined.

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**APPENDIX 1****Number of events for each 'degree' of Europeanization and Transnationalization**

Degree of Europeanization/ Transnationalization	SPAIN (163)		GREECE (148)	
	Europeanization	Transnationalization	Europeanization	Transnationalization
Very High (5)	3	2	1	1
High (4)	0	0	6	0
Moderate (3)	2	6	8	4
Low (2)	7	8	47	43
Very Low (1)	7	17	31	20
Non-Europeanization/ Non Transnationalization (0)	144	130	55	80

Source: compiled by authors

# Emotional Politics on Facebook. An Exploratory Study of Podemos' Discourse during the European Election Campaign 2014

*Política y emociones en Facebook. Un estudio exploratorio del discurso de Podemos en la campaña electoral europea de 2014*

AGNESE SAMPIETRO and LIDIA VALERA ORDAZ

DEPARTMENT OF THEORY OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF VALENCIA

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## Abstract

The results of the European elections 2014 in Spain were characterized by the outstanding rise of a new party, Podemos, which obtained five seats in the European Parliament, despite being founded few months before the elections. The present study analyzes both the content and the presence of emotions in Podemos' discourse on Facebook during the European electoral campaign. In particular, the affective content of both the party's discourse and the comments of its followers will be analyzed through a pragmatic linguistic approach applied to a corpus of 163 posts and 215 followers' comments. Results show an insistence on positive emotions in the party's discourse and a prevalence of negative emotions in the comments of the citizens.

Keywords: political discourse, European elections, Facebook, emotions, Podemos

## Resumen

Los resultados en España de las elecciones al Parlamento Europeo de 2014 se caracterizaron por el surgimiento de un nuevo partido, Podemos, que, a pesar de haber sido fundado pocos meses antes de las elecciones, obtuvo cinco escaños en el Parlamento Europeo. En este trabajo analizamos el contenido y la presencia de emociones en el discurso de Podemos en Facebook durante la campaña electoral europea. Concretamente, se analiza el contenido afectivo del discurso del partido y de los comentarios de sus seguidores mediante una aproximación lingüística pragmática aplicada a 163 posts y 215 comentarios. Los

resultados muestran una insistencia en emociones positivas por parte del partido y una prevalencia de emociones negativas en los comentarios de los internautas.

Palabras clave: discurso político, elecciones europeas, Facebook, emociones, Podemos

## INTRODUCTION

The electoral campaign for the European Parliament Election in May 2014 found Spain in a multiple-crisis environment. In addition to the deep economic crisis and the social tensions derived from the austerity policies, the country was facing several political and institutional problems, such as the Catalan independence movement or the many corruption scandals affecting the central political parties. These circumstances, among others, led the Spanish citizenry to develop strong attitudes of mistrust and cynicism against political parties, politicians and politics itself, as shown by successive polls.<sup>1</sup>

This political scenario witnessed the emergence of a new political force, called Podemos, that was officially founded on January 16<sup>th</sup>, that is, four months ahead the European elections. Its main leader, Pablo Iglesias Turrión, PhD in Political Science and university professor, was a well-known political analyst in different television shows. Indeed, his popularity and his constant appearance in televised political debates helped him publicize his political project during the months before the elections.

Podemos was one of the new parties born before the European elections, which were inheritors of the 15M Movement, as it was the case of Partido X. All these parties made a massive use of the new communication channels during the campaign. According to Sanjuan (2015), Podemos had a website with detailed information on the European election and open to a participatory process, a Facebook account with a growing number of followers (149.000 during the campaign), an official Twitter account with 43.200 followers at the time of the election (besides personal accounts of the party's leaders), more than 7.700 followers in its YouTube channel and an account on Vimeo. Podemos presented itself as a party open to a participatory process, formed by ordinary citizens who were disenchanting with the traditional political parties and willing to get involved in public life. Its intense

<sup>1</sup> See for example, the polls of the Spanish Centre for Sociological Research (CIS), which asks in periodical monthly surveys for the main problems that Spain is facing according to the citizenry. The results of the polls can be accessed at [http://www.cis.es/cis/openem/EN/11\\_barometros/depositados.jsp](http://www.cis.es/cis/openem/EN/11_barometros/depositados.jsp).

rise in popularity translated into 8% of the total votes and five seats in the European Parliament.

This study aims to analyze the party discourse on Facebook during the European campaign 2014, focusing on the posts published on the party's Facebook profile and paying special attention to the emotional content of both the posts and the comments published by Podemos followers.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Internet and electoral campaigns

Political communication research has shown that electoral campaigns in Western countries are undergoing a process of modernization, whose main objective is to achieve the maximum level of electoral effectiveness through a series of techniques imported from corporate marketing (Maarek, 2009) and different refined ways of attracting media attention (Swanson and Mancini, 1996; Gibson and Römmele, 2007).

Since the emergence of the Internet in the 90s, political parties have been adapting themselves to the new tools provided by the Web 2.0 to the rhythm of the technological innovations and the process of citizen appropriation, in such a way that each election has been accompanied by numerous technological innovations: blogs, video channels on YouTube, social networks, etc. (Dader, 2009). Thus, while the Internet seemed to give parties a platform to recover the political message (Bimber and Davis, 2003), i.e., to bypass the media machinery and reach militants and voters through websites (Sey and Castells, 2006; Chadwick, 2006), the Internet has been gradually incorporated as another element of the overall campaign strategy.

Despite the technological optimism that accompanied the expansion of the Internet, several studies about the partisan use of Internet generally suggest that parties have used these tools as a forum to deploy their persuasive-strategic discourse and attract media attention, rather than to recover a di-

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2 This study has been realized under the research project *Communication flows in processes of political mobilization: the media, blogs and opinion leaders (MEDIAFLOWS)* (2014-2016), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (Ref. cso2013-43960-R). Its principal researcher is Guillermo López, Professor of Journalism at the Department of Theory of Languages and Communication at the University of Valencia.

rect link with voters (Norris, 2003),<sup>3</sup> especially in the Spanish context (Dader, 2009; Dader et al., 2011). In this way, the accumulated experience seems to confirm the normalization hypothesis, namely, the idea that the technological practices of the Internet reproduce the main features of the offline campaigns (Druckman, Kifer and Parkin, 2010; Schweitzer, 2009). In other words, political actors are using the Internet mainly in order to foster marketing purposes, not to stimulate political pedagogy or to promote debate among citizens. But the political use of the Internet is not limited to electoral processes. There is, in fact, an intense academic debate on the impact of digital communication on the form and practice of politics in Western democracies. Scholars generally agree that the Internet has notably opened bottom-up communication channels in political processes (Gibson and Römmele, 2007; Castells, 2009). More specifically, ICTs have been conceived as a tool to face the growing citizen dissatisfaction towards democracy (Bentivegna, 2006), since social media allow for the direct contact between political actors and citizens and provide for new ways of political engagement. In that sense, cyber-optimist scholars claim that the Internet has positive effects on political participation (Lévy, 2004; Jenkins, 2008), especially intensifying the participation of people already interested in politics (Dader, 2001, 2003) or even reaching new groups (Rheingold, 2004). For their part, cyber-pessimists highlight the resistance to change and democratization of political elites and the lack of interest of the majority of the citizenry in politics (Davis, 2001; Anduiza et al., 2010).

## 2.2. Emotions in political discourse

Political communication scholarship has primarily showed a formalist approach when analyzing online political discussions,<sup>4</sup> since most researchers have relied on normative notions of deliberation and operationalized its different conditions (Dahlgren, 2000; 2005; Camaj et al., 2009; Freelon, 2010; Ruiz et al., 2010; Valera, 2012; 2014a).

Over the last decades, several authors have emphasized that the study of emotions may help understand social behavior and collective action processes.

3 Among the exceptions, it is worth mentioning the innovative use of ICT in some foreign campaigns, such as those of Howard Dean (Sey et al., 2006; Jenkins, 2008; Dader, 2009), Ségolène Royal (Montero, 2009) and Barack Obama (Turiera-Puigbò, 2009).

4 To the best of our knowledge, Graham (2010) is among the few scholars who have taken a tentative to move beyond the formal notions of deliberation. His research analyzed the interaction between deliberation and humor, emotional comments and acknowledgments.



According to Collins (1999), emotions bind society and motivate initiative in social interaction.

Different scholars point out the crucial role of emotions in constructing the identity of social movements (Melucci, 1995; Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta, 2001), since they play a key role in gathering people together, providing a sense of group identity and promoting collective action to achieve specific purposes. This crucial role of emotions does not imply that social movements' members are simply irrationally driven or have no long-term commitment to it. Even though the emotional energy is the primary attractor, there are people who internalize these emotions, and who are strongly motivated and committed to the cause in rational terms.

According to Collins (2001), the collective rituals that take place within social movements generate two different emotional transformations. At the time of the movement formation, emotions tend to be mostly negative, since their members experience certain aspect of social life as deeply unfair and therefore mobilize to design a plan for action. In fact, one of the means for social movements to defy their enemies is the recreation of this initial vigor. Then, however, the group generally transforms the negative feelings into positive emotions, which strengthen the sense of group identity and solidarity.

This study constitutes an exploratory research into the presence of emotions in electoral discourse through social media. We assume that emotions were particularly important in Podemos' discourse during the European election campaign for different reasons. First, the party emerged a few months before the elections with a strong heritage of different organizations, such as the platform PAH (*Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca*),<sup>5</sup> or the 15M Movement, etc. Second, researchers have pointed out the prevalence of persuasion and emotional appeals in the use of ICT by political parties during electoral campaigns.

The research questions that guided this study are the following:

- What kind of content prevails in Podemos' political discourse on Facebook? Does the party focus on ideological and programmatic stances or does it rather insist on campaign issues?

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5 Platform of People Affected by Mortgages (*Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* in Spanish) was a citizens' response to the generalized housing problems that emerged after the economic crisis and the end of the construction bubble, when a lot of citizens lost their jobs and started to be unable to pay their mortgages. Banks would then retain the house property and evict them from their homes. Platform actions have been primarily directed to stopping evictions and trying to negotiate with the banks alternative solutions.

- What kind of emotions does the party convey through its Facebook profile? Do they harp on existing negative feelings such as mistrust and cynicism towards traditional politics? Or does it run an online campaign appealing to positive emotions such as enthusiasm and hope for political change?
- What are the emotional responses of the followers to the party's discourse? Do the comments of the followers exhibit emotional involvement?
- Is there a relationship between the content of the posts and the emotions conveyed by them?

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study analyzes the discourse of Podemos and its followers on the party's Facebook profile during the European campaign 2014 through two methodological approaches. First, content analysis is applied to all the posts published during the campaign in order to assess what types of issues were specially emphasized by Podemos. Second, the presence of emotions in both the posts and the comments is analyzed through the means of a pragmatic linguistic approach.

#### 3.1. Sample and time frame

The corpus consists of all the posts published by Podemos in its Facebook profile during the official time frame of the electoral campaign in Spain (9<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014). These posts with all their respective comments were retrieved and saved by means of the research software NodeXLGraph.<sup>6</sup> In total, 163 posts and 7578 comments were collected. The analysis focuses on all the posts published by the party (n=163) and a sample of the comments. In order to select the sample, five posts were randomly chosen (post number 7, 56, 80, 93 and 161) and all the corresponding comments (n=215) were included in the analysis.

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<sup>6</sup> Available at: <http://nodexl.codeplex.com/>.

### 3.2. Content analysis

The content of the posts was categorized according to the classification scheme of electoral discourse proposed by López and adapted by Valera and López (2014). It includes four possible categories:

1. Ideological and programmatic issues: principles, values, ideological positions, policy proposals;
2. Campaign issues: political polling, propaganda, election ads, campaign events, debates, campaign strategies;
3. Candidates' character traits or personal issues;
4. Government management (any information evaluating the performance of a concrete government or official).

Two raters classified the content of a sample of 50 posts (30% of the sample). Inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's Kappa ( $k$ ) statistics to correct for chance agreement. The overall agreement was adequate enough ( $k=0.62$ ). As a consequence, the content rating was continued only by one rater.

In addition to this methodological design, we also analyzed the deliberative nature of the posts published by Podemos, in order to observe if its Facebook profile was actually being used for citizen deliberation. We did so through a concept elaborated by Valera (2014b) named "political density" or "deliberability", which refers to discourse that contains any statement that can be rationally debated. Generally, any post including an ideological or programmatic statement can be rationally discussed and argued among users (see example 1), while other posts including information about electoral events cannot (see example 2).

(1) We want quality public infrastructure and not projects for speculation. The caste loves spending our money benefitting his friends [...]. It's time to chase them (published 10<sup>th</sup> May 2014).<sup>7</sup>

(2) Tomorrow at 18:00 we are organizing a big Podemos meeting in Oviedo with Pablo Iglesias, Tania González, Estefanía Torres and more people. Are you willing to miss out on it? Share it and join it! (published 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014).<sup>8</sup>

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7 «Queremos infraestructuras públicas de calidad y no proyectos destinados a la especulación. La casta es muy aficionada a gastar lo que es de todos en concesiones a sus amigos [...]. Ya es hora de echarles» (nдр: all excerpts of Facebook posts have been translated by the authors).

8 «Mañana a las 18:00 hacemos un gran acto de Podemos en Oviedo con Pablo Iglesias, Tania González, Estefanía Torres y más. ¿Te lo vas a perder? ¡Comparte y participa!».

To assess the agreement among coders, inter-rater reliability was calculated using Kappa ( $k$ ). The results showed that raters were in moderate agreement ( $k=0.52$ ). Afterwards, the 42 posts in which raters disagreed were jointly recoded and three major criteria for the subsequent coding of “deliberability” and “non-deliberability” were established.

### 3.3. Linguistic analysis

Regarding the study of emotions in political discourse, we propose a linguistic approach. Generally, two different methods have been applied to the linguistic study of emotions: sentiment analysis and pragmatic analysis. While the first tries to extract emotions through the retrieval of affective words (e.g. *happy*, *sad*, *afraid*, and so on) through different means (keyword spotting, lexical affinity, statistical methods, etc.), pragmatic analysis studies emotions in the context of a specific discourse.

Indeed, pragmatic research considers that «*emotional words are only one way of grammatically codifying emotions in language*» (Bazzanella, 2004). As a consequence, emotional language is always analyzed in the overall context of the discourse. Caffi and Janney (1994) identified six ranges of emotional devices in language, which have been successfully applied to the study of computer-mediated discourse (Lafren and Fiorenza, 2012; Vandergiff, 2013).

We chose a pragmatic approach for this exploratory study of emotions in political discourse for multiple reasons. On the one hand, Facebook posts are usually short, so the shortness may reduce the presence of explicit emotional words. On the other hand, emotional content may be masked under the metaphors commonly used in political discourse. As a consequence, in the current study the presence of emotions in discourse is analyzed using Caffi and Janney’s (1994) methodology, especially focusing on two types of emotion markers: evaluation devices and proximity devices.<sup>9</sup>

The first category is based on the central distinction between positive and negative evaluations. It includes «*all types of verbal and nonverbal choices that suggest an inferable positive or negative evaluative stance on the part of the speaker with respect to a topic, part of a topic, a partner, or partners in discourse*» (Caffi et al., 1994, p. 354). For example, a negative evaluation device frequently repeated by Podemos is the term *casta* (caste), addressed

9 Other devices mentioned by Caffi et al. (1994) are: specificity devices, evidentiality devices, volitionality devices and quantity devices.

to the major Spanish political parties. The word *casta* (caste) is an emotional-laden word negatively marked.

Proximity devices are based on the central distinction between near and far and include all types of linguistic choices that create a “distance” between the speaker and the partners or topics (Caffi et al., 1994, p. 356). Among the most frequent devices in this category the use of deixis can be mentioned (personal pronouns, temporal markers, social proximity markers, etc.). Podemos made an attentive use of the first person plural pronouns (*we, our*). The inclusive ‘we’ creates proximity with the interlocutor and involve him in the political choices, a stratagem frequently used in political discourse (cfr. for example Wilson, 1990). Indeed, the name of the party itself, Podemos,<sup>10</sup> is the first person plural of the verb *poder* (to can), which clearly echoes Barack Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign slogan «yes, we can».

Therefore, the emotional content of the posts and the comments was analyzed paying attention to both evaluation devices (emotional-laden lexical choices) and proximity devices (use of pronouns and deixis to create proximity or distance with followers). The posts were analyzed indicating whether they conveyed emotions (yes or no). Posts containing emotions were subsequently classified according to the polarity of the emotions (positive, negative or both). To assess the agreement of the coders, inter-rater reliability was calculated using Kappa (k). The results showed that raters in this study were in substantial agreement about the presence of emotions in the posts (k=0.68) and in moderate agreement regarding the polarity of the posts (k=0.48); due to the qualitative nature of the study, these results were considered adequate and posts in which raters disagreed were jointly recoded.

#### 4. RESULTS

In general quantitative terms, Podemos’ Facebook use during the electoral campaign showed a continued activity on the profile. The party posted 163 posts in a period of 14 days (average 11,64 posts per day) and received 7578 comments in total (average 46,49 comments per post).

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10 In the lexical analysis of our corpus, *podemos* was largely the more frequently mentioned word both in the party’s posts and in the comments. These results are probably attributable not only to the repetition of the name of the party, but also to the frequency of the modal verb *poder* (to can).

#### 4.1. Thematic content of the posts

According to the proposed content classification scheme (López and Valera, 2014), the majority of the 163 posts published by Podemos in its Facebook profile during the European electoral campaign dealt mainly with issues related to the campaign itself (Figure 1).

To be precise, 64% of the posts (104 out of 163) focused on information related to campaign events, campaign strategies, electoral debates, polls, propaganda or results of the election. In other words, most of the party's discourse on this social network revolved around the campaign itself, while just 33% of the posts contained some ideological or programmatic statement (53 out of 163). These results suggest that Podemos' use of Facebook during the European Election campaign was basically strategic, inasmuch as it focused on the campaign as a horserace.

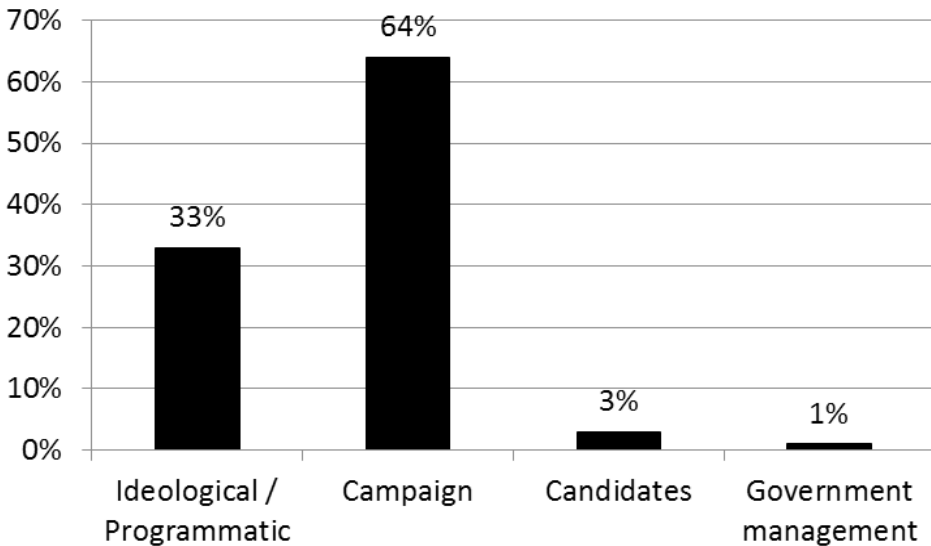


Figure 1  
Type of content of Podemos' Facebook posts

For their part, only 3% of the posts (five out of 163) contained personal information about the candidates or discussed the personality of the party's

leaders. This shows that despite the strong leadership and great visibility of its main leader, Pablo Iglesias Turrión, Podemos avoided to run a campaign based on this leadership in social media. It rather deployed a grass roots electoral strategy trying to appeal to and mobilize the ordinary citizen.

Finally, just 1% of the posts consisted on a critique to the management of the incumbent government. This result seems particularly striking, since most of Podemos' public discourse has consisted on a fierce and well-justified critique to the traditional political parties and their management on different levels of government. However, the results suggest that this rather negative strategy was substituted by a more constructive discourse during the campaign, as the analysis of emotions will point out later on.

Moreover, the analysis of the political density shows that the posts presented slight more "non-deliberability". Table 1 reveals that, in fact, 52% of the posts (84 posts out of 163) did not contain any statement that could be rationally discussed among the followers, but were centered on specific campaign information.

Table 1  
Political density of the posts

	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Deliberable posts	79	48%
Non-deliberable posts	84	52%

In other words, more than half of the posts published by Podemos during the campaign did not contain any statement that could translate into a substantial deliberation among the followers. Instead of promoting citizen discursive interaction, most of the content was designed to publish campaign information, such as concrete campaign events taking place all around the Spanish territory, or different ways to contribute to the party's funding. Still, 48% of the posts did imply taking stances that could be debated among citizens.

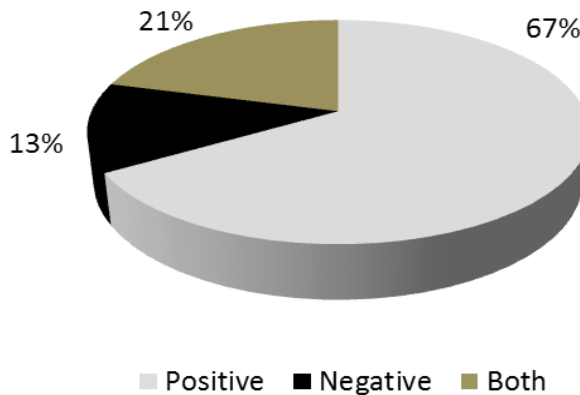
#### 4.2. Emotions in Podemos' discourse

The pragmatic analysis of evaluation and proximity devices reveals that there is a consistent presence of emotions in the analyzed corpus. According to our analysis, 101 posts out of 163 included some sort of emotional content (62%), and 62 posts (38%) did not present any emotional content at all (Table 2).

**Table 2**  
Emotional content of the posts

	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
Emotional posts	101	62%
Non-emotional posts	62	38%
Total	163	100%

Regarding the polarity of emotions, the majority of the posts had a positive-oriented emotional content (67 posts out of 101). This 66% of posts containing some sort of positive emotion (such as hope, enthusiasm, etc.) is in stark contrast with the 13% of the posts that presented negative emotions (such as cynicism or mistrust).



**Figure 2**  
Emotional polarity of Podemos' Facebook posts



That is, the party's discourse during the campaign was characterized by a significant positive tone, as suggested previously by the content analysis. Moreover, 21% of Podemos' publications included both positive and negative emotions (Figure 2).

### 4.3. Relationship between topic and emotions

In addition to the analysis of the presence of emotions, we asked ourselves about the possible relationship between the type of content published by the party and the presence of emotions. That is, were certain types of content more likely to contain emotions?

**Table 3**  
Presence of emotions in different types of content (absolute values)

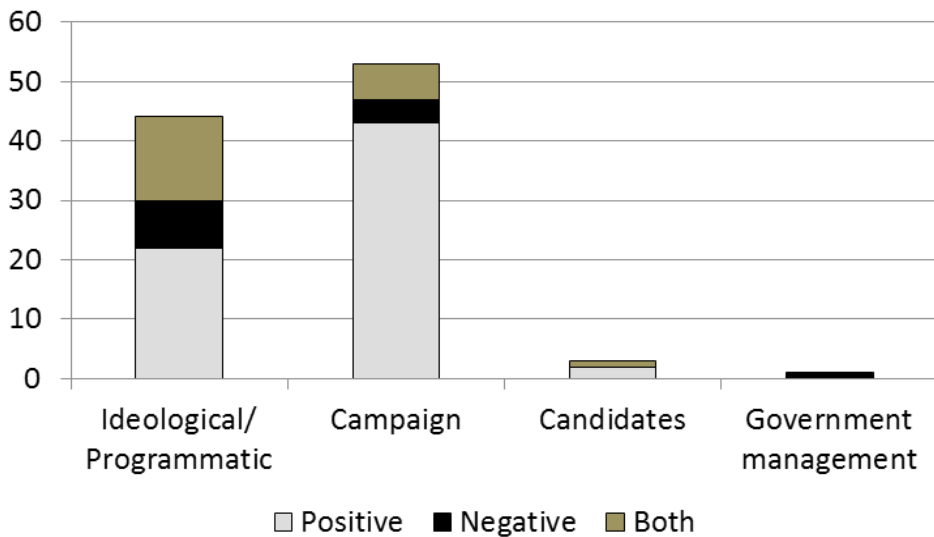
Type of content/ Presence of emotions	No emotions	Emotions	Total
Ideological/ Programmatic	9	44	53
Campaign	51	53	104
Candidates	2	3	5
Government management	0	1	1
Total	62	101	163

As showed in Table 3, ideological and programmatic posts were far more likely to include emotional content in comparison to posts related to campaign issues. Indeed, ideological and programmatic posts conveyed emotions more frequently: 44 out 53 posts (83%) included affective content.<sup>11</sup> The association of ideological and programmatic issues with the presence of emotions constitutes an interesting result, showing that the party exposed its essential ideological stances and programmatic proposals with the help of emotional devices in order to mobilize the citizenry.

<sup>11</sup> Due to the small sample size, no further statistical tests were calculated to analyze the association between the two variables.

For their part, campaign-related posts showed a certain degree of balance among presence or lack of emotions: 51 posts showed no emotions and 53 included some emotional content. In the case of posts about candidates, two of them showed emotional content and the only post dealing with the government management also had some emotional orientation.

Regarding the polarity of emotions, as showed in Figure 3, half of the ideological and programmatic posts contained positive emotions (22 posts out of 44), 8 posts included negative emotions and 14 posts presented both. Within the posts related to the campaign, most of them contained positive emotions (43 posts out of 53), while a minority included negative feelings (4 posts) or both positive and negative emotions (6 posts, 14%). The only post about candidates clearly had a positive emotional content, and the affective charge of the post on the current government was negative.



**Figure 3**  
Polarity of emotions in different types of content

#### 4.4 The presence of emotions in the comments

Before analyzing the emotional content of the comments, it is worth considering some basic information about the posts that were randomly selected for analyzing their comments, as their content and emotional value may influence the subsequent comments (Table 4).

**Table 4**  
Posts randomly selected for the analysis of their comments

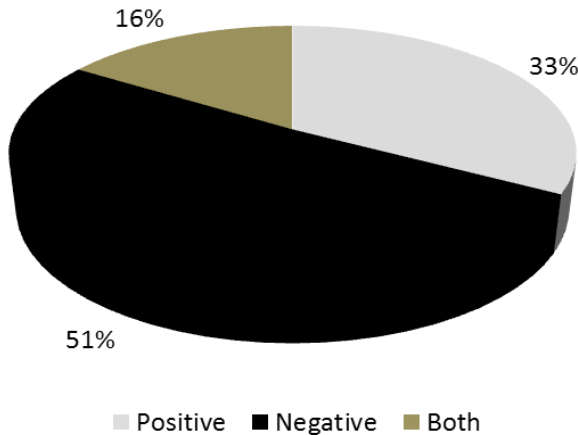
Post	Type of content	«Deliberability»	Presence of emotions	Polarity of emotions
7	Campaign issues	No	Yes	Positive
56	Ideological and programmatic issues	Yes	Yes	Positive
80	Campaign issues	No	Yes	Positive
93	Ideological and programmatic issues	Yes	Yes	Both
161	Campaign issues	No	Yes	Negative

The results of the analysis of the 215 comments clearly show a very different pattern in comparison with the posts published by the party (Table 5). Most of the comments contained no emotional content at all (154 out of 215), even though programmatic issues were debated, the hope for a political change repeated in the posts related to campaign issues and posts showed different emotional polarity. Most of the users only commented once, and no real debates took place among several users, although two of the posts randomly chosen showed political density, thus theoretically opening the way to citizens' debates. Only less than one third (61 out of 215) expressed some emotion (Table 5). That is, the party deployed a much more emotional discourse in this social network than the citizens that got involved in the online political discussions.

**Table 5**  
**Presence of emotions in the comments**

	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency
No emotions	154	72%
Emotions	61	28%
Total	215	100%

Regarding the polarity of emotions, the results also exhibit another interesting pattern in comparison to the party's discourse (Figure 4). Indeed, the majority of the users' comments contained expressions of negative emotions (31 out of 61), while the posts were overwhelmingly positive, as previously exposed. A third of the comments, however, expressed positive feelings (33%), while 16% contained both positive and negative emotions.



**Figure 4**  
**Emotional polarity of the comments**

In general, the expression of negative emotions in the comments by Podemos' followers refers to feelings of mistrust, cynicism and disaffection towards political elites. These negative comments, as previously exposed, are the most common, according to our results. For example, the 6<sup>th</sup> comment of post number 7 (example 3), shows a negative orientation towards politicians:

(3) You know, what bothers me is that we are people who have very clear ideas and when they try to deceive us, they think we're stupid and we believe everything they say without consequences, that then we will not remember anything. But that is over, we are not sheep following the herd [...]<sup>12</sup>.

In contrast, positive emotional comments refer to feelings like enthusiasm and hope and they tend to be addressed to Podemos as a party and its potential to promote a political and social change in Spain. For example, the 32<sup>nd</sup> comment of post number 80 clearly shows a positive orientation towards the party and its campaign, as shown in example 4:

(4) Today the act in Alicante was fantastic. The thrill of feeling the people get together. More than numbers, I would talk about authenticity, and in Podemos' acts you can breathe genuine enthusiasm and excitement; it's moving to see so many people together believing in the same project<sup>13</sup>.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The last two decades have witnessed an increasing interest of scholars in the use of the Internet in different political participation and mobilization processes. The growth and success of social networks have recently moved academic attention to these new communication platforms. In this article, we have analyzed Podemos' use of Facebook during the European election campaign, as well as the relationship between emotions and political discourse.

According to the content analysis, campaign issues clearly prevailed in the party's discourse on Facebook (such as information about multiple cam-

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12 «Sabeis [sic] lo que me jode que somos gente que tenemos unas ideas muy claras y que cuando nos intentan engañar se creen que somos tontos y que nos creemos todo lo que dicen impunemente [sic] que no vamos a recordar nada luego pero eso se acaba [sic] no somos ovejas de su rebao [sic] [...]».

13 «Tremendo hoy el acto de Alicante. La emoción de sentir que el pueblo se une. Más que de números, yo hablaría de autenticidad, y en los actos de Podemos se respira auténtica ilusión y emoción de ver a tanta gente junta creyendo en un mismo proyecto [...]».

paigned events, or about different ways to financially support the party), while ideological and programmatic-laden contents were less frequent. This confirms that Podemos' use of the Internet was electorally driven, since they mainly used it as a tool to deploy their persuasive-strategic discourse, instead of trying to recover a direct link with voters or promote citizen deliberation (Dader et al., 2011). In that sense, our results with regards to the topics and the limited "deliberability" (Valera, 2014b) of the posts contribute to ratify the normalization hypothesis (Schweitzer, 2009; Druckman et al., 2010).

Despite the formal bias of political communication research when dealing with online political discussions, this study presents an exploratory research of the presence of emotions on the party's discourse. Emotions are considered important in the emergence and strengthening of political and social movements (Collins, 2001), such as the 15M Movement (Belli and Díez, 2013), the Obama's campaign 2008 (Castells, 2009), or the MAS movement in Bolivia (Errejón, 2012).

Following a pragmatic linguistic approach, this research has shown a significant presence of emotions in Podemos' discourse on Facebook. These emotions were mainly positive during the campaign, since the party repeatedly appealed to feelings like enthusiasm and hope for a political change to promote mobilization. These results are in big contrast with Podemos' public discourse before the campaign, which consisted on a well-justified and systematic critique of the traditional Spanish political parties.

Moreover, our results reveal that ideological and programmatic posts were more likely to contain emotions, thus confirming the idea that emotions play an important role in processes of political and social mobilization, especially in the early stages of the building of a new political and social movement (Collins, 2001). But there were also some negative emotions found in Podemos' discourse, mainly associated to Spanish traditional political parties. That is, Podemos' discourse during the campaign 2014 was consistently presented with an emotional tone, mainly positive (hope for a change and confidence on the party) but also negative (critiques and attacks against the "caste").

According to the analysis of emotions in the development of social movements elaborated by Collins (2001), movements start from negative feelings against people, institutions or organizations that threaten their main values, and then they move to more positive feelings, such as pride or hope. The negative emotions of the 15M Movement were addressed to traditional political actors and institutions, which were considered corrupted, degraded and inadequate to solve social problems. In that sense, our analysis of emotions in

both the party's discourse and the comments shows a very interesting result and a marked discrepancy.

On the one hand, the results suggest that Podemos tried to convert these first negative emotions against traditional parties into positive feelings during the campaign, placing itself in the political scenario as a source of hope and change, as argued by Collins (2001) in his conception of the two emotional stages of social movements.

On the other hand, just a minority of followers' comments had some emotional content and most of them showed a lack of political density. In their majority posts were simple repetitions of campaign slogans, or questions about practical campaign issues, and citizens rarely involved in real political debates. Moreover, emotionally laden comments mainly conveyed expressions of negative emotions, such as mistrust or cynicism, in stark contrast with the party's predominant positive emotional tone. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the party's support and its surprising electoral mobilization were achieved through the negative motivations of its followers. In other words, while the party was already trying to move to a more positive discourse that could transform the citizen disenchantment into social change, the electoral base of the party remained mainly at an earlier stage, expressing negative feelings against traditional political actors and politics in general.

In conclusion, this study constitutes a first attempt to analyze the presence of emotions in political discourse through social networks. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, several limitations should be noted. First, the qualitative nature of the method used to identify emotions hinders a generalization of the results. Even though inter-rater reliability was statistically calculated and considered adequate, a subjective bias in the analysis of the data remains. Another limitation refers to the size of the sample, especially in the case of the comments, which impose a prudent discussion of the results. Future research with bigger samples of comments will have to establish if these results are generalizable. Finally, future research will also have to study the presence of emotions in political discourse in non-electoral periods. Comparative studies could also analyze the emotional dimension of multiple parties' discourse. Moreover, the deliberative dimension of online political discussions could also be considered in more detail, through a more extensive analysis of followers' interactions and participation.

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# El moviment per l'okupació i el moviment per l'habitatge: semblances, diferències i confluències en temps de crisi

## *Squatting Movement and Housing Movement: Similarities, Differences and Convergences in Times of Crisis*

ROBERT GONZÁLEZ GARCÍA

INSTITUTO DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES, UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DEL ESTADO DE HIDALGO (MÉXICO)

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### Resum

Les pràctiques d'okupació que sorgeixen a mitjans dels 80 al nostre país són considerades un moviment social per múltiples autors (Calle, 2004; Pruijt, 2004; Martínez, 2002). L'any 2006 apareix arreu de l'Estat un nou moviment social diferenciat, el moviment per l'habitatge. Aquest moviment organitzà joves d'arreu de l'Estat espanyol i, els anys posteriors, consolidà centenars de plataformes d'afectats per les hipoteques de totes les edats. Les seves propostes i demandes han estat un full de ruta en l'aterratge pràctic del moviment del 15-M. L'objectiu d'aquest article és comparar aquests dos moviments urbans que es poden entendre també com a pràctiques emancipadores i noves formes de participació de la societat civil.

Paraules clau: joventut, okupació, habitatge, crisi, moviments socials

### Abstract

The practical of squatting that arrived to our country in the 80's is considered a social movement by multiple authors (Calle, 2004; Pruijt, 2004; Martínez, 2002). The year 2006 appears a new and differentiated social movement, the housing movement. This movement organized young people of all over the country, and therefore consolidated hundreds of platforms of affected by the mortgages of different ages. Their proposals and demands have been a rate routing coming from the 15-M movement. The aim of this article is to compare these two urban movements that could be also understood as emancipation practices and new shapes of participation of the civil society.

Keywords: youth, squatting, housing, crisis, social movements

## INTRODUCCIÓ

L'objectiu d'aquest article és comparar dos moviments socials contemporanis que han protagonitzat lluites socials importants a l'Estat espanyol entorn de temàtiques com l'accés a l'habitatge i a espais de sociabilitat comunitària. El moviment per l'okupació i el moviment per l'habitatge presenten similituds i sovint confluències, però són dos moviments diferents, tant en el seu procés històric com en les seves formes organitzatives, objectius i lideratges.

En el primer apartat analitzarem les pràctiques d'okupació que s'originaren en el context europeu a la dècada dels setanta i s'instal·laren a Catalunya i Espanya<sup>1</sup> a la dècada dels vuitanta. Veurem com l'okupació ha esdevingut un moviment social amb tots els ets i uts i farem un repàs als ja 30 anys d'història de les okupacions al nostre país.

Per altra banda, l'any 2006 apareix el moviment per l'habitatge. Aquest moviment organitzà joves d'arreu de l'Estat i, els anys posteriors, va consolidar centenars de col·lectius locals per l'habitatge. En els darrers temps han guanyat protagonisme les Plataformes d'Afectats per les Hipoteques (les PAH). Les seves propostes i demandes han estat un full de ruta en l'aterratge pràctic del moviment 15-M, amb propostes com la dació en pagament, desnonaments zero o la desaparició del parc de pisos buits. En el segon apartat explicarem la gènesi del moviment per l'habitatge i el sorgiment de les PAH.

En el tercer apartat compararem aquests dos moviments urbans, situant-los en un context més ampli de lluites contra la globalització neoliberal. S'analitzaran les semblances i diferències entre ambdós moviments en termes d'identitat, relació amb les institucions, estratègies, objectius, organització, concepció de l'okupació i composició social dels seus activistes.

A les conclusions reflexionarem sobre les semblances, diferències i confluències entre okupació i moviment per l'habitatge, essent conscients que caldran nous estudis empírics per validar o falsar les hipòtesis comparatives que es plantegen.

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1 L'article analitza els casos de Catalunya, Madrid i el País Basc, ja que aquests han estat estudiats per l'autor en la seva tesi doctoral (González, 2011) i en posteriors recerques. En concret, l'article s'emmarca dins la recerca "El movimiento de okupación de viviendas y centros sociales en España y en Europa: contextos, ciclos, identidades e institucionalización", que es portà a terme entre gener de 2012 i desembre de 2014.

## 1. EL MOVIMENT PER L'OKUPACIÓ A CATALUNYA I A L'ESTAT ESPANYOL: CARACTERÍSTIQUES I RESUM HISTÒRIC

### 1.1. Les pràctiques d'okupació com a moviment social

L'okupació d'immobles abandonats per a construir centres socials o habitatges s'adapta a les idees fonamentals per a definir un moviment social present a la literatura acadèmica: conflicte, desafiament, canvi i acció col·lectiva (Pastor, 2002). A més a més, les pràctiques d'okupació han transcendit el camp de la protesta, per acabar desembocant en una sèrie de discursos, repertoris d'acció i formes organitzatives, que les doten d'una identitat cultural compartida fortament emparentada amb el sorgiment dels nous moviments socials a Europa (feminisme, pacifisme, ecologisme, autonomia obrera, etc.) (Calle, 2004).

Ara bé, què és okupar? Pel sociòleg holandès Hans Pruijt okupar és viure en (o usar d'una altra manera) immobles sense el consentiment del seu propietari (Pruijt, 2004). Podríem afegir –tal i com apunta Martínez– que es tracta d'un moviment que se centra en l'accés directe a un bé urbà escàs (l'habitatge i els espais de sociabilitat) i la seva legítima defensa (Martínez, 2004). De tota manera, existeixen i conviuen diverses pràctiques d'okupació. Per sentit comú, podríem distingir aquelles que es dediquen a satisfer una necessitat d'habitatge de les que es converteixen en Centres Socials Okupats (CSO) on realitzar tot tipus d'activitats contraculturals en un espai públic no estatal –fora de les lògiques *burocratitzades* (de l'Estat) o *mercantilitzades* (del sector privat).

Hans Pruijt distingeix fins a cinc *configuracions*<sup>2</sup> de l'okupació (2004: 37-60), que ens dona idea de l'extraordinària diversitat del fenomen: *a) l'okupació basada en la pobresa* que implica la participació de persones sense recursos econòmics que realitzen okupacions a causa d'una situació extrema de privació d'habitatge; *b) l'okupació com a estratègia alternativa d'habitatge*, que inclou una varietat de situacions personals i tipus diferents d'okupes; *c) l'okupació emprenedora*, que permet fer activitats econòmiques i laborals autogestionades en els centres socials; *d) l'okupació conservacionista*, que esdevé una tàctica usada en la preservació del paisatge rural

2 Les configuracions són una mena de models o combinacions de característiques que juntes encaixen bé (Mintzberg, 1983, citat a Pruijt, 2004: 37). En el cas de l'okupació, les configuracions difereixen en les característiques de les persones implicades, el tipus d'immobles, els *marcs cognitius*, les seves demandes i els patrons d'organització i mobilització que desenvolupen.

i urbà, i e) *l'okupació política*, aquella en la qual s'identifiquen els activistes antisistema (ja siguin revolucionaris o autònoms).

El context social que facilita l'aparició d'okupacions és el producte dels processos de desestructuració de les xarxes socials que genera la globalització neoliberal, en forma d'una precarietat vital i d'uns riscos d'exclusió social creixents entre la població. Les dificultats per accedir a un habitatge i la precarietat laboral s'han generalitzat en les darreres dècades, acarnissant-se especialment en el sector juvenil i convivint amb paradoxes com l'existència d'una enorme quantitat d'habitatges buits fruit de l'especulació immobiliària.

D'altra banda, l'oferta de cultura i oci del món privat es torna cada cop més alienant, amb la profusió de grans superfícies, macrodiscoteques i multicines, que fomenten el consum a discreció. A més de les "prestacions" logístiques, els cso compleixen una tasca de rearticulació de les xarxes socials locals, destrossades pel procés de globalització neoliberal. Les xarxes informals que s'estableixen en les okupacions i els desallotjaments són percebudes pels i les okupes com una recuperació positiva de sobirania sociovital (Calle, 2004).

En paraules de Martínez, en okupar, no només se sostrauen immobles abandonats de les lògiques especulatives-capitalistes, sinó que es genera el principal recurs per portar a terme l'autogestió col·lectiva i per reprendre les relacions socials i les formes de vida que reptin directament les imposicions del mercat i de la legalitat i les institucions al seu servei (Martínez, 2010). Quant a les característiques físiques del territori urbà on es produeixen les okupacions, Martínez apunta que, com a tendència general, les okupacions a l'Estat espanyol se solen localitzar en tres llocs: 1) als centres històrics i urbans (Lavapiés i Tetuán a Madrid; Raval, Ciutat Vella, Gràcia o Sants a Barcelona); 2) en àrees de reconversió industrial i fàbriques o instal·lacions deslocalitzades (Baix Llobregat i Vallès Occidental a Barcelona o el marge esquerre a Bilbao), i 3) en zones de renovació urbana amb "grans projectes" terciaris o residencials (Poble Nou a Barcelona o El Cabanyal a València). A aquestes tres ubicacions preferencials, cal afegir l'okupació en zones periurbanes (com Collserola a Barcelona o Leioa a Biscaia), propietats abandonades per l'Estat (la Kasa de la Muntanya a Gràcia) o l'Església (com l'Escola de la Prosperitat a Madrid o el Gaztetxe de Santutxu a Bilbao) i edificis d'habitatges sense llicències (El Puntal i Esperanza 8, al barri de Lavapiés de Madrid) (Martínez, 2004: 84).

En definitiva, l'okupació a l'Estat espanyol tindria una condició ambivalent. És a dir, d'una banda, l'okupació es pot entendre com una arma de



combat per a portar a terme un projecte transformador. Un altra visió correspondria a l'okupació com a mitjà per a engregar projectes d'experimentació personal i col·lectiva, seguint pautes de comportament alternatives, sota una lògica d'insubmissió quotidiana. Es considera, doncs, que les okupacions són, d'una banda, fi en si mateixes, espais recuperats a un sistema de propietat basat en l'especulació i en el predomini del valor de canvi sobre el valor d'ús; però, al mateix temps, són un mitjà per a portar a terme una lluita global contra el sistema.

Podem dividir la història del moviment per l'okupació en tres etapes. Per decidir on comencen i on acaben les etapes partim de les teories de cicles (Tarrow, 1997) i dels canvis en les estructures d'oportunitat política<sup>3</sup> del moviment per l'okupació. En la darrera etapa coincidirà i en alguns casos confluirà (i estarà en la gènesi) amb el moviment per l'habitatge.

## 1.2. Naixement i consolidació (1984-1995)

A Catalunya la primera okupació es produí al barri de Gràcia de Barcelona el desembre de 1984. D'altres destacades d'aquesta primera etapa foren l'Ateneu de Cornellà (que durà de 1986 a 2003) i la Kasa de la Muntanya, també a Gràcia i okupada des de 1989 (continua activa). A Madrid, una incipient Assemblea d'Okupes va protagonitzar la històrica okupació de Minuesa el 1987. Pel que fa a Euskadi, el naixement del moviment per l'okupació es produí al voltant dels moviments juvenils dels anys vuitanta. Van començar a aparèixer *Gaztetxes* (cases dels joves) per tot Euskal Herria. Les més emblemàtiques foren les okupacions de la Borsa de Bilbao, la del *Gaztetxe de Gazteiz* (Vitòria), així com l'*Euskal Jai* de Pamplona-Iruñea.

A partir de 1992 es va produir una obertura del moviment, derivada de la incidència del moviment estudiantil, antimilitarista i feminista, entre d'altres (González, Blas i Pelàez, 2002; Herrerros, 2004). L'any 1992 semblava articular-se la primera resposta al context de reestructuració capitalista de les grans ciutats, expressada a través de tres esdeveniments: *a*) els Jocs Olímpics de Barcelona, *b*) l'Exposició Universal de Sevilla, i *c*) la Capitalitat Cultural de Madrid (Martínez, 2004).

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3 Sobre el concepte d'estructura d'oportunitats polítiques, veure Kitschelt (1996) i Mc Adam (1998).

### 1.3. Etapa daurada (1996-2000)

La criminalització de l'okupació en el nou Codi Penal (1996) va marcar l'inici d'una expansió de les okupacions. L'estratègia de repressió del moviment per part de les institucions suposà paradoxalment la seva revitalització. D'altra banda cal sumar el salt a l'arena mediàtica del moviment amb els desallotjaments del Princesa a Barcelona o de la Guindalera a Madrid. A Catalunya les okupacions passaren de 40 a 150 en dos anys. A ambdós territoris el moviment okupa esdevingué el referent dels moviments socials juvenils radicals i protagonitzà manifestacions, resistències a desallotjaments i un gran nombre d'okupacions. El cso Can Vies, al barri de Sants de Barcelona, okupat el 1997, simbolitza perfectament aquest període de puixança del moviment.<sup>4</sup>

Cap als anys 1999 i 2000, el moviment començava a reflectir certs símptomes de canvi. D'una banda, els espais de coordinació i organització interna es van anar perdent per a afirmar les identitats particulars de cada casa okupada. D'altra banda, l'estratègia repressiva de l'Estat va provocar una conjuntura de conflicte permanent amb la policia que va arribar al seu punt àlgid el 2001 amb les detencions d'algunes persones relacionades amb la protesta okupa, acusades de pertànyer a ETA a Barcelona o als GRAPO a Madrid (Asens, 2004).

### 1.4. Perspectives del moviment per l'okupació contemporani (2001-2015)

Són diverses les aportacions que apunten cap a l'inici d'un nou cicle en el moviment de les okupacions a partir de l'any 2001 (Martínez, 2007; Hereros, 2004; Miró, 2001). Els canvis operats en les *estructures d'oportunitat política* del moviment van estar provocats, entre d'altres elements, per l'inici el 1999 (Seattle) d'un nou cicle de protesta a escala internacional, que es manifestà a l'Estat espanyol en la primera dècada del 2000.

En aquest període el moviment s'hibridà amb d'altres. En primer lloc, es produïren confluències amb el moviment global, tant en les campanyes puntuals com en alguns centres socials okupats com Can Masdeu a Barcelona o el Laboratorio a Madrid. En segon lloc, la confluència amb sectors del moviment veïnal en el que s'anomenà "la crítica pràctica a l'urbanisme capitalista"

<sup>4</sup> El seu desallotjament el 26 de maig de 2014 desfermà una onada de protestes arreu de Catalunya que mostren l'arrelament social i polític d'un centre social per on passaren fins a tres generacions diferents de joves okupes. La seva pervivència li permeté participar i relacionar-se fortament amb diversos cicles de mobilització, com el de les lluites contra la globalització neoliberal (2000-2004) o el del 15-M de 2011.

(Miró, 2001: 3). I tercer: el sorgiment els anys 2004 i 2005 de nous espais de lluita sobre la temàtica capital-treball, a l'entorn de les deslocalitzacions d'empreses i la precarietat laboral creixent.

En aquesta tercera etapa la pràctica de l'okupació s'estén i desborda el camp clàssic de l'okupació. Així, des d'altres subjectivitats i identitats diferents a l'okupa, es recorre a l'okupació com una eina potent de lluita. Okupacions com la de la Rimaia –protagonitzada pel moviment estudiantil contra Bolonya–, el cso Barrilonia –per part del moviment d'immigrants– o les okupacions d'horts urbans –per part de coalicions heterodoxes d'activistes de la permacultura i l'agroecologia– en són exemples a Barcelona. Al mateix temps, a Madrid, l'aparició de noves subjectivitats okupes com el Patio Maravillas o La Eskalera Karakola, confirmen aquesta tendència. En el cas català, a més, cal afegir l'aposta de l'independentisme revolucionari per l'okupació, que es tradueix –durant la dècada dels 2000– en les nombroses okupacions de les assemblees de joves de l'esquerra independentista arreu del territori. Finalment, com veurem en l'apartat següent, diferents nuclis del moviment per l'habitatge (especialment de les PAH), del 15-M, del cooperativisme i del propi moviment per l'okupació, okupen edificis d'habitatges per a persones afectades per l'onada massiva de desnonaments entre els anys 2011 i 2013. De fet, alguns autors (Martínez i García, 2013) apunten cap a l'inici d'una quarta etapa en la història del moviment l'any 2011.

## 2. EL MOVIMENT PER L'HABITATGE. PINZELADES SOBRE UNA HISTÒRIA RECENT

Aquest apartat analitza els contextos i l'evolució del moviment per l'habitatge a l'Estat espanyol, centrant-se en l'observació directa, l'anàlisi dels documents generats pel propi moviment i entrevistes semiestructurades i en profunditat a diferents activistes de les Plataformes d'Afectats per la Hipoteca (PAH) realitzades entre novembre de 2013 i abril de 2014 a Catalunya.

### 2.1. Contextos socials d'aparició d'un nou moviment

La problemàtica concreta de l'habitatge al nostre país i el context actual de crisi econòmica són els principals contextos de sorgiment del moviment per l'habitatge. La crisi ha produït un lleu retard en la ja de per sí elevada

edat d'emancipació dels joves catalans i espanyols. L'elevat preu del lloguer i de la compra d'habitatge és un dels motius d'aquest retard, que situa en uns 29 anys l'edat mitjana d'emancipació dels joves espanyols, enfront dels 23 anys de Finlàndia, per exemple. De fet, el percentatge de joves emancipats de 16 a 34 anys ha passat del 44,8 % el 2007 al 44,1 % el 2011 (Moreno *et al.*, 2012: 180).

El preu mig de la compra i el lloguer han estat durant molts anys elevadíssims i ho continuen estant en l'actualitat malgrat que els darrers quatre anys estan experimentant baixades notables<sup>5</sup>. A Barcelona, per exemple, l'any 2005 l'esforç econòmic per a comprar un pis era de 1475 euros al mes i per llogar-lo de 735, la qual cosa suposava el 45,1 % dels ingressos d'una llar mitjana, molt per sobre del màxim del 30 % recomanat per Nacions Unides (Trilla i López, 2007: 752).

L'enorme parc de pisos buits, fruit de l'especulació immobiliària, no ha fet més que créixer. Així, si al cens de l'INE de 2001 se'n comptabilitzaven uns 3,1 milions, el darrer cens de 2011 podria situar la xifra en 6 milions.<sup>6</sup> Aquestes xifres es deuen també al model de creixement espanyol, basat fortament en la construcció, que l'any 2007 arribà a representar el 9,3 % del PIB (més del doble que als Estats Units) (Romero, 2010: 18).

La temporalitat dels contractes laborals i les taxes d'atur altíssimes (de més del 25 % i de més del 40 % en el cas dels joves) formen part també d'aquest context que dificulta l'accés a l'habitatge a milions de persones. La conversió de l'habitatge en una pura mercaderia i en objecte de l'especulació ha estat fonamental en el model de creixement econòmic espanyol, creant greus desequilibris socials, humans i mediambientals.

Paral·lelament, a la ciutat de Barcelona s'executaven 30 desnonaments diaris l'any 2009, segons la Plataforma per un Habitatge Digne (El Debat.cat, 11 de febrer de 2009).

En el total de l'Estat espanyol 500 persones perdien la casa diàriament des de 2008, segons dades de les PAH (El País, 3 de juny de 2010). La crisi de les hipoteques ha disparat els desnonaments –uns 400.00 des que va començar la crisi el 2008– l'endeutament de per vida de milers de persones i l'augment del nombre de suïcidis amb aquest motiu com a causa directa (Colau i Ale-

5 Aquest fet va posar les famílies en una espiral de deute molt important, que no té en compte que amb els preus actuals l'esforç econòmic s'ha reduït al 30 % i una mitjana de dos salaris anuals a Catalunya (<http://www.niu.cat/ca/noticies-niu-cat/minim-historic-lesforc-familiar-per-adquiriri-habitatge>).

6 Vegeu: <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2011/08/22/suivienda/1314001038.html>, [http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/01/05/actualidad/1325752378\\_850215.html](http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2012/01/05/actualidad/1325752378_850215.html) i <http://www.eleconomista.es/vivienda/noticias/3653831/01/12/En-Espana-podria-haber-hasta-seis-millones-de-pisos-vacios.html>. Consultades el 31 de març de 2013.

many, 2012: 32). Al mateix temps, la insuficiència de les polítiques d'habitatge que prioritzen els interessos de propietaris i mercat sobre el dret a l'habitatge (tot i que aquest està recollit fins i tot a la CE, art. 47) s'han fet evidents en els darrers anys.

La desconfiança en els partits polítics, l'increment de la desafecció, la corrupció, les promeses incomplertes i, -en definitiva- la configuració de l'anomenada democràcia sense alternativa pròpia dels països perifèrics de la Unió Europea en l'actual context de crisi i polítiques d'austeritat, completen el context de sorgiment del moviment per l'habitatge que a través d'organitzacions de caire assembleari i d'acció directa com la PAH canalitza les demandes i les necessitats de milers de persones afectades i solidàries (Alonso, 2014; Colau i Alemany, 2013).

## 2.2. Breu història: de “V de Vivienda” a la PAH

Cap moviment social sorgeix un dia concret, però en el cas d'aquesta nova onada del moviment per l'habitatge, sí que hi podríem posar una data fundacional o un mite originari. Aquest moviment va experimentar un sorgiment espontani i sorpresa arran d'una convocatòria anònima per la xarxa el 14 de maig de 2006. La convocatòria tenia però un bon referent polític, les lluites juvenils a França contra el Primer Contracte. De fet, de forma irònica comparava aquestes amb les mobilitzacions en favor del “botellot” que per aquells dies es produïen en diverses ciutats d'Espanya. La convocatòria d'“assegudes” a diverses places de les principals ciutats aquell dia de maig de 2006 fou tot un èxit i desembocà en manifestacions i assemblees espontànies. En totes elles es podia apreciar la presència d'un petit nucli activista, provinent del moviment okupa, el moviment veïnal i l'esquerra anticapitalista, rodejat d'un nombrós grup de gent “nova”, afectada directament pel problema de l'habitatge. Els activistes aportaren eines per potenciar les mobilitzacions (el saber fer) però els nous contingents “militants” aportaren frescor i això es feia evident en les consignes i les formes de mobilització. Per exemple una de les consignes o lemes més famosos fou: *No tindràs una casa en la puta vida*, mostra de la sensació d'impotència i de ràbia d'àmplies masses populars despolititzades fins aleshores. Aquests elements es reproduiran amplificats en el moviment dels indignats el 15 de maig de 2011.

Les vinculacions amb el moviment okupa en aquest primer període es fan evidents a través de l'Espai Social Magdalenes a Barcelona o el Patio Maravillas a Madrid. Tots dos centres socials okupats coincideixen en presentar-se

com a partidaris de la negociació amb les administracions i en generar –per aquest motiu– gran controvèrsia a l’interior d’un moviment okupa, posicionat majoritàriament en contra.

L’Espai Social Magdalenes es definia com:

Un projecte ubicat a Ciutat Vella que té per objectiu fomentar l’autogestió, així com promoure i allotjar iniciatives que garanteixin l’exercici i la defensa d’aquells drets que no es troben actualment garantits en les polítiques vigents: dret a l’habitatge, dret a la ciutat, dret a la llibertat de moviments de les persones immigrants, dret a la participació política i dret al lliure accés i producció de cultura.<sup>7</sup>

Situat al carrer Magdalenes 13-15, es tractava d’un edifici sencer, amb habitatges i centre social, que fou okupat el maig de 2005.<sup>8</sup> Des del principi, comptà amb el suport dels veïns «legals», víctimes de l’assetjament immobiliari i de les intencions de construir un hotel en aquell local. El seu bon ús d’estratègies d’emmarcament positives davant els mitjans de comunicació i la seva disposició explícita a la negociació,<sup>9</sup> l’enfrontaren a part del moviment okupa, però al mateix temps facilitaren la seva continuïtat malgrat trobar-se en ple centre de Barcelona. El primer intent de desallotjament, el 15 de febrer de 2010, fou frustrat gràcies a la concentració de centenars de veïns. L’1 d’abril de 2010, però, s’acabà executant el desallotjament posant fi a un procés de diàleg que les administracions no atengueren.

L’Espai Social Magdalenes esdevingué un projecte públic obert als moviments socials i al teixit associatiu del barri. Aquest espai ha generat xarxes i iniciatives culturals i polítiques des de les quals s’han articulat i s’articulen respostes i solucions a les problemàtiques i reptes socials que experimenta actualment el centre històric de Barcelona: la creixent gentrificació, l’assetjament immobiliari, la pressió turisticadora, l’èxode poblacional i d’activitats, i el debilitament de les xarxes socials existents i d’acollida de població nouvinguda.

Durant cinc anys l’Es Magdalenes fou un espai de trobada d’associacions veïnals, moviments en defensa del dret a l’habitatge (V de Vivienda, Taller contra la Violència Immobiliària i Urbanística), moviments en defensa dels drets de les persones immigrants, així com d’iniciatives que promouen l’ús

7 Vegeu <http://magdalenes.net/?q=ca/taxonomy/term/48>.

8 Dins la història del moviment les successives okupacions de Miles de Viviendas des de 2003 (dos dies al Turó de la Peira, uns mesos al carrer Sardenya i quatre anys a la Barceloneta) ja marcaven aquesta tendència mitjançant la qual okupes activistes troben cases en un context d’alts preus del lloguer i fomenten l’okupació d’habitatges per gent amb necessitat.

9 Sobre estratègies d’emmarcament i oportunitats polítiques dels moviments socials, vegeu Máiz (1996).

del programari lliure i aposten per un accés no restrictiu a la producció i distribució cultural. Finalment, cal destacar que l'ES Magdalenes no va ser una iniciativa aïllada d'aquesta transició de moviment per l'okupació a moviment per l'habitatge, sinó que s'emmarcà dins l'anomenada PHRP (Promoció d'Habitatge Realment Públic). La PHRP mantenia a inicis de 2008 quatre okupacions d'habitatges amb aquest nou enfocament al districte de Ciutat Vella. A més de l'ES Magdalenes estaven okupats Avinyó 33, Amargós 6 i Tallers 44.

Amb plantejaments molt similars als de l'ES Magdalenes, s'okupà el 2007 al barri de Malasaña de Madrid, l'Espacio Polivalente Autogestionado Patio Maravillas. El Patio Maravillas esdevingué un espai central dels moviments socials madrilenys, gràcies a la seva identitat oberta i la seva arquitectura. El primer Patio se situà en un col·legi abandonat amb un gran pati al mig. La filosofia del Patio Maravillas fou la de defugir l'estereotip *okupa* i presentar-se com un espai de participació social i cultural obert a tots els moviments socials, col·lectius i individus. La seva estratègia, davant el seu procés de desallotjament fou reunir el màxim de suports socials i dialogar amb l'Ajuntament de Madrid la possibilitat d'expropiació del local. En aquest projecte, el Patio Maravillas comptà amb el suport de la Federació Regional d'Associacions de Veïns de Madrid (FRAVM) i d'Ecologistes en Acció. Malgrat aquest suport, el Patio fou desallotjat d'aquest edifici del carrer Acuerdo a inicis de 2010. La mateixa nit del desallotjament, com a punt culminant a la manifestació de rebuig, s'okupà un altre espai al mateix barri –al carrer Pez– on continuaren les activitats d'aquest centre social (*El País*, 2 d'agost de 2010).

Després d'aquesta breu ressenya sobre els espais que situen les primeres confluències o transicions entre moviment per l'okupació i moviment per l'habitatge a Espanya, tornem a la història dels orígens del moviment per l'habitatge. La manifestació del 2 de juliol de 2006 sota la consigna de *No tindrás una casa en la puta vida* congregà milers de persones arreu de l'Estat. Les convocatòries del 30 de setembre i del 23 de desembre de 2006 seguiren en la mateixa línia. Després, una certa resposta per part de les institucions (Llei d'Habitatge a Catalunya i ajuts al lloguer de Zapatero) empetití les convocatòries de 2007 i 2008. Però el moviment guanyà en extensió, descentralització i autoorganització. A part de V de Vivienda –nucli fundacional– sorgiren desenes de plataformes locals per l'Habitatge Digne, així com altres de temàtiques, com les Plataformes dels Afectats per la Violència Immobiliària (*mobbing*) o les PAH. També l'elaboració discursiva i les propostes concretes guanyaren en pes i solidesa.

L'evolució de la crisi de les hipoteques, la irrupció del 15-M i el repertori de protesta radical, solidari i democràtic, basat en aportar solucions a les

persones afectades, seran les claus de la pervivència i el creixement d'un d'aquests col·lectius, les PAH. A Barcelona, la PAH neix el febrer de 2009 a iniciativa de *V de Vivienda*. L'any 2013 ja hi havia 40 nuclis de les PAH a Catalunya i uns 130 a tot l'Estat espanyol. La generació d'eines d'empoderament de les persones afectades ha estat el secret del creixement d'aquest moviment associatiu que refusa l'assistencialisme i aposta per l'acció col·lectiva directa com a única sortida a la situació de les persones que estan en processos de desnonament.

El repertori d'acció col·lectiva de les PAH combina elements de negociació política amb les administracions i les entitats financeres, amb accions de pressió a entitats o persones, sobretot campanyes de boicot que afecten la imatge pública de les entitats o *escraches* a dirigents polítics.<sup>10</sup>

Les PAH també han utilitzat la via legal acudint als jutjats a defensar els hipotecats. I la via legislativa, amb la presentació d'una Iniciativa Legislativa Popular (ILP) per la dació en pagament. Aquesta ILP fou presentada amb més d'un milió i mig d'avalos populars. La seva tramitació -acceptada in extremis per un canvi de posició dels dos grans partits polítics del Parlament espanyol- suposà per sí sola el major impacte de tipus operatiu que ha tingut un moviment social en els darrers 20 anys. En tot cas, la ILP fou rebutjada per la majoria absoluta del PP.

Les PAH han aturat 600 desnonaments en quatre anys, la qual cosa demostra la seva eficiència com a mecanisme de suport mutu i la seva habilitat negociadora, que contrasta amb la posició més clarament contestatària i anticapitalista del moviment per l'okupació. La composició de les PAH és, d'altra banda, més plural que la del moviment okupa, destacant la presència de persones immigrades i de classe popular, juntament amb persones de classe mitja. Pel que fa a l'edat, les PAH presenten també una gran varietat, mentre que l'entorn okupa té una majoria juvenil.

Els reptes organitzatius que presenta el moviment per l'habitatge són enormes. Segons una de les seves portaveus més conegudes «no donem abast per respondre a tothom» (entrevista a Ada Colau, 2013).<sup>11</sup> A Catalunya el moviment ha crescut de forma més homogènia i organitzada que a la resta de l'Estat. Avui ja compta amb una trobada mensual de plataformes i una coordinadora. Cal tenir en compte que les PAH són un moviment de base, sense subvencions, autogenerat per persones afectades, amb mecanis-

10 *L'escrache* té el seu origen més recent en les pràctiques de desobediència civil no violenta activa del moviment argentí *Hijos*, per denunciar els genocides de la Dictadura que havien estat indultats pel Govern de Menem (Gradel, 2011).

11 Disponible a <http://www.vilaweb.tv/implicats-amb-ada-colau>.



mes d'autoformació col·lectiva. A Barcelona hi ha diferents reunions tots els vespres al carrer Enamorats, que s'ha quedat petit per acollir la demanda social. Accions per aturar desnonaments, per pressionar les entitats financeres i *escraches* formen part del seu repertori d'acció col·lectiva més disruptiu, i les que més l'emparenten amb les formes de fer del moviment per l'okupació.

A les PAH, en tant que moviment que ja es pot considerar de masses (la darrera manifestació del 16 de febrer de 2013 aplegà centenars de milers de persones a les principals capitals de tot l'Estat), se'ls hi interpel·la molt més que al moviment d'okupació per qüestions de regeneració democràtica i per la necessitat de vincles amb les lluites en defensa dels serveis públics. Ara bé, des de les PAH es fan anàlisis del problema de l'habitatge molt similars als que l'okupació porta plantejant 30 anys, tot i que a diferència d'aquest, es presenten a més de l'anàlisi, tota una sèrie de propostes possibilistes o reformistes.

Així doncs, les PAH coincideixen amb el moviment okupa en la definició del marc d'injustícia. Espanya és el país d'Europa que més habitatges buits té. Per a les PAH, en referència als pisos buits en mans d'entitats financeres, caldria prioritzar-ne l'ús social sobre l'ús especulatiu. Les PAH aposten pel lloguer social assequible, per un màxim del 30 % dels ingressos familiars. En canvi, les entitats nacionalitzades pel Fondo de Reestructuración Ordenada Bancaria (FROB) com Bankia i Catalunya Caixa segueixen executant i acumulant pisos buits. La Sareb (Sociedad de Gestión de Activos Procedentes de la Reestructuración Bancaria) o banc dolent, també té milers de pisos, que l'Estat està oferint a inversors estrangers per reactivar el cicle especulatiu. Les PAH demanen que aquests habitatges buits s'obrin al lloguer social. Davant de la situació d'emergència i la manca d'accions des de les polítiques públiques, les PAH donen suport a l'okupació d'immobles buits que pertanyen a les entitats financeres. I és aquí on l'okupació esdevé per a les PAH una acció legítima orientada a un fi, però no un fi en si mateix.

Finalment, una altra de les propostes de les PAH és la dació en pagament. Aquesta proposta és ja una realitat en molts casos gràcies a l'acció col·lectiva de les PAH. Ara bé, la dació en pagament negociada també provoca un desnonament voluntari a canvi de saldar el deute i aquesta població també ha de ser atesa, per la qual cosa no és una solució ni molt menys definitiva al problema (Colau i Alemany, 2013).

Per concloure, el salt definitiu a l'arena política institucional de la generació d'activistes que han animat moviments com el 15-M, les PAH i les mareas en defensa de la sanitat i educació públiques es produí amb la generalització

de candidatures ciutadanes municipalistes el maig de 2015. A Barcelona, la candidatura de confluència *Barcelona en Comú* seria encapçalada per la ex-portaveu de la PAH Ada Colau, mentre que a Madrid, la candidatura *Ahora Madrid*, portaria a les seves llistes nombrosos activistes de la PAH. El mateix es pot dir de centenars de candidatures arreu d'Espanya.

### 3. OKUPACIÓ I HABITATGE: SEMBLANCES I DIFERÈNCIES

Alguns autors han estudiat a altres països europeus les diferències teòriques i pràctiques entre ambdós moviments. Per a Pruijt (2003) caldrà distingir en tot moment entre un moviment per l'habitatge que utilitza la pràctica de l'okupació com a tàctica, d'un moviment okupa pel qual "squatting itself is at the centre". Segons Katz i Mayer (1983) diverses variables estructurals del propi moviment ens poden presentar les clares diferències entre un i altre moviment, que poden però coincidir i col·laborar en moltes ocasions.

En primer lloc, el predomini d'una ideologia de caire autònom, que considera que la creació d'antagonismes amb el poder establert és la clau del canvi social, serà dominant en el moviment okupa, conferint-li un caire eminentment polític. D'altra banda, l'ús de l'okupació –més enllà de satisfer necessitats materials d'habitatge– per expressar i crear contracultura, és també un element distintiu d'un moviment okupa resistent a la *cooptació*. En tercer lloc, el moviment okupa s'organitza sempre de manera informal, mentre que el moviment per l'habitatge compta amb estructures més formalitzades i líders visibles. Finalment, en el clàssic debat de l'okupació com mitjà o com a finalitat en si mateixa, el moviment okupa reconeix aquesta ambivalència i situa la seva pràctica com un mitjà per dur a terme una transformació social més àmplia, i com a finalitat en si mateixa, per la crítica frontal a la propietat (pilar del capitalisme) i les possibilitats de crear illes d'autonomia social i vital en els centres socials i cases okupades.

Aquesta concepció de l'okupació com a moviment ha predominat a l'Estat espanyol en els darrers trenta anys. Ara bé, altres experiències com la Masoveria Urbana<sup>12</sup> o el moviment per l'habitatge podrien obrir nous

12 Acords entre el propietari i els llogaters, mitjançant els quals el llogater fa millores en l'edifici a canvi de gaudir en períodes acordats per contracte de l'usdefruit de l'habitatge sense pagar una renda. Mataró fou la ciutat que comptà amb les primeres experiències mitjançant la tasca de l'associació Dret a Sostre (González, Peláez i Blas, 2002). La Llei del Dret de l'Habitatge de 2007, en el seu article 28, regulà la Masoveria de forma legal. Malgrat això no s'han fet molt extensius els contractes de Masoveria Urbana i es pot dir que només hi ha experiències aïllades a diverses poblacions de Catalunya, algunes d'elles impulsades per la Cooperativa Integral Catalana (Ribugent i Solanas, 2013).

escenaris a la negociació. Caldrà veure, però, si es resolen en *institucionalització* o *cooptació*, o si la dinàmica repressiva segueix sent la dominant, com fins ara.<sup>13</sup>

Dos models ideals de moviment en defensa de l'habitatge i de moviment okupa, podrien servir per distingir les estratègies negociadores de les de confrontació. També el tipus de relacions amb les institucions, els objectius, els models organitzatius o la pròpia concepció de l'okupació, com podem veure en el quadre següent.

**Quadre 1**  
**Diferències entre un moviment okupa i un moviment per l'habitatge**  
**(tipus ideals)**

	Moviment okupa	Moviment prohabitatge
Identitat	Forta, contracultural	Difusa, integrada
Relació amb institucions	Autonomia	Interlocució
Estratègia dominant	Confrontació	Disrupció/ negociació
Objectius	Anticapitalisme	Polítiques d'habitatge
Organització	Informal Activistes	Formalitzada Activistes + afectats
Concepció de l'okupació	Fi i mitjà	Mitjà per accedir a un habitatge
Composició per edats	Predomini generació jove	Intergeneracional

Font: Elaboració pròpia, a partir de Pruijt (2003).

En la pràctica no trobarem cap moviment que s'ajusti a aquests tipus ideals, i de vegades trobarem situacions on un moviment prohabitatge presenta característiques similars a les d'un moviment okupa. Aquest fou el cas de Barcelona l'any 2006, on un fort moviment per un habitatge digne apare-

<sup>13</sup> Els desallotjaments l'any 2014 de blocs de pisos de Salt i de Sabadell okupats per les respectives PAH locals, fan pensar que les administracions i els bancs segueixen tancats a la negociació, per la qual cosa la institucionalització o la cooptació semblen encara escenaris llunyans.

gué sense estructures formalitzades, ni estratègies que facilitessin l'establiment d'àmplies aliances socials, la qual cosa, per alguns autors, l'abocà al fracàs (Aguilar y Fernández, 2010: 679).

En tot cas, les oportunitats polítiques que obria el Pacte Nacional de l'Habitatge a Catalunya o els ajuts al lloguer juvenil arreu de l'Estat coincidiren temporalment amb el sorgiment –a Catalunya i a Madrid– d'un moviment per un habitatge digne, diferent del moviment per l'okupació. Aquest fet demostrà que el de les okupacions no és –ni pretén ser– un moviment exclusivament orientat cap a aquest aspecte de les polítiques públiques. El moviment per l'habitatge va tenir una gran incidència en l'organització de grans manifestacions de joves en favor del dret a l'habitatge a les principals ciutats de l'Estat espanyol. Amb la crisi de 2008 el moviment s'ha estès a altres capes socials, com els afectats per les hipoteques. Aquesta qüestió posa en evidència que el moviment per l'okupació a l'Estat espanyol no és, fonamentalment, un moviment per l'habitatge. De fet, caldria caracteritzar-lo com un moviment on hi conviuen motivacions polítiques de ruptura amb el sistema capitalista amb estratègies alternatives de cerca d'habitatge i d'espais de convivència.

D'altra banda, la radicalitat de les propostes okupes i el seu atac a la propietat privada han dificultat l'emmarcament del seu discurs en els marcs mestres hegemònics. En un context de dominació simbòlica neoliberal, el moviment per l'okupació tindrà greus dificultats per emmarcar els seus discursos. Però en canvi, el fort suport social del moviment dels indignats del 15-M o de les PAH obren un nou cicle de lluites centrat en demandes bàsiques contra el model neoliberal de gestió de la crisi i en favor d'una democràcia real, amb autonomia dels mercats i lliure de les corrupteles i de la indiferència de la classe política.

Al llarg d'aquests 30 anys, certs discursos del moviment per l'okupació han penetrat en les polítiques públiques i han eixamplat el menú d'alternatives possibles. Per exemple, podem trobar aquesta circumstància en els casos en els que hi ha hagut negociació o a través de la generalització i extensió de polítiques juvenils afirmatives (relacionades amb el lleure o la formació en el temps lliure). En tot cas, a l'Estat espanyol, les administracions públiques han estat lluny de ser permeables a la influència de moviments socials de caràcter autogestionari. De fet, les darreres tendències mostren un increment de la pressió policial i judicial contra les okupacions. En concret, el Senat espanyol va aprovar el juliol de 2010 una nova reforma del Codi Penal que incrementà les penes per usurpació. Al mateix temps, i amb la pretensió oficial de facilitar el lloguer en temps de crisi, el 2010 entrà en

vigor la Llei de mesures de foment i agilització del lloguer, que juntament amb les reformes de la Llei d'Enjudiciament Civil, aprovades el desembre de 2009, pretenen accelerar els desnonaments (Manrique, 2010).

Aquesta pressió legal i policial sobre les okupacions es produeix però en un context del seu creixement, en especial de les degudes a la pobresa. En concret, segons dades de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona, les okupacions havien crescut l'any 2009 en un 11,2 % per situar-se en un total de 249 a la ciutat (Manrique, 2010). Aquestes xifres mostren que les condicions socials, econòmiques i urbanes que van fer sorgir el fenomen de les okupacions no sols no han remés, sinó que s'han accentuat.

En aquest context, les perspectives del moviment per l'okupació es presenten ambivalents. Per una banda, el moviment es troba en el centre d'una espiral de criminalització; però, per l'altra, la pràctica de les okupacions s'ha estès com mai a altres moviments socials i a persones amb problemes d'accés a l'habitatge. A més a més, el creixement d'un moviment d'ateneus, centres socials legals i noves forces polítiques emergents afins a les okupacions, garanteixen que el moviment no quedarà aïllat. L'exemple més clar d'estratègies coincidents entre okupació i moviment per l'habitatge són les pròpies okupacions promogudes per la PAH.<sup>14</sup> D'altra banda, altres okupacions vinculades al 15-M desenvolupen projectes similars però desvinculats de la PAH.

Les PAH estan tenint forts impactes polítics i protagonisme en els darrers anys. Malgrat el seu perfil aparentment temàtic i moderat, estan aglutinant corrents polític partidaris de la regeneració democràtica i del canvi radical de sistema polític i econòmic. Les PAH afirmen sense embuts que cal fer fora del poder els responsables de la crisi i processar-los, ja que mentre hi ha impunitat no hi ha democràcia (entrevista a Ada Colau, 2013). Les PAH estan actuant com a moviment social generador de consciència col·lectiva i han sabut situar un marc d'injustícia<sup>15</sup> molt clar que ha connectat amb la majoria de la població. A partir d'aquest, les PAH han generat també un marc d'acció col·lectiva (Benford i Snow, 1994), és a dir, una disposició individual favorable a les accions promogudes contra els desnonaments per part d'un nombre significatiu de persones.

14 L'abril de 2013 hi havia vuit edificis a Catalunya okupats per l'*Obra Social la PAH*, tres a Sabadell, dos a Terrassa, un a Cerdanyola, un a Rubí i un a Girona. Les famílies pagaven un lloguer social i l'ingressaven davant notari en un compte per tal de demostrar la bona fe.

15 Sobre el concepte marc d'injustícia vegeu Gamson, Fireman i Rytina, 1982. Aquests autors defineixen els marcs com orientacions mentals que organitzen la percepció i la interpretació dels fenòmens socials.

La demanda de noves formes de democràcia participativa i la vinculació a un dret de tipus materialista com l'habitatge, aterren al moviment per l'habitatge dins l'opinió pública de forma més evident que amb el moviment per l'okupació. Les seves reivindicacions de caire "reformista" el situen més proper als marcs simbòlics<sup>16</sup> de la majoria dels ciutadans que no pas el radicalisme del moviment per l'okupació. L'aparició d'una nova fornada d'activistes urbans modernitza les vetustes formes del moviment veïnal. Tots aquests trets situen el moviment per l'habitatge com un moviment central en els cicles de mobilització i de lluita contra la gestió neoliberal de la crisi financera i per tant l'apropen -des de la pròpia pràctica i de forma paradoxal (o no)- als orígens anticapitalistes del propi moviment per l'okupació.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS PRELIMINARS

La primera conclusió quedarà com una qüestió oberta, pendent de posteriors estudis comparatius que comptin amb una major explotació de dades empíriques. Es tracta de veure si el moviment per l'habitatge que apareix a finals de la primera dècada del segle XXI constitueix una nova etapa de la història de les okupacions o bé s'ha d'abordar com un moviment separat i diferenciat del d'okupacions. En aquest article es demostra que el moviment d'okupacions o algunes de les seves components es troben en la gènesi del moviment per l'habitatge digne. El recorregut personal d'una de les seves portaveus més conegudes, Ada Colau, ens en dóna les pistes: *Miles de Viviendas*, l'ES Magdalenes, *V de Vivienda* i PAH.

També ha quedat clar que les diferències entre ambdós moviments són substantives en algunes dimensions analítiques: una identitat difusa i integrada del moviment per l'habitatge enfront d'una de contracultural més forta en el d'okupacions; una predisposició immediata a la negociació per part del moviment per l'habitatge i una estratègia més autònoma de les okupacions; uns objectius concrets centrats en les polítiques d'habitatge per part del primer i uns objectius més generals i que entronquen amb les tradicions polítiques més transformadores per part de l'okupació; una organització un tant més formalitzada i amb interlocutors coneguts i on també es pot distingir entre activistes i afectats, contrasten amb una organització informal, basa-

<sup>16</sup> Seguint Bourdieu (1991), podem afirmar que la PAH ha consolidat una forma de veure la política molt diferent ideològicament a la dels partits polítics convencionals. L'acció directa disruptiva en defensa d'un interès material com l'habitatge és percebuda com a legítima per amplis sectors socials.

da en el treball diari dels activistes –tot i que no és descartable cert lideratge carismàtic– en el món de les okupacions.

Finalment, tant moviment per l'habitatge com moviment okupa proposen una economia social i cooperativa que torni a posar al centre les necessitats de la població i no el fet de generar el màxim lucre. Es pot afirmar que –tot i que amb tàctiques i identitats diferents– la finalitat darrera d'ambdós moviments coincideix en què cal transformar radicalment el sistema, i més enllà de solucionar un problema de polítiques públiques d'habitatge, lligar la seva solució a un canvi més global del sistema econòmic i polític realment existent.

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# Democracy will never be the same again: 21st Century Protest and the Transformation of Politics

## *La democracia nunca volverá a ser igual: Las protestas del siglo XXI y la transformación de la política*

SIMON TORMEY

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY (AUSTRALIA)

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### Abstract

This paper looks at the current wave of protests and demonstrations and asks whether what we are witnessing is the emergence of a new movement against austerity and in favour of democracy, as many suggest. The wider context is the crisis of representative politics, which is in turn transforming the nature of mobilisation, contestation and politics more generally. In place of traditional organisational structures, we are seeing the emergence of cloud, swarm and connective initiatives with characteristics that challenge and supplant traditional organisational politics. We are seeing the emergence of a politics that is resistant to 'politicians' of whatever ideology, seeking to recuperate power and agency from representatives. This creates an interesting tension at the heart of democracy: whether and to what extent democracy needs to 'reboot' or whether new political parties and movements can ally the connective to representational styles of politics to provide a way in which democracy can evolve.

Keywords: democracy, protest, representation, activism

### Resumen

Este artículo examina la ola de protestas y manifestaciones, preguntándonos si, como muchos sugieren, lo que estamos presenciando es el surgimiento de un nuevo movimiento contra la austeridad y a favor de la democracia. El contexto político está marcado por una generalizada crisis de la política representativa, hecho que a su vez marca la transformación de la naturaleza de la movilización, de la contestación y de la política en general. Estamos presenciando el surgimiento de iniciativas con características *cloud*, *swarm* y conectivas que desafían y suplantán a las estructuras organizativas tradicionales. En la actualidad está emergiendo una forma de política que es resistente a los "políticos" de cualquier tipo de ideología y que trata de recuperar el poder de los representantes. Esto crea una tensión interesante en el corazón de la democracia: si, y en qué medida, la democracia necesita 'resetearse' o si los nuevos partidos y los nuevos movimientos políticos pueden aliar lo conectivo a estilos de

representación política capaces de proporcionar una manera en la que la democracia pueda evolucionar.

Palabras clave: democracia, protestas, representación, activismo

## INTRODUCTION

Since 2011 and the extraordinary events of the Arab Spring we have, it seems, entered a new phase of protest, revolt and rebellion (Castells, 2012; Mason, 2013). There will be debates about the degree to which the date itself is significant in terms of providing a marker for developments that have their origin in deep-lying phenomena. However, there seems to be a degree of consensus amongst interested commentators that the events around the Arab Spring resonated with sufficient force to provoke a ripple effect in terms of sparking rebellions, protests and insurrections across the world. The symbolic occupation of space associated with Tahrir Square quickly became emblematic of a kind of citizen activism then witnessed in Spain, in Occupy Wall Street, in the Pots and Pans Protests in Iceland, and more recently in public occupations and protests in Turkey, Bulgaria, Thailand, Brazil, Hong Kong and many other locations besides.

It is one thing to note outbursts of citizen disaffection, but what are the longer-term ramifications of such actions for democracy? To what degree are these otherwise separate events tied together in 'a movement'? Are today actions a movement against austerity? Or are they to be read as a movement in favour of democracy? Or are they just the latest manifestation of citizens' disapproval of what elites do in their name? A movement implies some sort of coalescence of ends and objectives. It implies a sharing of perspective. It also implies some singularity as far as organisation is concerned. A movement implies some minimal unity, either of purpose or affect or goal. How then might we think about this current phase *as a movement*? What would be its common features? And assuming that we can describe these protests on such terms, what are the implications for politics generally and democracy in particular? Where is this 'movement' - if such it be - taking us?

### 1. THE PATTERN OF REVOLT

Let's consider, firstly, some of the obvious ways in which these events are linked. Several points seem to suggest themselves:

1. *Object: A revolt against 'politicians'* - the aspects of these protests that stands out is the contempt, anger and hatred expressed towards representatives or politicians (Mason, 2013). The Arab Spring had its origins in deep disaffection and mistrust of local elites across North Africa, culminating in the overthrow of the Egyptian Prime Minister. The accusation was that elites had become corrupt and indifferent to the needs of ordinary people. This in turn led to street protests and occupations as the logical as well as symbolic expression of people's outrage. With 'nowhere else to go', the street and squares become the setting for the expression of these frustrations. This gesture resonated in Spain, which has similarly endured a crisis of legitimacy brought about by corruption, cronyism and clientelism exercised by the two main political parties. Events in Iceland were sparked by evidence of collusion between politicians and bankers that led to the Icelandic state going bankrupt, and with it losing the savings and pensions of many citizens. Occupy Wall Street was a response to the incompetence and self-serving of 'the 1%' or elites considered in general terms to include both bankers and politicians. In Turkey the protests were triggered by the insensitivity of local politicians to objections to an inappropriate development at Taksim Square. Around the world, politicians are in the firing line - as signalled not just by revolt but by the rise of populist movements dedicated to overturning 'bureaucracy', 'waste', and the corruption of elites.
2. *Context: A revolt against austerity* - the global financial crisis of 2008 unleashed unprecedented cutbacks in public spending across both the developed and developing world. It was ordinary people who paid for the incompetence of politicians and the quasi-criminal activities of bankers who gambled with the deposits and livelihoods of their own often unsuspecting clients and then went running to the taxpayer as their institutions went bust. With public finances in trouble so measures have been imposed to cut back on welfare, public services, education and benefits to the detriment of the very poorest elements of society. The focus of much public activity in Spain for example has been to roll back these measures. Groups such as *La Plataforma de Afectados por las Hipotecas* (PAH) have sprung up to defend mortgagees against the actions of banks seeking to repossess properties (Feenstra and Keane, 2014). In Greece an extensive network of direct action groupings, citizens solidarity initiatives, protests and demonstrations has characterised civil society over the past decade. Across Eu-

rope citizens have protested and revolted against the harsh measures imposed by governments.

3. *Capacity: New weapons of the weak* - one of the most commented-upon aspects of the current phase of revolt is the role played by ICT and social media technologies (Christensen, 2011; Morozov, 2012; Hill, 2013). There's a high degree of consensus that Twitter and Facebook amongst other technologies were an important factor in the spread of protests across the Arab speaking world in 2011. The evidence is even clearer in Spain where the initial event that precipitated the current unrest, the occupation of squares on 15 May 2011, was created through hashtags and callouts involving minimal organisation by existing groups or political parties (Anduiza *et al.*, 2013; Postill, 2013; Toret, 2013). Occupy was a phenomenon that owed its extensive take up across the world to ICT. What is becoming clearer is the degree to which these technologies facilitate mobilisation and organisation without the need for the infrastructure previously regarded as essential to the successful development of initiatives: leadership structures, funding, officials and so forth. Sometimes it just takes a suggestive hashtag or photo capturing the particular mood or anger of citizens can resonate and create the basis for a significant mobilisation. Whether it provides the basis for something more substantial is perhaps one of the most hotly-debated topics in social movement literatures; but it is clear that ICT is changing the nature and potential of organisational politics in a dramatic way.

For our purposes, it is important to bear in mind the particular kind of politics that ICT or Twitter-led mobilisation provokes because this will give us an insight into the particular kind of 'movement' that we are describing. Assuming that it makes sense to speak about these initiatives as being part of a movement, then it is worth thinking further about the characteristics they display. We can summarise them in terms of their being:

- *Acephelous* - or 'leaderless'. The particular aspect that unites developments since 2011 is that they were triggered by ordinary citizens or activists who remained largely anonymous as events unfolded. Whilst it might be possible to identify certain activists, factions or groupings who initiate an event such as 15M, it is *the event itself* that becomes the focus rather than the people who initiated it. The events took on a life of their own and gave rise to a largely spontaneous form of poli-

tics focused on occupation, the creation of assemblies and other kinds of deliberative structures. The Arab Spring, through the events in Spain to Occupy were largely movements from below unaided and unassisted by existing organisations or leaders. This contrasts with more traditional political initiatives usually characterised by an identifiable leadership group. Political organisations have usually succeeded on the ability of the leadership to articulate demands that then attract a following to it. Event based and episodic revolts do not display classic movement characteristics as this has usually been thought about: appointed leaders, a clear division of labour, a ‘head’ and a ‘body’ in a relatively fixed formation.

- *Non-programmatic* – What also unites these actions is that they have their origin in an immediate reaction to a particular political and economic context rather than being a product of planning or organisation in the name of a particular ideology or programme. But of equal significance is the degree to which once created the occupations and assemblies resisted the call to *develop* a programme, demands, a manifesto. This has been an immense frustration to high profile leftists such as Slavoj Žižek, Alain Badiou and Jodi Dean who would like to see these movements develop a set of demands around which opinion could coalesce and which could then form the basis for a strategy to contest power – a ‘counter-hegemonic bloc’, to deploy Gramsci. But what seems to be the case is that the participants in these events rightly or wrongly associated such an approach with an *exclusionary* form or style of politics. This resistance to the development of a programme has not in this sense been haphazard or accidental. It has been the result of collective deliberation amongst participants. The view of participants at events such as 15M and Occupy has been that the development of demands or a programme would quickly lead to the development of a conventional political organisation or party – which would enthuse and mobilise some, but not *all*. The participants clearly wished to avoid such an outcome, and in turn avoid gestures that split the initiative into as it were believers and non-believers, leaders and led. In this sense they enact a kind of anti-politics associated with the perspectives of those such as Subcomandante Marcos and John Holloway who see the function of insurgent initiatives such as these as creating political *possibility*, not an end project or blueprint (Marcos, 2001; Holloway, 2002).

- *Non/anti-representative* - In light of the above, this is a movement that at one level *resists representation* or the apparatus of representative politics as that has long been thought about. None of these initiatives or events have so far given rise to a traditional movement or political party. Some of them have come and gone leaving little in the way of permanent memorial. In Spain for example, what we observe is some of those identifying with 15M creating political organisations, but of a new kind. Some of them such as Podemos and Party X reject the traditional hierarchy of political parties with clear leaderships and a standing bureaucracy in favour of the use of electronic Peer-2-Peer and Twiki technologies facilitating an interchange between activists. Other parties style themselves as protest parties, seeing their role exclusively in terms of humiliating the political class or making the case for a 'second transition' to a more democratic and proportional system of elections. None of these new political parties represent the *Indignados* as such. As is often stated by the parties themselves, the *Indignados* cannot be represented without losing what *Indignados* means: the description of all those who are angry or 'pissed off'. The parties are better characterised as an *extension of protest*, an extension of 'the street', or what is more the same, new tools for developing weapons in the struggle against elites. They are seeking to keep alive the spirit of direct and immediate participation by anyone who shares the conviction that the present misery needs to be resisted. That they take the form of political parties is more testament to the ease with which it is possible to create parties that are flatter, less hierarchical, or less like traditional parties in structure. The point should be clear: in Spain and elsewhere citizens are seeking ways of protesting, resisting, that evade the exclusionary character of politics as this has been practised hitherto (Feenstra, 2015). They seek open, participatory and deliberative mechanisms whether physical or virtual in which ordinary people can recuperate some sense of voice and value rather than being spoken for by others.

So any talk of the current phase of protest as tantamount to the emergence of a new movement has to be made with caution. None or very few of the characteristics that we associate with social and political movements would seem to be present in anything other than a rather superficial sense. Indeed we might go further: these are protests and revolts that display a unity *only in relation to the unwillingness of participants to develop*



*party or movement characteristics*. They self-consciously avoid leadership, clear demands, manifestos, bureaucracy, offices, external funding. This gives witness to the emergence of a politics that is *anti-* and *non-representative*. Before asking ourselves where all this might be heading and what it means for democracy, it is I think useful to link these developments to a consideration of the wider political context in which they are taking place: the crisis of representative politics (Tormey, 2015).

## 2. REPRESENTATION – WHAT’S HAPPENING?

The preoccupation of today’s activists with avoiding representative practices looks curious until we set in the context of what is happening elsewhere in mainstream as well as street politics. Considering the former it is difficult to avoid concluding that we are dealing with a much more generalised phenomenon that penetrates the nature of politics more generally. Consider the following four variables:

- *The decline of participation in elections* – Across the ‘advanced democracies’ we are witnessing a marked decline in engagement in electoral politics (Dalton, 2004; Hay, 2007). The long-term trend since the 1960s suggests that only presidential elections and general elections - in parliamentary systems - show signs of staying-off decline. Yet even here the 60% turnout achieved by for example US presidential elections illustrates the problem starkly. 40% of electors cannot or will not engage in a process that takes a matter of minutes of their time. In Europe the long-term trend is also clear: fewer citizens are voting with the exception of moments of crisis when they perceive that there is something important at stake, as for example in Italy in 2013. Take ‘crisis’ away, and citizens are becoming increasingly inclined to ignore the spectacle. Elections at the supranational and subnational levels show the nature of the problem in even greater relief. The recent European elections attracted around 30% of citizens in European countries or one citizen in three. And it was populist, protest and ‘anti-political’ parties who made the furthest advances. This of course is itself a symptom of a failing system, not a source of hope or salvation for representative politics (Alonso, 2014).
- *The decline in membership of traditional political parties* - Recent data from Europe shows the precipitous decline of membership in

political parties over the past half-century (Mair and Van Biezen, 2001; Van Biezen *et al.*, 2012). Where once the major political parties were able to attract between 30% of the voting population, now that figure is often below 10%, and in some cases such as the UK heading for 1 or 2%. Given that political parties play a crucial transmission role between citizens and representatives, this is bad news for those who regard liberal democracy as the best means achieved so far to ensure that representation engages citizens directly and immediately in their daily lives and not just during periods of elections. However, citizens are turning their backs on traditional political parties – particularly traditional left parties such as PSOE, PSOK, Labour, and the SPD – and by extension on the means by which they used to be able to have some say in the political process. The result is that parties increasingly turn to business in order to find the means of keeping themselves going. It also means that they become progressively less sensitive to the needs of their own memberships, in turn reinforcing the impression that the leadership of political parties cares little for ordinary party activists. Politicians are becoming ‘executive’ style figures, competing with each other on the basis of their ability to speak directly to electors via the media. ‘Style over substance’ has become the watchword for today’s politics.

- *The decline of trust in politicians* - Where once politicians were regarded as public servants, now they are regarded as figures who serve narrow sectional interests not the public interest. A recent nationwide survey in Australia shows the depth of the problem (Goot, 2002; Markus, 2013). Only 4% of those who were asked to respond to the question ‘do you trust the politicians?’ responded without equivocation. The majority answered negatively. Similarly, when citizens were asked to rank professions in the order to which they could be trusted, the response was that politicians ranked lowest of all and behind the usual scapegoats such as lawyers, real-estate agents and second-hand car salesman. As already noted, the stock of today’s crop of politicians has never been lower – as reconfirmed through multiple iterations of longitudinal survey data such as Eurobarometer, the World Values Survey as well as discrete country studies such as that referred to above. The data is not uniform, in that there are areas of the world that show slower declines than others (as in Denmark for example); but overall the impression statistically and discursively is increasingly to query the integrity of and need for politicians. Indeed, the very term ‘politi-

cian' has become a byword for sleaze, corruption and self-interest. It is no surprise then that today's movements seek to distance themselves from the inheritance of 'the politician'. Where leadership figures do emerge, they display very different virtues to those associated with traditional politicians. For example in Spain the popularity of Ada Colau and Sister Teresa Forcades can be traced in good measure to their distance from the traditional figure of the politicians. Both are 'anti-political' figures. Colau is a street activist working with PAH to highlight the iniquities enjoyed by ordinary people faced with repossession of their home. Forcades is a nun who by nature of her professional commitment disavowed the trappings of power to defend the poor and needy. It would be difficult to imagine figures who are less like today's politicians and elites.

- *Interest in and knowledge of mainstream politics* - Notwithstanding the fact that we live in highly politicised times, the decline of interest in 'high politics', that is the politics of our elected representatives had never been so marked (Flinders, 2012). Where once serious newspapers carried many pages of commentary on parliamentary and presidential proceedings, now the focus on 'infotainment'. TV and radio programmes devoted to scrutinising and examining politics that once occupied a prime-time position, are relegated to 'the graveyard slot', code for late-nights, early Sunday mornings – or they have been moved to obscure and little watched TV channels (A-PAC, The Parliamentary Channel, and so on). Amongst even the most politically literate part of the population the activities of our representatives attracts contempt rather than interest. By contrast, some of the great success stories in terms of mobilising young people have been online initiatives such as Avaaz.org and GetUp.org (Vromen, 2003). The common denominator in initiatives such as these is that they focus on particular issues which then become the subject of an extensive online campaign. They do so without representatives and representation, instead trading on crowd power: the ability of large numbers of people acting together to generate a response from the elites. This is symptomatic of how politics is moving. Many young people are no longer interested in the electoral process or in the activities of their representatives. They are passionate about a particular issue such as climate change, or the fate of a particular species, or sweatshop labour. Issues such as these do not translate into the kind of political engagement that is easily captured by traditional media focusing on the activities in the nation's capitals.

Little wonder then that, as it often appears, young people seem ‘apathetic’ or ‘switched off’. If what we mean by these terms is an interest in mainstream electoral politics then that may be true. But as my comments indicate, there is more to the story than this. Much more.

However we think about the health of representative politics it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the crisis is permanent rather than temporary. But why is this? What are the drivers of the underlying change that we are witnessing in the advanced democracies?

This is a complex and highly contested question, and one that only elicits a lot of head scratching amongst interested commentators. But what I would add is the degree to which this collapse in the attractiveness and credibility of representative politics is not limited to official or mainstream political processes. It is something that is quite observable across a broad range of political phenomenon, whether it be the emergence of an anti-representational discourse in the Zapatista insurgency or the similarly non-representative Charter of the World Social Forum, perhaps the most discussed product of the last phase of revolt before this one – the anti-globalisation movement (Sen, 2004; Tormey, 2006).

Clearly there is something going on that takes us beyond disaffection with mainstream politics. There is a major shift or transformation underway in the nature of political subjectivity such that representation, the practice of being represented or representing others, has become something to be avoided, resisted, negated. When we think back to the vital role that representation has played in terms of the development of movements such as socialism and communism, and also the role it continues to play in many parts of the world where poverty is politically disabling, this is a remarkable phenomenon. It is also a highly complex one where caution is needed before proceeding. Nevertheless I want to offer a few observations about what I think this means and where it is heading for our purposes.

### 3. WHAT’S THE MATTER WITH REPRESENTATIVE POLITICS?

Representative politics is in historical terms the product of the early modern imagination (Manin, 1997; Brito Viera and Runciman, 2008). The first theorist to discuss representation as intrinsic to the legitimacy of the sovereign was Thomas Hobbes writing in the middle of the 17th century. Representation as a political practice and the means by which societies

came to democratise themselves is a phenomenon of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It is associated with the emergence of collective identities and in particular class, nationality and ideology. Under each of these headings citizens were encouraged to see themselves as part of some larger aggregate identity that could be represented whether in the form of a political party, a nation-state or a political movement. The politics of the period resonated strongly with calls to these identities as the basis of mobilisation: «Power to the people!»; «Workers of the world unite!», «We hold these truths to be self-evident...»; «Man was born free, yet everywhere is in chains». We could go on.

The important dimension of representative politics was that ordinary people felt the need and desire *to be represented*. They identified with the signifiers and felt that they were included in the proclamations and discourse of those who would represent. What is becoming clearer is that this process of identity formation is becoming more difficult, less complete, more problematic. Globalisation promotes a different dynamic, one that is highly disruptive of the formation of collective or aggregate identities. To take class as one example, where under Fordist conditions it was clear who the workers were, what their shared interests are, and equally who the managers were and what their interests were, under post-Fordist conditions such distinctions of position, power and privilege become blurred. Earlier industrial processes based around factories, mines, and mass production are giving way to varieties of affective labour that complexifies class formation. The neat distinctions of class that are so clarifying in political terms have given way a dominant ideology that insists that we can advance through hard work, determination and ‘positive thinking’. Class politics has been in decline and along with it the hopes of those who see politics in terms of the defence of the needs and interests of the poorest elements in society. One of the victims of the ebbing of representative politics has been social democratic parties whose rationale was to defend the working class from the more rapacious aspects of contemporary capitalism. And yet social democratic parties have suffered the same fate as all the rest: decline, exhaustion and slump.

It is not just class identity that has fragmented under the pressure of changes associated with globalisation, it is also national and ethnic identities. A key feature of globalisation is transnational migration caused by wars, climate change, economic opportunity, collapsing forms of governance, decolonisation, and so on. The accelerating movement of peoples, particularly towards the metropolitan spaces is deeply disruptive of the formation and

maintenance of clear and distinct identities around which representation and representational politics rotates (Sassen, 2006). What seems more to be the case is that second and third generations develop novel and hybrid kinds of identity that induce a perception of 'newness' that is difficult to capture in representational terms. This doesn't prevent states from trying to bolster a sense of national identity or 'patriotism' in multicultural citizens. Many states spend huge sums of money trying to generate that sense of common identity they believe to be essential to maintain community and a sense of common purpose. With mixed results, it has to be said.

When combined with another facet of our contemporary world, communicative abundance, it is clear that subjects have access to such a plethora of kinds and forms of information that seeking to bring this multiplicity back into a unified political subject is becoming an ever more demanding exercise. The metropolitan space is characterised by a high degree of individualisation (or 'personalisation' as this phenomenon is also termed) in which subjects perceive themselves to be the authors of their own destiny as opposed to being tied to the collective fate of a particular identity or group. This, too, is part of the modern imaginary, and arguably serves the needs and purposes of capitalists better than it does their critics. As long as individuals are defined in terms of differentiation by consumer preferences, then of course it can be recuperated by capitalism in a way that is self promoting. If by 'individualisation' is meant choosing a pair of Nikes, as opposed to a pair of Adidas, then there is obviously no threat to the *status quo*. However, the story is more complicated than that. Individualisation can also inform and promote a kind of *reflexivity* towards received truths and inherited institutions and practices (Beck *et al.*, 1994). It's partly for this reason that commentators such as Robert Putnam are so wary of the modernising tendencies that underpin the process of individualisation. He would prefer us to be tied into a pattern of activity and identity associated with our parents and grandparents, a kind of embedding in local community structures that can be trusted to produce docile and obedient subjects (Putnam, 1995).

Reflexive subjects on the other hand would seem to be far from docile or obedient. They are, on the contrary, questioning, critical, demanding of authority, politicians, states. Gone it seems is the aura of authority no matter where it is located – and not just in politics. The aura of doctors is challenged by access to mountains of information over the Internet against which to check their prognosis and prescriptions. The aura of university lecturers is challenged by students with access to the very same sources and materials as lecturers themselves. We live in a world where individuals in-

creasingly feel themselves to be sources of authority on whatever it is they take an interest in. The Internet has provided an infinite amount of knowledge, encouraging the perception that the division of labour between those who 'know' and those who don't, those who lead and those who follow, is redundant (Shirkey, 2009). Professionals and those enjoying positional authority have seen their power base wither. The monopoly on knowledge, insight, wisdom - once taken for granted by intellectuals - is disappearing. Individualisation at this level represents a certain self empowerment, and one that makes us reluctant to cede voice, influence, power to others. Individualisation is corrosive of the very rationale that prompted support for political parties, trade unions and other bodies created to represent others: the need to empower *someone else* to pursue collective needs and interests. That ideology or imaginary is rapidly dissolving in the acid bath of individualisation.

#### 4. THE POLITICS OF INDIVIDUALISATION

It is a common assumption amongst sociologists interested in the impact of individualisation to draw pessimistic conclusions about the impact of these developments on politics. Individualisation at one level represents *individualism*, or the pursuit of my own needs and desires to the exclusion of consideration for others (Bauman, 2001). There is certainly an element of truth in the suggestion. However, concluding that individualisation necessarily results in such outcomes needs to be treated with caution. As is now well documented, individualisation can also be the basis for collective action, albeit of a novel kind. One of the most eye-catching developments in recent years has been the growth of ethical consumerism or ethical shopping (Micheletti, 2003). This is using the power of the consumer to generate better outcomes for otherwise exploited groups often located in the developing world or in the poorer parts of society. Through the use of boycotts or buy-cotts consumers, so it is held, can exercise a significant degree of influence over corporations, supermarkets and other actors in the marketplace.

This is a mild iteration of what is now termed 'swarm logic' or the power of 'the crowd' (Howe, 2008; Miller, 2010). Swarms and crowds obey a different logic to those engaged in representative politics where there is a natural distinction between those who represent, the active part, and those who are represented, who are the passive or *pacified* part. Individuals engaged in swarm politics are themselves actors. More than this they are not directed

by someone, but rather part of an ecology that is itself without direction from above or anywhere else for that matter.

This sense of a collectivity that obeys its own logic is attractive to political theorists seeking a style or manner of acting 'beyond' or 'after' representation. To take an obvious example, Hardt and Negri evoke such a politics in their idea of the multitude as the subject of a contemporary radical praxis (Hardt and Negri, 2004). They look forward to the time when 'the multitude' is able to govern itself without the need for representatives or interlocutors. Their account is informed by a vision of biopolitical production that sets great store by the potentiality of technology to erase the need for intermediaries. It's a demand that is on the rise in the contemporary political context as activists latch onto the potentiality of P2P networking and other technologies that promote self-activity and direct participation (Toret, 2013).

It is difficult not to conclude that there is a certain romanticism at work in imagining that technology will enable the development of a kind of transparent self-governance of the kind promoted by Hardt and Negri. Crowd or swarm logic is best conceptualised in terms of the performance of relatively simple actions: the initiation of an occupation, a protest against a parliament, acts of self defence against police or military brutality and so on (Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 2000). They are thus best conceptualised in terms of an *evanescent* style of politics. Crowds and swarms are summoned quickly for a relatively simple or straightforward purpose, and disappear once that purpose has been fulfilled or the rationale completed. The more complex the terrain, the more complex the variables in terms of decision-making, the greater the need becomes for quasi-permanent institutionalisation, structures, accountability, constitutions. As we see in the unfolding occupations in Spain, the swarm like logic that initially brought people onto the streets quickly developed a different dynamic, that of the deliberative assembly (Castañeda, 2012). Once decisions had to be made, so differences of opinion and perspective required procedure, deliberative norms around participation, voting mechanisms and so forth. In short, swarm-like behaviour quickly developed into what we might term *politics*, or the management of dissensus.

Equally significant in terms of how these events and initiatives have unfolded is the resistance to generating representative structures and procedures. As we have already remarked, very few of the events and initiatives that we have been documenting gave rise to representatives or to representative bodies – even if one of their purposes is to call for greater repre-



sentation, a second transition, a recall of Parliament. In this sense the individualised character of these revolts is clear to see. Over and again we notice the reluctance of participants in these events to nominate others to speak for them. We notice rather a clear preference for direct democratic and deliberative procedures that preserve the integrity of each singular voice within the initiative. We notice the hostility towards the development of bureaucracies, standing officers and officialdom, majoritarian voting practices and all the other paraphernalia associated with representative politics. These are eruptions of a highly individualised kind, but whose character is the generation of political procedures that seek to be participatory, consensual and deliberative – or *genuinely collective*. Of course not all of these initiatives lived up to these expectations. Perhaps none of them did or have done so to date. But the point is they often have a *prefigurative* aspect to them in the sense of embodying an ideal or vision of democracy sharply at odds with the practice of actually existing representative democracy. In other words many of these movements and revolts carried within them an immanent and sometimes quite explicit critique of representation and representative democracy whilst at the same time pointing towards other kinds of democracy felt to be more authentic or in the expression of the Spanish protesters ‘real’ – as in *Real Democracia Ya*.

So returning to the earlier problematic, I don’t think that the emergence of an individualised politics necessarily equates to the kind of introspective, narcissistic or self-interested politics that is often assumed in the commentary. What it does equate to is the rejection of what for the past 200 years has been the standard form that politics has taken: a political party with a clear programme or manifesto seeking to represent the needs and interests of a particular group, class, nationality or ethnicity. What is becoming clear is that whatever future there is for the political party lies in it rejected the vertical logic formerly associated with political parties, which is to say a more or less sharply differentiated division of labour between party leaders and the rest. Political parties can and will survive, but only on the basis that they become flatter, more horizontal and better able to engage interested individuals as part of a collective and participatory ecology (Hughes, 2011; Gautney, 2012).

The emergence of Podemos and Syriza is of course an interesting test of the hypothesis: ‘street’ parties that are able to combine both a coherent ‘vertical’ or populist face to the electorate with a sense of engagement for activists who might otherwise be directing their energies to more avowedly horizontal or ‘connective’ initiatives. It’s a difficult trick to pull off, though

perhaps vital if the insurgent styles of anti-austerity, pro-democracy activisms on display are to leverage institutional and political change in the short and medium term. However, theirs is a very different mission and 'politics' to that of the traditional left parties they seem to be supplanting (PSOE, PSOK). Gone the accent on building membership, capacity, funding for the long slow deliberative assault on elections, the cronyism and careful manipulation of delegates at the party conference and so on. Replaced by a politics of excitement, immediacy, connectedness that speaks directly to the politics of the streets and squares from where many of their voluble supporters have come from.

There will be leftists out there who say that socialist and communist parties have more or less approximated this form since the early debates in the first working men's international. Yet the history of party politics offers mixed evidence. Examples of *really* inclusive political parties have been few and far between. But ICT is undeniably a game changer. It offers the prospect of much greater interactivity, transparency and participation that has hitherto been possible – for new and old parties. At the same time this high degree of porosity and transparency creates other kinds of issues for activists to overcome. In the past the success and failure of political parties has often traded on the credibility of those chosen to lead it. The successful parties of the past two centuries were led by charismatic or exemplary individuals able to mobilise ordinary people at election time as well as activists between elections. Will the new political parties, the new political organisations feel the need to invest in leader figures, in populist strategies and tactics? And if they do, will this alienate those whose political instincts lead them to reject representatives and represented politics? These are not just hypothetical questions. They get to the heart of the issues facing activists in Spain, Greece, Turkey and elsewhere where the initial energy of street politics has given rise to opportunities to advance in electoral terms as well as in terms of the swarm or crowd.

## 5. WHERE IS THE MOVEMENT NOW?

Before answering this question directly, it might be useful to rehearse the central components of the argument offered here. What I have been suggesting is that to understand the current phase of revolt and rebellion requires us to step back and take a larger view of what is happening in the political field. What I noted was the similarity between the various revolts around the

world in terms of a rejection of the traditional structures associated with representation and representational politics in favour of immediate and direct action - greatly facilitated by ICT. We then went on to note that this is consonant with the wider crisis of representation playing out to greater or lesser degree across representative democracies. Whilst many commentators insist that this crisis is located in short-term or contingent factors such as the politics of austerity or recession, in my view it is consonant with larger changes in the nature of modernity. This is the modernity of nation states, of discrete territorial entities enjoying sovereignty over their affairs, and presiding over a relatively homogenous ethnic or national group. Globalisation is highly disruptive of this pattern of political affinity and identity. It is also highly disruptive of sovereignty and territoriality, which in turn have been the basis of contemporary governance. More broadly, modernity also equates to individualisation, or the adoption of modes and patterns of behaviour that escape categorisation in terms of collective identities. Individualisation is thus corrosive of representation and representative politics.

I would argue that the revolts and rebellions that we see around Europe and indeed the world have in common their rejection of the logic of representative politics and representation more generally. This often means that they are seen as *anti-political* gestures, a rejection of politics and democracy. I think the opposite is true. What unites many of these initiatives is the realisation that representation is being used as a cover for the domestication and emasculation of politics for the benefit of the few, or the 1%. Where once there seemed some credibility to the idea that politicians spoke for us, and on our behalf, that credibility has increasingly waned if it has not disappeared altogether, hence the resonant power of contemporary slogans such as «We are the 99%» and «Real Democracia Ya» – in their own quintessential representative slogans – but at another angle anti-representative, particularly when it comes to thinking about what representative politics has become: the politics of the 1%. The figure of the politician has instead become a proxy for a kind of zombie-fication of politics, a politics that seems to be ‘full of life’, but is instead better understood as a parasitic body sucking the life and energy out of communities (Giroux, 2011). But rather than turn to other kinds of politician, to revolutionary leaders or heroic figures, what is noteworthy in the current conjuncture is the manner by which these initiatives have set their face against renewing the parties, trade unions and traditional organisations did the job of representing us. It is as if the tenor of political action has undergone a paradigm shift away from the preoccupation with generating new representative bodies, figures, claims towards a «connective

politics», a politics of networks, swarms, collectives, occupations, prefigurations (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). Politics is undergoing a Gestalt shift. This still leaves the question of where all this is going.

As is clear then, in looking at present revolts, rebellions, protests we are not describing a movement of a traditional kind. Far from it, we are describing a rhizomatic movement *against* traditional ‘politics’ including the traditional oppositional politics (Deleuze and Guattari 1988). What we are seeing is the rejection of the preoccupation with programmes, manifestoes and such like towards what we might call a *resonant* form of politics where the object is less the promotion of a singular ideal about how we should live so much as the recuperation of political agency and political space. In doing so these movements and revolts remind us how far contemporary political practices have moved from the ideal of democracy as the affair of ‘anyone and everyone’. It reminds us that representative democracy was born not as a mechanism for permitting us to govern ourselves, but as J.S. Mill reminds us, as a means of preventing us from being ‘misgoverned’ (Mill, 1972). Mill’s quote reminds us that the origins of representative democracy bear their trace in the desire of those already in power to prevent ‘tyranny of the majority’ or what might ordinarily be regarded as democracy (Manin, 1997). From this point of view democracy is not a first order quality of contemporary political systems, but a second order means for ensuring that property and privilege remain intact. Democracy has long been regarded by liberal elites as a provisional and contingent virtue, and one that could only be justified insofar as it permitted accumulation, dispossession and acquisition of further wealth. Quite simply, representative democracy has been the hand-aid for capitalist globalisation.

Just as the dream of constant expansion crashed and burned in financial crisis, so the dream of democracy as a Schumpeterian ‘rotation of elites’ has crashed and burned in the profligacy, corruption and heartless self-serving of today’s politicians. Many of today’s revolts and rebellions, though born of economic discontent, nevertheless carry an important political message. This is that the era of the politician as privileged actor-expert working on our behalf is over. The era of the recuperation of political power and agency by individuals acting together collectively is just beginning. So the irony is that just at the moment when media dominated elites want to tell us that these protests and revolts are a threat to democracy as ‘anti-politics’, the reality would seem to be the reverse: they are movements that articulate in direct, and increasingly visceral terms, the desire of many ordinary people to

exercise greater control over the world in which they live and not to be subject to a far-removed political and economic class.

So perhaps democracy as a concept is coming full circle. As Ranciere reminds us, democracy used to mean a raucous, noisy resonant politics that engaged everyone (Rancière, 2006). So determined were the Greeks to operationalise this idea of rule by anyone and everyone that they insisted that democratic office holding be allocated on the basis of *lot*, thereby undercutting the possibility for elites to exercise domination over the *demos*. But it was Plato and those who, as Ranciere puts it, 'hate' democracy who won the day, devising a mechanism whereby our interests and needs could act as proxies for direct participation and deliberation in common affairs. In challenging rejecting representative styles and modes of politics, the politics of the 'politicians', today's revolts are not just a negation – of governance, representatives, organised politics – they evince a *democratic* sensibility: the demand of ordinary people to count, to be heard, to participate. Today's revolts are not a challenge to democracy – they *are* democracy. Its by no means ironic that the epicentre for this new style of politics: a raucous, 'unruly' politics in which 'the demos' appears as both subject and object of politics seems to find its fullest voice in Greece – home of the democracy of «anyone and everyone».

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## Reseñas de libros

**Amartya Sen (2010): *La idea de la Justicia*, Madrid, Santillana Ediciones Generales, Madrid. Reseñado por Martha Rodríguez Coronel, Universitat Jaume I. Reseña recibida: 26 septiembre 2013. Reseña aceptada: 15 abril 2014.**

*La idea de la Justicia* es un libro escrito por Amartya Sen, el ganador del premio Nobel de Economía de 1998. Representa la síntesis de más de 50 años de su investigación académica. Consta de 18 capítulos, de los cuales los diez primeros se refieren a cuestiones teóricas sobre la justicia y los restantes a temas relacionados con la aplicación de los fundamentos en los cuales se basan los juicios sobre la justicia. Entre estos temas se encuentran como principales: las libertades, las capacidades, los recursos, la felicidad, la igualdad y el bienestar.

Como siempre, a través de fábulas, cuentos e historias, Sen ilustra al lector haciéndole comprender muy fácilmente la problemática de la injusticia y entonces de la justicia, desarrollando su particular senda de aproximación a esta cuestión: una combinación de filosofía moral y política y de economía. Para la construcción de una teoría de la justicia, según el autor, es clave la identificación de las injusticias reparables, así como los razonamientos para la evaluación de justicia o injusticia.

La teoría de la justicia que trata de fundamentar es amplia, desarrollando el tema del razonamiento y escrutinio imparcial sobre las razones de justicia y sus conclusiones. De igual forma expone el asunto del peso de las transgresiones del comportamiento y la insuficiencia institucional en la aparición y mantenimiento de injusticias remediabiles. Su propósito es esclarecer la cuestión del mejoramiento de la justicia y la superación de la injusticia, a diferencia de teorías anteriormente expuestas que se centran en la caracterización de sociedades perfectamente justas.

El autor aclara que los antecedentes de su enfoque provienen del «periodo de inconformidad intelectual de la Ilustración europea», teniendo en cuenta ideas procedentes de sociedades no occidentales. Esto le permitió ampliar el alcance de los argumentos de la literatura occidental. No se inclina por la corriente contractualista de autores como Locke, Rousseau, Hobbes, Kant, más recientemente Rawls, en el que la única tarea de la teoría de la justicia es la caracterización de las «justas instituciones»; opta más bien por una va-

riedad de enfoques desarrollados por Smith, Condorcet, Wollstonecraft, Bentham, Marx, Mill, que comparten un interés común: la comparación de las distintas maneras en que viven las personas, que se encuentran condicionadas por las instituciones, pero a la vez por el propio comportamiento de la gente y la interacción social, entre otros, atendiendo siempre al avance o retroceso de la justicia.

El camino del trascendentalismo institucionalista o contractualismo tiene dos problemas, según Sen. A saber, primero, bajo este enfoque no puede haber consenso razonado: la cuestión de la factibilidad de encontrar una solución trascendental de consenso; y segundo, la identificación de la situación perfecta probablemente inalcanzable: esta es la cuestión de la redundancia de la búsqueda de la solución trascendental. Por estas razones escoge como punto de partida a la «otra» tradición, la comparativa, sustentada en la teoría de la elección social.

La justicia se puede comprender de dos maneras, una basada en esquemas y otra basada en realizaciones. Sen realiza una analogía de estos dos modos de ver la justicia con las palabras *niti* y *nyaya* del sánscrito clásico. El término *niti* tiene varios significados, entre sus principales está: idoneidad de las instituciones y corrección del comportamiento; el vocablo *nyaya* entraña un concepto comprehensivo de la justicia realizada. «Aun cuando las instituciones es-

tablecidas sean idóneas, si el pez grande puede devorar al pez chico hay una flagrante violación de la justicia humana entendida como *nyaya*» (2010: 52). Para Sen, la perspectiva del *nyaya* se comprendería ampliamente como un proceso inclusivo y no solo como la realización última de justicia.

Bajo el enfoque comparativo o del *nyaya*, la democracia, por ejemplo, se evalúa no solo por las instituciones que existen, sino por la disponibilidad de información, por la viabilidad de las discusiones, por la capacidad de ser escuchadas las voces de los diferentes sectores de la población. La apuesta se realiza siempre por la razón pública como vía de impulso de justicia global. «Puede no existir, en efecto, ningún esquema social perfectamente justo e identificable del cual pudiere surgir un acuerdo imparcial» (2010: 49). «Lo que se requiere [...] es un acuerdo, basado en la razón pública, sobre la gradación de las alternativas realizables» (2010: 47).

A pesar que los principios de justicia que defiende este autor no serán definidos por las instituciones, sino más bien por las libertades de las personas, las instituciones no dejan de tener un papel importante en esta teoría. La vía comparativa contiene, también, la raíz del enfoque del *niti*: la confianza en la razón y en la deliberación sobre la justicia.

Aunque Sen aboga por el uso de la razón como una disciplina de exa-

men crítico de las creencias y razones expuestas, por otro lado, insiste que en esta discusión o escrutinio razonado no se pueden dejar de lado a los sentimientos morales y a las motivaciones de las personas. En su propuesta de justicia, apunta igualmente hacia la importancia de procurar el bien de otros, ya que no solo estamos obligados a buscar nuestro propio bien. Para el economista es totalmente razonable que en la búsqueda de nuestros propios fines hagamos un espacio para los fines de los otros.

Cuando las realizaciones sociales se evalúan desde el punto de vista de las capacidades que la gente posee verdaderamente, y no desde el punto de vista de su utilidad o felicidad, los cambios en la vida de las personas, tanto individual como colectivamente, pueden ser sorprendentemente positivos. Así, las personas se observan entre ellas de manera inclusiva, debido a la concienciación de las libertades sustantivas que disfrutan, en vez de ignorar todo lo que no

sean placeres o utilidades que pueden tener o experimentar. Existe, conjuntamente, otro aspecto significativo de la libertad como capacidad: nos hace responsables por lo que hacemos. La libertad para actuar no puede limitarse solamente a la idea de ventaja social, sino a la responsabilidad del poder de facto, reflexión por la cual Sen relaciona las obligaciones con el concepto de justicia.

Este trabajo trata de ilustrar la necesidad de transformación de raíz de las teorías de la justicia que están sobre la mesa. La inquietud del autor es una auténtica preocupación ética. En las cuatro partes del libro: «Las exigencias de la justicia», «Formas de razonamiento», «Los materiales de la justicia» y «Razón pública y democracia», se evidencia que la motivación principal de Sen no es la búsqueda de una verdad, ni de una situación perfecta, sino de una teoría que ofrezca soluciones viables para las situaciones de injusticias reales que viven los hombres hoy en día.

**Silvia Federici (2013):** *Revolución en punto cero. Trabajo doméstico, reproducción y luchas feministas*, Traficantes de Sueños, Madrid. Reseñado por María Medina-Vicent, Universitat Jaume I. Reseña recibida: 6 mayo 2015. Reseña aceptada: 12 junio 2015.

A través de la obra *Revolución en punto cero. Trabajo doméstico, reproducción y luchas feministas*, Silvia Federici nos abre una ventana al amplio abanico de luchas que subyacen a la práctica feminista. Sus trabajos se sitúan en el movimiento autónomo feminista dentro de la tradición marxista, desde donde «rechaza firmemente la idea de que patriarcado, trabajo doméstico y desigualdad de las mujeres se sitúen “fuera” del capitalismo» (Echevarría, 2014: 1). A partir de las bases que le otorgan el feminismo radical y el materialismo histórico, la autora pone su foco de atención en el trabajo reproductivo como parte vital de la lucha política feminista. Así pues, debido a la frágil situación de las mujeres en un marco actual de crisis del capital (Carrasco, 2009; Larrañaga y Jubeto, 2009), se vuelve necesario reflexionar junto a Federici sobre el papel de las mujeres y la reproducción social en el sistema capitalista.

En la primera parte de la obra, la autora pretende «Teorizar y politizar el trabajo doméstico». De este modo, Federici aborda el salario doméstico desde una perspectiva política, partiendo del reconocimiento de que el trabajo del hogar «ha sido transformado en un atributo natural de la

psique y personalidad femeninas» (2013: 37). Esta idea responde a la «glorificación de la familia como ámbito privado» (2013: 62) contrapuesto al ámbito público, con lo que el primero se convierte en «el territorio de las mujeres, el de la reproducción, el de los afectos, el de los cuidados» (Salazar, 2012: 97). En este sentido es en el que Federici considera que reclamar el Salario por el Trabajo Doméstico (STD), significa rechazar el rol asignado a las mujeres por parte del capital, «rechazar este trabajo como expresión de nuestra naturaleza (hablando de las mujeres)» (2013: 39). Mediante dicha reclamación, iniciada por las *welfare mothers* en los EE. UU. de los setenta, se visibiliza que este trabajo genera dinero para el capital, y que por tanto, solamente cuando se revele como una cuestión política, las mujeres podrán gozar del derecho a decidir si realizar o no este tipo de trabajos. Sin embargo, como señala la autora, el STD despierta un amplio rechazo en la izquierda marxista, tradición que «ha estado de acuerdo en la marginalidad del trabajo doméstico en la reproducción del capital» (2013: 52), y que en consecuencia, ha relegado a una posición secundaria las reclamaciones feministas, ofreciendo a las mujeres nada

más que «el derecho a estar más explotadas» (2013: 53).

La conclusión que se puede extraer de la primera parte de la obra es que el feminismo, entendido como el movimiento por la igualdad entre mujeres y hombres, no ha puesto en duda el sistema material en el que se producen las desigualdades, sino que «se ha identificado con la adquisición de igualdad de oportunidades en el mercado laboral» (2013: 94), una igualdad que supone una doble explotación para las mujeres: en el hogar y en el mercado laboral. De este modo, tener en cuenta las condiciones materiales y no «priorizar el papel de la conciencia, como si la esclavitud fuese una condición mental» (2013: 93), resulta clave para afrontar los retos de la lucha feminista hoy en día.

La segunda parte de la obra recibe el título «Globalización y reproducción social», y se centra en estudiar cómo afectan la globalización y la Nueva División Internacional del Trabajo (NDIT) a las mujeres. La autora parte del hecho de que la creación de las zonas de libre comercio no ha supuesto una mejora en las condiciones de vida de quien habitanta el Tercer Mundo, ya que ha permitido que «las empresas extranjeras mantengan salarios inferiores a los niveles de subsistencia» (2013: 115), provocando un proceso de «feminización de la pobreza» (2013: 118). Al mismo tiempo, esto ha promovido la rees-

tructuración global del trabajo reproductivo, reforzando «las jerarquías inherentes a la división sexual del trabajo» (2013: 118). Dicha reestructuración introduce una «división entre las mujeres que debilita la posibilidad de una solidaridad feminista global y amenaza con reducir el feminismo a un mero vehículo para la racionalización del orden económico mundial» (2013: 110), en consecuencia, se puede hablar hoy de una crisis de las políticas feministas. A su vez, «la proliferación de conflictos en África, Asia y Oriente Medio» (2013: 128) muestran que los Programas de Ajuste Estructural (PAE) perpetúan la violencia y «la dependencia de dichos territorios con respecto al capital internacional» (2013: 129). Así pues, la importancia de las mujeres en la globalización se ve reflejada en su papel clave dentro de dichos programas, y es que son ellas las que protagonizan las luchas contra sus efectos nocivos: «la privatización del agua [...] la deforestación y exportación de bosques enteros» (2013: 147-148). También son las mujeres del Sur las que «se han convertido en las trabajadoras domésticas del Norte» (2013: 147), permitiendo a los gobiernos «reducir la inversión en reproducción» (2013: 176), reducir su responsabilidad para con el cuidado, un tema de gran trascendencia social. Atendiendo a estos hechos, Federici concluye que la reflexión feminista se debe situar «en un marco

de trabajo anticapitalista» (2013: 125), pues la situación del Sur debe suponer para las feministas del Norte una toma de conciencia de cuál es el enemigo común: el capitalismo.

En la tercera y última parte de la obra, se trata la reproducción de lo común, donde Federici destaca las luchas de las mujeres del Sur en defensa de la tierra, así como su protagonismo en la «persistencia de la agricultura de subsistencia» (2013: 226). Dicha práctica supone ventajas para las comunidades, porque «han supuesto el principal parachoques del mundo proletario frente a las hambrunas provocadas por el régimen neoliberal» (2013: 233), debido al desarrollo de un modelo sostenible de reproducción de la vida, más allá de los flujos del capital. De esta manera, el activismo femenino en África, Latinoamérica y la India, ejemplifican el auge de movimientos que se oponen a «la presión de las compañías agroalimentarias para reducir las tierras de cultivo» (2013: 241), compañías que expolian los recursos naturales, lacrando el futuro de la población. De esta realidad se desprende la idea de que la protección de los bienes comunes debe ser la misión central de cualquier movimiento social, que es necesario «proponer una gestión alternativa de los bienes comunes, sometidos hoy a los intereses del mercado» (Abad y Abad, 2014: 61). Al ser conscientes de esta realidad, desde la perspectiva femi-

nista existe la responsabilidad de reapropiarse dicho término, para configurar una propuesta en defensa de la vida de corte anticapitalista (Pérez Orozco, 2014), sobre todo, porque como encargadas del cuidado y la reproducción, «las mujeres han dependido en mayor manera que los hombres del acceso a los recursos comunes, y han estado más comprometidas con su defensa» (2013: 251). Así, sin caer en un sesgo naturalista, Federici propone reconocer la labor de las mujeres en la «creación de formas colectivas de vida» (2013: 255) para garantizar la reproducción social.

En definitiva, cuando en el Norte del mundo emergen nuevos movimientos ciudadanos que reclaman justicia, el activismo de las mujeres del Sur en la protección de los recursos, así como su resistencia a plegarse frente al expolio del capital, debe ser reconocida y incorporada en la agenda política feminista. Al fin y al cabo, el nuevo activismo ciudadano en Occidente es el eco de las luchas que llevan décadas realizándose en los países del Sur. Desde nuestro punto de vista, existen más puntos en común que diferencias entre las madres que protegen la tierra para evitar la desposesión de la comunidad, y la ciudadanía que defiende a su vecindad de un desalojo. La conexión no se puede obviar, por eso una de las reflexiones más potentes de Federici en su obra *Revolución*

*en punto cero. Trabajo doméstico, reproducción y luchas feministas*, es que no se puede trabajar por la igualdad entre mujeres y hombres si no se lucha antes contra las estructuras capitalistas.

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**Andrés Piqueras Infante (2014):** *La opción reformista: entre el despotismo y la revolución*, Madrid, Anthropos, 2014. Reseñado por Albert Noguera Fernández, Universitat de València. Reseña recibida: 3 julio 2015. Reseña aceptada: 8 julio 2015.

El reformismo o la socialdemocracia es una estrategia de transformación de la sociedad que pretende usar el Estado como instrumento de intervención en el mercado para mejorar las condiciones de vida de la población. Persigue la regulación del mercado y la prestación de derechos y servicios desde y por el Estado, así, el Estado es el sujeto de las políticas y la sociedad el objeto de las mismas. Ahora bien, la estrategia reformista o socialdemócrata no es ajena a la coyuntura histórico-concreta en la que opera, esta no puede considerarse como «algo» que puede ser utilizado por «cualquiera» cuando «quiera». No es una estrategia que se mantenga a lo largo del tiempo a la espera de que alguien la use. De acuerdo con esta concepción, el acontecimiento fruto de las elecciones de un simple cambio de tendencia progresista en las personas que ocupan las estructuras de Estado debería permitir volver a activar la estrategia reformista en la coyuntura actual. El libro de Andrés Piqueras, *La opción reformista: entre el despotismo y la revolución*, demuestra de manera brillante que esto no es así. La estrategia reformista o socialdemócrata, como cualquier otra estrategia de acción política, aparece

como parte integrada de una «época» o de una configuración social histórica en cuyo interior adquiere eficacia. Fuera de su «época» una estrategia no es útil ni eficaz. Toda estrategia de acción política surge fruto de una coyuntura y opera en interrelación con ella de manera que su modificación altera también la eficacia de la estrategia.

La viabilidad y eficacia de la opción reformista dependerá, señala el autor, de que en una determinada formación socio-estatal se den tres factores (el subyacente, el activante y el precipitante):

- El primero (factor subyacente) hace referencia a la capacidad de impulsar y mantener el crecimiento, capaz a su vez, de posibilitar un aceptable consumo de masas. Como señala el autor, esto permite seguir manteniendo la plusvalía por encima de los costes de producción, y además, gracias al incremento general del poder adquisitivo y de los niveles de vida, vender más fácilmente y en más cantidad los productos para transformar aquella plusvalía en beneficio. En este escenario, aunque se mantengan inalteradas las desiguales proporciones del reparto



de la producción total asignadas al Capital y las asignadas al Trabajo, en tanto la producción aumenta, la masa de bienes destinadas a este último aumenta también materialmente sin que ello suponga menoscabo alguno para los beneficios del capital ni las relaciones productivas establecidas, permitiendo al Trabajo negociar y conseguir un aumento de los salarios directos, indirectos (prestaciones y servicios sociales) y diferidos (pensiones) de los trabajadores.

- El segundo (factor activante) hace referencia a la limitación de la capacidad de reemplazo de la fuerza de trabajo por el Capital. El desarrollo de la industrialización implica un aumento de la necesidad de asalarización, lo que supone que la mayor parte de la población activa queda directa o indirectamente bajo la forma salario agotando o reduciendo el ejército industrial de reserva. Ello aumenta significativamente las posibilidades de negociación y presión de la opción socialdemócrata.
- Y el tercero (factor precipitante) a la capacidad agencial del Trabajo, estrechamente vinculada a su fortaleza organizativa. De manera que las fuerzas del Trabajo sean capaces de aprovechar en su propio beneficio una correlación de fuerzas objetivamente favorable.

Este factor viene fuertemente determinado por los otros dos.

Solo cuando se dan estas tres condiciones existen posibilidades de afianzamiento y mantenimiento de la opción socialdemócrata como estrategia generadora de progreso social. Cuando ellas no se dan, el capitalismo histórico se ha decantado siempre por la opción liberal generadora de pobreza y desigualdad. A partir de esta tesis, el libro lleva a cabo un estudio de las distintas fases que ha atravesado el capitalismo histórico, de sus regímenes de acumulación y modos de regulación del orden social, de sus bases energéticas, sus crisis y mutaciones y las formas de dominación resultantes, desde finales del s. XVIII hasta hoy en día.

Piqueras diferencia entre distintas fases que define como: el capitalismo de libre competencia (de finales del s. XVIII hasta mediados de la última década del s. XIX), el capitalismo monopolista corporativo (de mediados de la última década del s. XIX hasta la IIGM), el capitalismo monopolista de estado (de la segunda posguerra mundial hasta la década de los 80 del s. XX), el capitalismo monopolista transnacional (de la década de los 80 del s. XX hasta un poco antes de la actualidad) y el *impasse* actual.

En su análisis de las fases del capitalismo, el autor explica cómo es después de la segunda posguerra mundial, en el llamado capitalismo

monopolista de estado, donde se dan los tres factores descritos (el subyacente, el activante y el precipitante), siendo los años 50, 60 y 70, las tres décadas doradas de la opción reformista. Al terminar la SGM se da en Europa una coyuntura histórica de destrucción del Capital y, por tanto, la necesidad de este de iniciar un proceso de acumulación inmediata. Para ello se requería paz social y crecimiento económico.

Por un lado, el apaciguamiento del conflicto se lleva a cabo mediante el reconocimiento del Trabajo sociológico como actor político con capacidad de intervenir en los procesos político-decisionarios. La construcción de la democracia en la Europa de posguerra no se hizo sobre un conjunto de instrumentos participativos que actuaban como métrica de la agregación de voluntades individuales (referéndums, consultas, etc.), sino sobre un modelo neocorporativo basado en el reconocimiento del trabajo como sujeto sociológico (libertad de sindicación y de creación de nuevos partidos de masa, organizados a partir de los sindicatos), y el reconocimiento de instrumentos de acción específicos que permitían la procedimentalización del conflicto capital-trabajo en el interior del sistema (huelga, negociación colectiva y otros derechos del conflicto social). Ello permitía la integración del Trabajo dentro del sistema y la desactivación de la amenaza revolucionaria.

Por otro lado, y respecto al crecimiento económico, la ideología económica dominante en la época era el keynesianismo, favorable a que el Estado jugara un papel activo en la recuperación económica mediante el aumento de la productividad y de la demanda.

El aumento de la productividad se llevó a cabo a través de la inversión de dinero público en capital constante (infraestructuras, transportes, comunicaciones, investigación, etc.). Inversiones que el capital privado no hace por sí solo porque está fuera de la lógica del beneficio directo pero que tiene especial importancia en momentos de posguerra para favorecer el crecimiento. Y a través de llevar a cabo planes de reestructuración de sectores económicos y estímulos a la fusión de capital que acentuaron el proceso de concentración y monopolización. La creación de grandes empresas con cientos de trabajadores aumentó la producción, primero porque permite insertar competitivamente la economía estatal en la economía mundial, y segundo porque permite al Estado convertirse en cliente de ellas mediante contratos públicos. La gran empresa es la única en condiciones de satisfacer la gran demanda del Estado.

El aumento de la demanda, de acuerdo con la tesis keynesiana que invierte la ley de Say y afirma que no es la producción la que determina la demanda sino a la inversa, se consi-

guió mediante una manipulación de la economía por parte del Estado con el fin de aumentar la demanda. Ello se logró a través de una determinada política monetaria, a través de la carrera armamentística de la guerra fría que convirtió el Estado en un gran comprador de armamento, o a través del aumento de salarios siguiendo el ejemplo de Henry Ford de incrementar la retribución a los trabajadores de su fábrica automovilística para que pudieran convertirse en cliente de la misma.

A esta política concreta en el ámbito económico (intervención del Estado para aumentar la productividad y la demanda) propia del capitalismo industrial de pleno empleo de la segunda posguerra mundial, le correspondió una política concreta en el ámbito social que pasó por el reconocimiento de derechos y prestaciones sociales. La incorporación de los derechos sociales en el constitucionalismo europeo de posguerra se dirigió al cumplimiento de la citada doble función del Estado en la economía. En primer lugar, conseguir aumentar la producción. La asunción por parte del Estado del coste y garantía de derechos como la educación, la sanidad, vivienda, etc., no es más que una contribución del Estado para costear la producción y reproducción de la fuerza de trabajo. Toda la enseñanza o formación pública de una fuerza de trabajo que prestará después sus servicios en la empresa

privada supone tanto una transferencia de recursos como una contribución importantísima, en la medida que se necesita mano de obra cada vez más cualificada para propiciar un aumento de la productividad. Se socializan los costes del trabajo mientras que se privatiza la producción. En segundo lugar, conseguir aumentar la demanda. Las prestaciones o servicios sociales era una manera de añadir a la forma salario directo, la forma salario indirecto (salario en «especies»), mediante el que se completaban los ingresos del Trabajo con el objetivo de generar un aumento del excedente salarial que, a la vez, generaba un aumento de la demanda o consumo.

En este escenario de capitalismo industrial de pleno empleo los factores subyacente, activante y precipitante se daban plenamente permitiendo a la opción reformista operar eficazmente para la generación de progreso social. Sin embargo, la crisis económica mundial de los años 70, cuyo momento simbólico de inicio es la crisis del petróleo de octubre de 1973, implicó el inicio de una fuerte depresión económica a la que los grandes capitales hicieron frente a través de lo que el autor llama una estrategia de triple desplazamiento:

- La fusión entre empresas y el surgimiento de las empresas transnacionales que provocan un desplazamiento espacial del capital

hacia las periferias del sistema donde los costes de producción eran más baratos, lo que implica la eliminación de muchos puestos de trabajo en el centro europeo.

- Un desplazamiento hacia nuevas líneas de producción o sectores de actividad. Al desplazar la actividad industrial hacia la periferia, la economía en los países centrales se reorienta hacia nuevos sectores muy especializados y con un fuerte desarrollo tecnológico (biogenética, robótica, microelectrónica, etc.). Se trata de sectores que requieren pocos trabajadores y muy especializados.
- Un desplazamiento del capital fuera de la producción, hacia la especulación, la usura o las finanzas.

Ello condujo a la conformación de una nueva fase de Capitalismo Monopolista Transnacional, cuya expansión viene favorecida por el ciclo de triunfos electorales de gobiernos neoliberales (iniciado con la victoria de Margaret Thatcher en el Reino Unido y Ronald Reagan en EE. UU.) y sus políticas. La vieja sociedad fordista donde el trabajador asalariado era el sujeto de referencia es sustituida por una nueva sociedad posfordista caracterizada por una multiframeanetación o multiactividad nómada de múltiples formas de trabajo (autónomos no asalariados, precarios, desempleados, etc.). En este contexto no se

da ninguna de las condiciones necesarias para que la opción reformista tenga ninguna capacidad para generar progreso social. No por casualidad es esta una época de fuertes recortes sociales y de deslegitimación y crisis de los grandes partidos socialdemócratas y sus sindicatos desautorizados por su incapacidad de mejorar las condiciones materiales de vida de los trabajadores.

La vinculación de los derechos a la forma trabajo-salario provoca que cuando el salario deja de ser la forma general de retribución de las relaciones de trabajo, una amplia mayoría de la población queda excluida de los derechos. A la vez, al cambiar la forma de organización del trabajo, cambian también las formas de conflicto y negociación y, por tanto, de organización de los trabajadores. La figura clásica del sindicato y la huelga es, en la actualidad, un instrumento válido de actuación en el ámbito estrictamente industrial-laboral, pero incapaz de abarcar la amplitud y complejidad del nuevo espacio de actuación, «lo social», y sus múltiples formas de trabajo. Los desempleados o el trabajo autónomo precario de subsistencia, al carecer de una contraparte colectiva, ha salido de facto de la historia secular de conflictos laborales y del sistema de derechos construido a partir de la legitimidad de esos conflictos.

A partir de 2008 nos encontramos ante una nueva crisis del modelo de capitalismo y de su superestructura político-ideológica. Frente a ello, están apareciendo nuevas formaciones políticas que defienden y apuestan por el reformismo como estrategia o solución a la precarización general de las condiciones materiales de vida de amplias capas sociales. Sin embargo, ¿ofrece la opción reformista alguna posibilidad de éxito en la coyuntura actual?

El libro pone de manifiesto cómo la historia de las grandes crisis nos ha enseñado que una vez superadas estas nunca se vuelve atrás hacia las viejas formas de capitalismo. La vuelta al capitalismo monopolista de Estado, época dorada de la opción reformista, resulta imposible. Nuevas formas de capitalismo desencadenan una nueva fase del capital, nuevas formas de gestionar la mediación social del valor, de conseguir la reproducción de la fuerza de trabajo y, en general, nuevas relaciones Capital/Trabajo. Después de cada gran crisis ha surgido un capitalismo nuevo.

No resulta posible establecer detalladamente cómo será el capitalismo de las próximas décadas, lo que no hay duda es que estamos en una etapa de transición y que, tal como señala Piqueras, el capitalismo actual se caracteriza por:

- Una pérdida de capacidad para impulsar y mantener el crecimiento.
- Dificultades para encontrar un nuevo motor de acumulación. No hay hoy una rama económica como fue el ferrocarril en el s. XIX o la industria automotriz en el s. XX, capaz de teñir todas las demás y llevarlas hacia adelante.
- Una decreciente capacidad de conversión del dinero en capital. El estallido de la burbuja inmobiliaria implica que sea cada vez más difícil para los agentes financieros derivar la gran cantidad de capital ficticio hacia sectores económicos reales.
- Una decreciente capacidad de asalarización o de generación de empleo.
- El agotamiento de las fuentes energéticas básicas para cualquier modelo de producción industrial.

Ello imposibilita la conformación de los tres factores (subyacentes, activante y precipitante) necesarios para que la opción reformista pueda operar y ser útil en los próximos años para la mejora de nuestras condiciones de vida. En consecuencia, difícilmente la opción socialdemócrata puede ser una alternativa para salir de esta crisis con una sociedad más justa e igualitaria. Descartada esta opción, y tal como concluye el autor del libro, el declive de la civilización industrial-fordista irá obligan-

do a establecer, en cualquier caso, formas de vida apegadas a lo local, con producción y consumo más o menos autosuficiente y autocentrados. Este declive ofrece, por tanto, perspectivas objetivas para la exis-

tencia de otros modos de producción. Para ello, la renovada dinámica de clases que suscita la propia degeneración capitalista abre una nueva etapa esperanzadora en la senda de la emancipación humana.

Joan Subirats, Mayo Fuster, Rubén Martínez, Marco Berlinguer y Jorge Luis Salcedo (2014): *Jóvenes, Internet y política*, Madrid, Centro Reina Sofía sobre Adolescencia y Juventud Fundación de Ayuda contra la Drogadicción (FAD). Reseñado por Luis Vives Martín, Universitat Jaume I. Reseña recibida: 5 junio 2015. Reseña aceptada: 2 julio 2015.

*Jóvenes, Internet y política* es un trabajo de investigación en el cual se explora la relación entre los siguientes tres elementos: 1) los jóvenes como grupo social protagonista, 2) internet como nuevo espacio de actuación y 3) la política como ejercicio de las acciones colectivas implicadas en relaciones de poder. Si bien existían numerosos estudios sobre estos tres factores, lo interesante de este trabajo es que aquí se estudian de manera relacionada, dando pie a extraer conclusiones interesantes y novedosas. La comprensión que hasta la fecha se tenía de estos factores –juventud, participación y política– parece que está cambiando. Tal como señala Subirats en la introducción «Desde el 15-M [...] nadie que quiera saber cómo está funcionando el escenario político en España puede desconocer el fenómeno de las redes sociales y sus efectos en el sistema político» (Subirats, 2014: 6). Los autores de este trabajo ahondan en esta cuestión desde un estudio pormenorizado de publicaciones recientes de los campos de la filosofía y la ciencia política.

El trabajo se estructura en un total de cuatro capítulos. En el primer

capítulo Marc Parés desglosa el trío juventud, política y participación, realizando una aproximación histórica a dichos términos. Esto permite observar cómo los nuevos estudios sobre estos tres factores ofrecen nuevas respuestas y abren un nuevo horizonte de posibilidades. En el caso de la juventud, según las teorías contractualistas, esta deja de ser una etapa estrictamente delimitada por el factor referido a la edad de los individuos, ahora sus límites son difusos y dependen mucho del contexto en el que se encuentre el sujeto. La definición de política se amplía hasta el punto de comprender su ejercicio como gobierno de lo común, ya sea desde las instancias oficiales o al margen de las mismas. Con la participación ocurre lo mismo, definiciones más extensivas abandonan los antiguos estudios, centrados únicamente en la acción del voto, de forma que las últimas definiciones de la participación reconocen distintas formas de ejercer la acción política que van más allá de las urnas.

Seguidamente, Parés se centra detalladamente en el papel que juegan los jóvenes respecto a la participación política. Para ello recoge estu-

dios tanto desde un enfoque más positivista, como otros más constructivistas. Las conclusiones a las que llega demuestran que lo que en otras ocasiones se había sostenido, es decir, la desafección y apatía juvenil hacia la política, parece que es más bien desafección hacia la política institucional, o una actitud de insatisfacción más que desafección, y así lo revelan estudios como el de Benedetto o el de Soler que el propio autor cita en su artículo (Parés, 2014: 24) Estudios que muestran cómo los jóvenes se ven más atraídos hacia formas políticas no institucionalizadas como pudiera ser el caso de la participación en los movimientos sociales. Finalmente, para cerrar el capítulo, Parés menciona incipientes estudios referidos a internet y sus nuevas herramientas como son los nuevos espacios web wiki o 2.0, los cuales podrían traducirse en mecanismo de movilización de los jóvenes hacia la participación política. Aun así, el propio autor advierte que es demasiado pronto para evaluar esta tendencia, pues los estudios realizados hasta la fecha no revelan resultados concluyentes.

El segundo capítulo, titulado «Desconfiados: suspendidos entre búsqueda, resignación y revuelta. Una situación inestable» es obra de Marco Berlinguer y Rubén Martínez Moreno. Se trata de un informe que recoge las ideas principales surgidas de 4 *focus groups* realizadas en Ma-

drid y Barcelona a jóvenes de entre 18 y 25 años. Entre las principales afirmaciones que realizan estos autores, destaca su defensa de dos factores claves en la alteración de la relación entre jóvenes y política, estos son: la crisis económica y la nueva esfera pública en red. La primera parece llevar a una politización guiada por la necesidad, ya que son factores como la educación y el paro los que más preocupan a los jóvenes. Así, lejos de una pasión vocacional se acercan a la política por la necesidad de encontrar solución a los problemas que les atañen directamente. En cuanto al segundo factor, el referido a la nueva esfera pública digital, es considerado como el elemento central de conformación de la que denominan generación post 15-M. La nueva esfera digital, se convierte en el lugar predilecto de las jóvenes generaciones para comunicar, informarse, relacionarse y, en definitiva, empoderarse.

Las conclusiones que presentan estos autores en su informe en torno a la juventud y la participación política se resumen en cuatro puntos:

- 1) Esta generación está más politizada que la anterior y tiene una actitud más crítica.
- 2) A pesar de que los jóvenes asistentes en los *focus groups* muestran su descontento con el sistema democrático actual no renuncian a la democracia, sino



- que oscilan entre un modelo democrático más participativo, pero a su vez más meritocrático.
- 3) Aunque los jóvenes reconocen la potencialidad de la nueva esfera pública digital, dudan de la fiabilidad de las nuevas fuentes de información así como lo hacían de las clásicas.
  - 4) Aseguran que la nueva esfera digital difumina los límites entre lo público y lo privado. Debatándose además entre la funcionalidad de las formas colectivas de acción o, por el contrario, la salvaguarda del interés individual.

El tercer capítulo, escrito por Rubén Martínez Moreno, lleva por título «Internet y política (versión 1.0). Política para la Red, política con la Red, política desde la Red». En él ocupa un lugar central el estudio de la Red como elemento impulsor del cambio político. El autor se pregunta primero por qué política de funcionamiento tiene internet, para posteriormente advertir de los tres posibles tipos de transformación política que se derivan de internet. Estos tres procesos son, según el autor, los siguientes: 1) la política para la red, es decir, incidir en espacios donde la propia red es el espacio afectado; 2) la política con la red, como herramienta para mejorar el sistema o instituciones ya existentes; 3) la política desde la red o también llamada

«tecnopolítica», un espacio donde surgen nuevas formas de organización. Martínez Moreno asegura que la red, en todas sus dimensiones, es un instrumento que sirve para mejorar la democracia. Ahora bien, considera que la política desde la red, o esta nueva dimensión conocida como «tecnopolítica», es la más innovadora, puesto que convierte la red en algo más que una herramienta para hacer política, la transforma en una nueva forma de hacer política. La «tecnopolítica» corrige así fallas de la democracia representativa al uso y acerca a formas democráticas permanentes, con mayores posibilidades de participación, cualitativa y cuantitativamente. La política desde la Red, es aplicable además a distintos niveles, tanto a partidos políticos para facilitar su apertura (deliberación, participación en la toma de decisiones, mayor capacidad de adaptación al ciberactivismo), a gobiernos con el fin de aumentar la participación y la transparencia, o a prácticas ciudadanas como ya se están dando (sería el caso de Civio, Red Ciudadana. Partido X, etc.).

Para cerrar el capítulo, el autor aplica la dialéctica hegeliana al mundo digital, presentando una tesis, una antítesis y una síntesis final de lo que puede deparar la red en los procesos de transformación política. Para Martínez Moreno, la tesis es que la red permitirá impulsar nuevas formas organizativas y de comunicación, dando

pie a nuevas formas institucionales. Por su parte, como antítesis presenta posturas que difieren de dicho optimismo tecnopolítico. El «solucionismo» declara que este no produce más que ilusiones que no se corresponden de facto con el cambio que desde hace tiempo se augura. Mientras tanto, el «ciberfetichismo» considera que la red no permite una socialización densa. Para Martínez Moreno, la respuesta final o la síntesis desemboca en «la Red como producción cultural, como un ensamblaje de tecnologías, sujetos, rumbos culturales y usos que pueden presentar una amalgama de formas de hacer política» (2014: 90). Y precisamente en esa vasta red hay espacio para el diálogo entre la red como forma que abre nuevas posibilidades a la democracia y las críticas al ciberfetichismo o el solucionismo. Así, se puede entender la red como espacio de conflicto (y por ende político) para reinventar la democracia.

El cuarto capítulo, titulado «Juventud y participación política en la era digital: estado del arte versus arte del estado», lo firma Carlos Feixa. El texto tiene como objetivo analizar las formas de participación política en internet de los jóvenes. Para este propósito el autor referencia una serie de estudios clásicos que demuestran cómo la juventud tiene una participación activa en la política, aunque esta provenga de vías no tradicionales. En concreto, destaca el papel de los movimientos sociales como lugar

donde los jóvenes se sienten más identificados políticamente. Esto le proporciona las bases para analizar exhaustivamente y más concretamente lo que llama movimientos juveniles, dividiéndolos cronológicamente por «la generación digital o @» y «la generación hiperdigital o #». Si bien parece ser que la generación digital sería aquella que siendo jóvenes se desenvuelven en la era digital (internet de 1.ª generación, móviles, dispositivos electrónicos, etc.), en estos momentos a los jóvenes se les consideraría ya generación hiperdigital, de las redes y la web social. A la ruptura generacional marcada por la revolución tecnológica que da nombre a la generación digital, le seguiría ahora una generación hiperdigital, caracterizada por el uso de las webs 2.0., las redes sociales, e incluso una participación política rizomática, refiriéndose así a la descentralización de los movimientos de protesta derivados del 15-M, que crecen indefinidamente y que emiten nuevas raíces de sus propios nudos. Freixa analiza minuciosamente esta generación y la compara con la anterior, proponiendo como colofón un estudio de caso como el de la generación indignada. Los rasgos más destacables de esta generación son: el hiperdigitalismo, la temporalidad viral, una comprensión glocal del espacio o translocal y, como ya se ha comentado, una reproducción política en forma de rizoma. Características que según el

autor proyectan un cambio si no de época, sí de generación.

Cierra este estudio de *Jóvenes, Internet y política* un anexo con dos trabajos referidos a la investigación en red, ambos de un corte más metodológico y técnico. Uno se titula «Métodos de investigación en Red» y está escrito por Jorge Luis Salcedo y Mayo Fuster Morell, y el otro titulado «Investigación colaborativa, divertida, barata, transmedia. Otras formas de entender la investigación», escrito por Pablo Rey Mazón y Alfonso Sánchez Uzábal.

En lo que se refiere al conjunto general de esta obra, se puede afirmar que recoge los estudios de la implicación juvenil en la participación política, aportando una nueva visión respecto a un tema central como el de la desafección juvenil hacia la misma y demostrando con

numerosas referencias que son posibles otras interpretaciones. Coinciden todos los trabajos que componen la obra en que el interés político de los jóvenes lejos de acercarse a las clásicas formas de participación, se traduce en nuevas formas de activismo político como las mareas y los movimiento sociales, y se desplaza a nuevos espacios en los que la nueva esfera pública digital ocupa un lugar central. Los cambios que la red ha generado en el trinomio política-jóvenes-participación es un hecho que a la luz de estos estudios no se puede obviar, todavía es difícil hacerse una idea del lugar hacia el cual nos llevan, ahora bien, lo que parece cierto es que el escenario político está cambiando, ahora dependerá de las nuevas generaciones de jóvenes el lugar hacia donde nos lleve el camino.



## Breves currículums de los autores y autoras

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### FRED POWELL

Catedrático de *Applied Social Studies* en la University College Cork, Irlanda. Ha sido profesor invitado en Gran Bretaña, Italia, Portugal, China y Francia. Entre sus numerosas publicaciones destacan (junto a M. Scanlon) *Dark Secrets of Childhood: Media Power, Child Abuse and Public Scandals* (Policy Press, 2015); (junto a Halton y Scanlon) *Continuing Professional Development in Social Work* (Policy Press, 2013); *The Politics of Civil Society: Big Society and small government* (Policy Press, 2013); *The Politics of Civil Society: Neoliberalism or Social Left?* (Policy Press, 2007); *The Politics of Social Work* (Sage, 2001). Sus intereses de investigación incluyen sociedad civil, infancia y juventud, democracia participativa y ciudadanía.

### ANGELA BOURNE

Profesora en la Universidad de Roskilde, Dinamarca. Entre sus publicaciones se incluyen obras como *The EU and the Accommodation of Basque Difference in Spain* (Manchester University Press, 2008) y la edición de libros como (junto a Michelle Cini) *European Union Studies* (Palgrave, 2006) y *The EU and Territorial Politics Within Member States: Conflict or Co-operation?* (Brill, 2006). También ha publicado numerosos artículos en revistas de investigación como *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *Democratization*, *Comparative European Politics*, *Regional and Federal Studies*, *International Journal of Public Administration* y *The Comparative Law Journal*. Además de trabajar en temas como la europeización y los movimientos sociales, Bourne tiene actualmente un contrato con Routledge para escribir un libro bajo el título *Democratic Dilemmas: Why democracies ban political parties*.

### SEVASTI CHATZOPOULOU

Profesora de Políticas y Leyes de la Unión Europea en el Departamento de Sociedad y Globalización de la Universidad de Roskilde, Dinamarca. Sus intereses de investigación se centran en la europeización de los movimientos sociales, así como la europeización de la administración pública y de las políticas de regulación. Por otra parte, su trabajo examina el papel de la UE como actor transnacional de gestión regulatoria y de gestión de crisis. Ha publicado en revistas de investigación tales como *International Journal of Public Administration*; *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* y *British Food Journal*. Asimismo, ha publicado varios capítulos de

libro dentro de la editorial Routledge. Actualmente está finalizando un monográfico sobre la europeización de las administraciones públicas nacionales.

### **AGNESE SAMPIETRO**

Es doctoranda en Lingüística en el Departamento de Teoría de los Lenguajes y Ciencia de la Comunicación de la Universitat de València. Sus áreas de investigación principales son la comunicación a través de las nuevas tecnologías y la participación en Internet. Ha sido investigadora visitante en la Universidad de Viena, ha participado en diferentes congresos internacionales y en dos proyectos de investigación a nivel nacional. Antes de incorporarse al Departamento de Teoría de los Lenguajes y Ciencia de la Comunicación con una beca predoctoral de tres años (2013-2016), ha trabajado como investigadora en el Instituto Polibienestar de la Universitat de València.

### **LIDIA VALERA ORDAZ**

Doctora en Comunicación en la Universitat de València (2014). Es licenciada en Periodismo por Universitat de València (2009) y está a punto de acabar el Grado en Ciencias Políticas (UNED). Sus intereses de investigación son la comunicación política, la sociología de los medios de comunicación y las tecnologías digitales. Ha publicado artículos en revistas científicas, participado en numerosas conferencias y en dos proyectos de investigación nacionales. Ha realizado estancias de investigación en las universidades París 8, Boston College y Science Po. Actualmente es investigadora en el Departamento de Teoría de los Lenguajes y Ciencia de la Comunicación de la Universitat de València.

### **ROBERT GONZÁLEZ GARCÍA**

Licenciado de Ciencias Políticas y de la Administración (1997) y de Sociología (1999) por la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), donde también obtuvo el grado de doctor en Ciencia Política y de la Administración (2011). Actualmente es profesor-investigador a tiempo completo en el Área de Ciencia Política y Administración Pública del Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo. Es colaborador del Cuerpo Académico Estudios Políticos Comparados y sus líneas de investigación son la participación ciudadana, las políticas públicas, la juventud y los movimientos sociales.

### **SIMON TORMEY**

Catedrático de Teoría Política y director del Departamento de Ciencias Políticas y Relaciones Internacionales en la Universidad de Sídney. Anteriormente ha sido profesor en la Universidad de Leicester y en la Universidad de Nottingham. Es autor de numerosos libros como *Agnes Heller: Socialism, Autonomy and the Postmodern* (Manchester University Press, 2001), *Anti-Capitalism. A Beginner's Guide'* (Oneworld, 2004 y 2013), *Key Thinkers from Critical Theory to Post-Marxism* (Sage, 2006) y *The End of Representative Politics* (Polity Press, 2015). Ha publicado artí-

culos en revistas como *Radical Philosophy*, *Thesis Eleven*, *The Journal of Political Ideologies*, *Political Studies* o *Historical Materialism*.

#### **PAUL DEKKER**

Es director de la Unidad de Investigación “Participación y Gobierno” en The Netherlands Institute for Social Research / SCP (Países Bajos), así como profesor de Estudios de la Sociedad Civil en la Universiteit van Tilburg. Sus campos de investigación recientes son el sector sin ánimo de lucro, participación social y política, opinión pública, democracia así como la sociedad y la política en los Países Bajos y la Unión Europea. Es secretario de la International Society of Third Sector Research. Es miembro del consejo editorial del *Journal of Civil Society*, *Voluntas* y *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Review*. Entre sus publicaciones cabe destacar (junto a Taco Brandsen y Adalbert Evers) *Civicness in the governance and delivery of social services* (Nomos, 2010); (junto a Govert Buys y Marc Hooghe) *Civil society: Tussen oud en nieuw* (Aksant, 2009); (junto a Loek Halman) *The values of volunteering. Cross-cultural perspectives* (Plenum Publishers, 2003) y (junto a Eric M. Uslaner), *Social capital and participation in everyday life* (Routledge, 2001).

#### **RAMÓN A. FEENSTRA**

Profesor del Departamento de Filosofía y Sociología de la Universitat Jaume I de Castellón. Es licenciado en Publicidad y Relaciones Públicas (2005) y en Historia (2013). En 2010 se doctoró en Filosofía Moral. Ha publicado los libros *Democracia monitorizada en la era de la nueva galaxia mediática* (Icaria, 2012) y *Ética de la publicidad. Retos en la era digital* (Dykinson, 2014). Ha publicado artículos en revistas como *Media International Australia*, *Revista del Clad*, *Reforma y Democracia*, *Voluntas*, *The Journal of Civil Society* o *Policy Studies*.





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### *Justicia social y Derechos Humanos: el papel de la sociedad civil*

**Editores:** Emilio Martínez Navarro (Universidad de Murcia) y Martha Rodríguez Coronel (Universitat Jaume I de Castellón)

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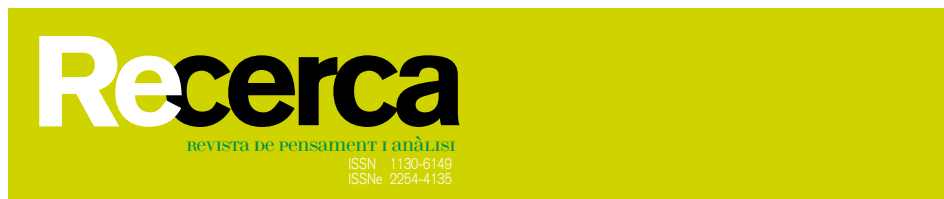
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**Període d'enviament:** fins el 15 de gener de 2016

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