

**Flesher Fominaya, Cristina and Laurence Cox (eds.). 2013. *Understanding European Movements. New Social Movements, Global Justice Struggles, Anti-Austerity Protest*. London, New York: Routledge. 263 pp. Pb.: \$46.95. ISBN: 9781138025462.**

This edited volume is driven by the concern to develop a richer narrative in understanding European Social Movements and propose to discuss and to take European Social Movements seriously and on “its own terms”. What is meant by “own terms” is at least partly answered in their publication, for which they collected 15 essays by 22 authors from 11 different countries.

Sociologists Flesher Fominaya and Cox suggest not dealing with European Social Movements as counterparts to the US experiences in social theory. Rather, they propose to enrich academic research by evolving non-English literature and incorporating European national characteristics while also not missing transnational and global dynamics. The writers from France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Iceland, USA, Hungary, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland and Great Britain whose essays are included in the publication are mainly employed in the social sciences. The analyses are based on ethnographic and historical research throughout Europe. The contributors are spinning webs between concepts of identity, culture, place, autonomy, democracy, protest, development, society, transnationalism, solidarity and community within their research. They are climbing around in this web, attempted to find the next connecting thread, or even the master frame that binds all social movements to one another. All these different own terms, i.e. different contexts and different specific national histories, make this publication unique and inspiring in terms of bringing up examples of social commitment from European citizens.

The editors start in the first chapter by illuminating parts of the theoretical and philosophical history of social movements in Europe from 1960 onwards. After that, the contributors to the publication highlight the eventual precursor role of European movements to contemporary anti-globalisation movements in the second chapter in the form of six essays. They also involve “the movement of movements”, the Global Justice Movement (GJM), whose roots, networks and founding ideas are spread all over the world. The third chapter continues with a closer look at the construction of culture and identity of the European GJM, bringing up examples of cultural diffusion, collective identity and growing transnational tendencies in social uprisings. Finally, the last chapter describes new Anti-Austerity protest in Iceland Greece and Spain.

In the first part, *European theory/European movements*, the editors introduce some famous thinkers and theorists who engaged with or against social movements. They describe how these battles were central to democracy in European history. In addition, Cox and Flesher Fominaya raise a plea for a distinctly European approach in social theory, which should help stop analysis in isolation from the objects of interest, and rather start to contextualise and historicise movements and reflect and shape a wider reality. Self-confidently, the editors are this harsh critique and, fortunately their publication marks a step into the direction they claim to be the right one. They have produced an academic anthology written by people who got involved, who got into contact with their objects of interest and curiously investigated some rooms of the ever-growing large building of social movements from the inside.

However who are these objects of interests? This is what part two is all about and could be described as the constitutive core of the publication. Seven essays are collected under the heading of *European precursors to the Global Justice Movement*. These case studies and comparative accounts take the recipients along into the very reality of social movements in Europe in their specific national contexts. Many authors explain that the fairy-tale version of *one* Global Justice Movement (GJM), the so-called ‘movement of the movements’, is not adequate because the GJM is more of a result to be explained and not to be given characteristics. The question to be answered is from where it originates.

France and its peasantry rose up at the turn of the millennium, preparing fertile soil for the GJM, acting as a milestone for social protest around the globe, and the anti-nuclear movement in Germany shaped the strength and development of global movements. Finally, all of the movements seem to have had an impact on transnational protest. That is what creates an exciting flavour for all of the contributions. Sommer and Fillieule beautifully summarise the question of which movement was the most important forerunner for the GJM in concluding that there is no *one* transnational movements ‘but a mosaic, an amorphous collection of various mobilised groups characterised by the history and special nature of their national roots ...’ (p. 58).

The third chapter focuses on cultural processes involved in forming the GJM. In these four contributions, the writers highlight the concept of identity and cultural characteristics of European transnational protest. Collective identity, autonomy, and diffusion connect these essays’ contents and differences in the written style and thrilling writer-teams shape the form of presenting the topic. The writers characterise Europe as a contagious space where transnationalism and border-crossing are part of the cultural identity.

The fourth part gives an inspiring insight into three exciting movements of recent years, such as the Icelandic Sausage Revolution, the Indignados movement in Spain and the Tunisian uprising in connection to the Greek Anti-Austerity mobilisations. In Kerman Calvo’s conclusions of the Spanish 15-M movement in his essay, he states: ‘Close attention to this social movement could well give us new clues to reconcile ideas about change and continuity that are increasingly relevant in dealing with a systemic political and economy crisis that is shaking all element of the social fabric’ (p. 251). This might be transferred to lots of the movements.

To summarise, this book sets a focus to the obviously lacking academic field of social analysis of movements in Europe and engages scientists to move themselves out of their offices and creates a diverse and rich narrative for more fruitful lines of inquiry about European movements. Social Movements might contain strategies, ideas and methods to save the social fabric from tearing. Concerning the diversity and pluralism that is shown in this book, one can definitely perceive European movements to be vanguards of transnational protest.

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