

Review 'Mobilization and protest – introduction to the sociology of social movements', Ionel Nicu Sava, Lucian Blaga University Publishing, Sibiu, 2013

The book 'Mobilization and protest. Introduction to the sociology of social movements' is designed as a useful handbook for students, but also for those who want to explore this area. The book calls for an inventory study of theories of social movements, introducing the methodology for the study of collective action, trying to attract attention on social, political, economic transformation from actual society.

The study of the social movements becomes important in a world stripped of political and economic stability. Protests are important for historians, but also for social sciences researchers because it shows the state of the societies and the changes in time. 'Social scientists come back to social movements, because they are the essence of social life, in that people came together to solve problems, they devote time and money to some collective purpose, they coordinate their actions with other people' (Jasper, foreword in Sava 2013, 14).

The author succeeded in capturing in twelve chapters the contributions from important authors in the study of the social movements, to identify research methods and techniques for the study of the social movements, but also to explain some processes of the social movements. The last chapter is devoted to case studies focusing on popular movements from Latin America.

In the first chapter, the author appeals to the Charles Tilly's writings 'to describe the process of the formation of the collective action protests as a form of contesting policy' (Sava 2014, 37).

Tilly underlines that 'a way of making public policy began to take shape in Western countries in the second part of the eighteenth century, gained wide recognition in Western Europe and North America in the early nineteenth century, was strengthened in a sustainable compound of elements in the middle of the century, transformed slowly after this period then it has spread throughout the Western world and came to be called social movement' (Tilly apud Sava 2014, 40).

The author of the book evaluates the social movements taking account of the French revolutions, American national and democratic revolutions from nineteenth century. As Nicu Sava states, 'The American Revolution is known through the economic empowerment program, the French Revolution is guided by ideological program, while the democratic revolution is associated with the idea of the establishing of the modern national state' (Sava 38).

In the second chapter, Ionel Sava inventories directions for the study of social movements.

Marxists speak of mass movements as ‘irrational processes, collective pathologies placed outside against the existing social order’ (Sava 2013, 61).

In the 60's there are updated theories of capitalism and industrialism. Touraine A. presents the theory about post-industrial society and the new social movements.

A very interesting study was developed by Lipset and Rokkan in 1967. They are defining ‘the social cleavages taking account of four dimensions: territorial, religious, national and economic’ (Sava 2013, 61).

The theory of collective behaviour was elaborated in the USA by Samuel Stouffer and Robert Merton (1949). Student of Parsons, Smelser N. defines social movement as a ‘safety valve’ which releases social tensions.

Olson M (1965) develops a liberal perspective in explaining social movements.

In the early 1970s, Anthony Oberschall makes a critique of mass society theory and develops the theory of collective behaviour.

McCarthy and Zald (1977) reinforce the theory of resource mobilization through the political process theory. Tarrow S. and McAdam D. underline that political and economic factors are more important than the psychological and organizational ones.

Identity issues were brought into question starting from 2000, highlighting the role of emotions and culture in collective actions. Della Porta and Diani (2007) define social movements as ‘informal networks based on shared beliefs and group solidarity that mobilize itself to support conflict issues through frequent use of various forms of protest’ (Sava 2013, 63).

At the beginning of the XXIst century, constructivism has influenced social movement’s research. Jasper J. (2010) classified the traditions of study according to the interpretation of human actions and the level of analysis. Concerning the sense of the human action, the author mentioned two approaches: a materialist and a cultural one.

As the author of the book states, the macro social approach leads to the formation of two schools of study:

1. ‘American school- it focuses on mobilization of resources and interaction with the state.

2. European school- identified with the study of post industrialism, or new social movements.’ (Sava 2013, 64).

Crossley N. (2002), cited by I.N. Sava, mentions that ‘European tradition is closer to social philosophy while American tradition is more empirical’ (Ibidem).

The author of the book presents several theories and directions of social movements, including: the theory of relative deprivation, the theory of resource mobilization, the model of political process, constructivism and new social movements.

Denton Morrison (1971) stated that any society presents deprivation conditions. 'If there are a sufficient number of individuals who experience deprivation, the conditions are created for the emergence of social movements' (Sava 2013, 69). Chicago sociologists have introduced the term 'relative deprivation' in the late 40s.

McCarthy and Zald formulated the theory of resource mobilization taking into account the economic and political aspects of social movements. The authors noted that the social movements are normal rational actions. They bring into question the rationalist theory or rational choice theory of collective decisions.

The theory of rational choice predicted the theory of the resource mobilization. Mancur Olson, in his book 'The Logic of Collective Action' (1965) presents the economic perspective of social movements. According to Olson's theory, social movements 'are the result of rational decisions taken by individuals pursuing a goal that can not be achieved in another way' (Olson 1965 apud Sava 2013, 76). As Ionel Nicu Sava underlines, Olson believes that the association of individuals with similar thinking could lead to the organization of collective action.

In the 80's, the theory of resource mobilization was completed by the network theory. Social organizations and existing networks provide a flow mobilization of resources.

In the United States the model of political process replaces the theory of resource mobilization in the late '80s.

In the light of this analysis, certain political contexts favour the emergence of social movements. Studying protests in American cities, Eisinger points out that it can not be ignored that "the political opportunity structure for the study of social movements. Social movements occur when the political system creates opportunities and niches for groups able to organize themselves for collective action" (Eisinger apud Sava 2013, 83).

As the author of the book states, the most important factors of collective action are interests, organization, mobilization and opportunity. All these variables need to work together.

In the third chapter, Ionel Nicu emphasizes the sources of the social movement describing sociological perspectives on collective action (Marxism, Liberalism, Functionalism, Weberianism). In the fourth chapter the author highlights the role of emotions in social movements and the symbolic dimension of the collective actions. Ionel Sava describes the collective techniques of 'meaning diffusion' or 'meaning carriers' and 'the framing theory', 'how ideas and meanings contribute to the diffusion and functioning of the collective actions' (Sava 2013, 132). In the next chapter, the author shows the role of the social networks and media in social movements, dimensions more and more relevant in our times. At the same time, he tries to define the collective identity that became a vehicle for the construction of the proximity network. The sixth and seventh chapters capture the dynamics of social movements, taking into account the organization and the

leading of the social movements, types of organizations, highlighting the mechanisms and the protests processes. The political process is an important factor for the study of social movements. Throughout history, some social movements took even to the changing of the system. The author describes the process of generating change, and 'the formation of collective actors' (Sava 2013, 254). In the tenth chapter, Ionel Sava focuses on the relationship between democracy and social movements, highlighting the role of interest groups, political parties, etc.

For those who want to conduct a research on social movements, an important chapter is the methodological one. Theoretical and methodological investigation includes theoretical perspectives (structuralism, phenomenology, cultural approach) and 'combines use of methods and techniques' (Sava, 2013, 333). In the last chapter, the author presents several case studies of social movements (movements of Latin American, popular movements from Brazil, Bolivia, and Mexico- 'Zapatista' movement).

The book is useful and helpful for those who want to study the social movements, a field that has not been studied in Romania as a subject in its own right in universities. The field of social movements summarizes studies in sociology, politics, history, etc. It opens a new path of study and reflection both for specialists in various fields, NGOs, but also for policy makers.

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