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Working paper: <u>Social movements, active citizenship and democratic innovation: an overview</u>

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Introduction

One of the defining qualities of democracy ever since its appearance until its contemporary state has been participation. In this regard "citizen participation is usually considered a valuable element of democratic citizenship and democratic decision making" (Michels, 2011, 276) being that the positive effect of participation on the quality of democracy is taken almost axiomatically in democratic theory. Participatory democracy is one of the operative terms in the modern debate on the outreach and the limits of participation, be it in the more cooperative manner of dialogue between the state and civil society actors, or the more conflictual modalities of political participation characteristic for social movements.

Speaking of the contemporary state of democracy worldwide, it seems that it is exactly its participatory aspect that is undergoing a fundamental crisis on a global scale. The crisis of participatory democracy is reflected in two ways: as a fundamental attitudinal disillusionment in democracy as a political order; and as a troublesome behavioral relation between the citizens and institutions that should both represent them and be a locus for their political participation. This crisis can be diagnosed via "decline in electoral turnout, low levels of trust in politicians and political institutions and decline in membership of traditional mobilizing organizations such as political parties and trade unions" i.e. a "growing disconnection between citizens and decision-makers - the difference and distance between the subjectivity, motives and intentions of citizens and those who make decisions in their name" (see in Smith 2009, 4-5). One of the critiques of democracy, introduced in the theoretical discourse by radical democrats, lies exactly in its representative aspect that can often suffocate its participatory potential. In other words, radical democrats claim that representative democracy has a fundamental flaw in its design because it "alienates political will at the cost of genuine self-government, impairs the community's ability to function as a regulating instrument of justice, and precludes the evolution of a participating public in which the idea of justice might take root" (Barber 1984, 145-46).

Another important point of origin of the dissatisfaction with the participatory aspect of democracy is the lack of innovation in the different modalities of participation in democratic processes. The traditional forms of participation seem as insufficient in satisfying the growing complexity of the democratic processes. As Dalton (2004, 204) points out "stronger parties, fairer elections, more representative electoral systems will improve the democratic process, but these reforms do not address expectations that the democratic process will expand to provide new opportunities for citizen input and control." This means that it is crucial to engage in examining the possibilities in

democratic innovation in political theory and practice, trying to establish a connection between the possibilities and limits of representative democracy, and social movements as possible carriers of the process of democratic innovation. The possible new arenas and modes of engagement, pioneered by social movements can be a partial answer to the crisis of participatory democracy, or at least a considerable part of it.

This working paper engages in examining the connection between social movements, active citizenship and democratic innovation. Primarily, the paper defines the terms social movements and active citizenship in order to establish the categorial apparatus it operates with. The following part of the paper briefly analyzes social movements as democratizing agents as well as the reasons for reemergence of social movements in Southeast Europe. In the last part the paper analyzes the concept of democratic innovation, its definition, theoretical and methodological approaches as well as empirical findings in the area.

Social movements and the concept of active citizenship – defining the terms

The renewed interest in social movements after the Second World War triggered a growing literature, and with it, a plethora of definitions and academic approaches trying to define what social movements are, but also delineate between social movements and similar categories such as participatory democracy, active citizenship, protests, societal scenes, opportunity structures etc. Identified as a key element of civil society, academic interest on social movements intensified when "new social movements theory started to appear in the late 1960s and 1970s to explain new waves of political activism – student protests, feminism, peace and environmentalism" (Purdue 2007, 6). The increased attention to social movements globally, but also in the Western Balkans in the last three decades, requires that, on the one hand one needs to define the term, and on the other hand the term needs precise locating in the academic debate, which seems as a sensible starting point when discussing social movements and their current role in democratic innovations in the Western Balkans.

To this end, academic literature on social movements defines the term as "informal networks, linking individual and organizational actors engaged in conflictual relations to other actors, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Della Porta and Diani 2006, 30). This starting definition focuses on informality, solidarity, conflict and protest as fundamental defining categories, without saying much on the ultimate points of solidarity, conflict and protest as categories on which social movements are based on. Blumer (1969, 99; in Crossley 2002, 3) partly answers the questions of the end point of social movements by defining them as "collective enterprises seeking to establish a new order of life (…) derive their motive power on one hand from dissatisfaction with

the current form of life (…) from wishes and hopes for a new system of living" where "the career of a social movement depicts the emergence of a new order of life". Aiming to create new realities and change social dynamics is central to defining social movements but blurs the line between social movements and other social structures that cooperate with the government on political and social issues via modalities offered by participatory and deliberative democracy.

The conflictual dimension of social movements apropos an established social order to which social movements relate and conflict with, does not limit them to only challenging the state apparatus and practices. In this sense, "social movements do not limit themselves to presenting demands to decision makers; they also more or less explicitly express a fundamental critique of conventional politics, thus shifting their endeavors from politics itself to meta-politics" (Offe 1985; in Della Porta 2009, 1). Additionally, as Reiter (2009, 44) specifies "social movements express a fundamental critique of conventional politics, affirming the legitimacy (if not the primacy) of alternatives to representative models of democracy." Such an approach to social movements identifies their broader social role as agents of change and challenging of not just current social order, but representative democracy as such. In between lines, defining social movements as carriers of social alternatives, stresses the need for innovation and creation in the social domain, meaning that the ultimate end of social movement is not mere protest or challenging the state or representative democracy only, but also social invention and innovation in the political domain, usually occupied by state actors.

No matter the number of definitions taken in account, social movements need to be differed from other modalities/actors of the political arena and distinguished from other civil society actors, with which social movements often get confused with. The first line of division on social movements is their difference from other political actors in the political arena. Academic literature points out to the modalities of action that social movements rely on as the main difference between political actors and social movements. Della Porta and Diani (2006, 28) argue that:

> "Until the early 1970s debates on social movements emphasized their noninstitutionalized nature (…) Even now, the idea is still very popular that social movements may be distinguished from other political actors because of their adoption of "unusual" patterns of political behavior. Several scholars maintain that the fundamental distinction between movements and other social and political actors is to be found in the contrast between conventional styles of political participation (such as voting or lobbying political representatives) and public protest…"

The dichotomy conventional/unconventional styles of political participation, once again, directs the debate towards the conflicting capacity of social movements within a framework of action tools that often are not accessible to political actors, or, to say the least, are less frequently chosen as a first option in politics (protests or rallies for example). However, it is the opposite approach that really distinguishes social movements from political actors (as well as other civil society actors). The question is not the limits of action of political actors but also the limits of social movements, that usually do not engage into lobbying activities or policy change through negotiations with the state. Lobbying or negotiating are political instruments that lack direct friction and conflict in their essence and are mostly utilized by other civil society actors such as pressure groups, lobbies, interest groups or advocacy think-tanks. In this sense "social movements do challenge the power of the state (…) relying mainly on protest as a means to put pressure upon decision makers, they challenge the power of the state to impose its monopoly on the use of legitimate force" (Della Porta 2013, 152). While lobbyists, think-tanks or interest groups negotiate or pressure the state through non-conflictual or less conflictual modalities, social movements rely on protest and direct clash with its repressive apparatus.

Another important characteristic of social movements is the level of adaptation to social circumstances and optimization of resources when opportunities for social action occur. Although different individuals and spontaneous groups might use similar modes of action to social movements, this is still not a sufficient qualifier to define them as social movements. As Meyer (2002, 13) points out "movements are bound neither by narrow issues nor by particular tactics" and "although some individuals or groups habitually use the same years to pursue their goals, for example, firebombing, demonstrations, boycotts, or electioneering, most choose strategies they think most likely to be effective, given their perceptions of resources, opportunities, and constraints, including organizational limits and self-imposed moral commitments". This also speaks to internal traits of social movements which relate to at least minimal organizational structure (unlike ad-hoc movements) and internal moral code which is always centered around common grievances and dissatisfactions (Laclau, 2005), which delineates between social movements and massive outbursts of popular dissatisfaction, which could originate from different sources and are not by necessity centered around a single topic or even related issues.

Social movements are civil society actors. But, as it was already mentioned, they are a specific type of civil society actors that usually engage into activities that include some level of resentment towards the state. Individuals or other organized actors of civil society also participate in resolving public issues, but their participation is fundamentally different from that of social movements. Font and associates (2014, 1) point to this important distinction:

"The first characteristic that differentiates this kind of participation from that related to social movements or voluntary associations of various types is precisely the central role played by a government in organizing or providing legitimacy to these processes. This characteristic is important because it provides a direct link between participation and governmental decision-making processes."

Participatory democracy, in this sense, is a concept more often associated with civil society actors that interact with the state in a more cooperative manner, through cooptation and cooperation rather than through friction and protest, modalities reserved for social movements. Social movements engage into a bottom-up pressure, but so do other actors, although not with the same intensity, purpose or approaches. In case of policy processes the state vouches for the credibility of the policy process in an effort to coopt civil society actors giving legitimacy to specific policy change. In case of social movements, legitimacy is exactly what is being challenged in the process of organized action usually through modalities far more drastic compared to other civil society actors.

One of the concepts that commonly follows the concept of social movements in the concept of **active citizenship**. This concept has changed its meaning over time and includes a number of qualities that supersede both the classical meaning of the term "citizenship" as well as the minimal conception of activism, equal to forms of general social engagement in matters of public interest. In this regard the origins of the term go back to the 1980s, with its original meaning being the exact opposite of the term it later evolved into. In this regard, as Kearns (1995, 157) explains, the term was coined in the eighties in the times of Thatcherian neo-liberal governing, designating an anti-collectivistic and individualistic concept of transfer of responsibility for welfare from the state to the citizens "whose compulsion to get active is to derive from their personal morality and the prospect of the approbation of others, rather than from feelings of community belonging and communal endeavor." Defined in this manner, the concept of active citizenship was originally a product of the political times of the 1980s oriented towards individualism, quest for freedom (again individual rather than collective) as well as an effort of limiting the welfare state by relying on individual moral reform, followed by the pursuit for personal economic progress and neglect for community and society as a collective organism. Active citizenship was coined to be the exact opposite of what it means at present.

As the debate on active citizenship developed, and the concept of the welfare state regained political ground, active citizenship was no longer related to its original meaning. Defining the term can be derived from a more practical, activist aspect, and from a more philosophical aspect, both intersecting at certain common values (justice, inclusion, activeness etc.). Practical, activist oriented literature approaches active

citizenship more from the perspective of an acquired skill of the democratic citizen, seen as a prerequisite for participatory and deliberative democracy. In this sense active citizenship is both an equilibrium between rights and responsibilities of the democratic citizen as well as a "form of literacy (…) acquiring knowledge and understanding so as to make informed judgements and having the skill and courage to respond in the appropriate way, individually or collectively" (European Economic and Social Committee 2012, 7). Additionally, it is a concept that cannot be limited to participating in institutions of the system i.e. it is "more than participating in representative democratic structures (…) or involvement in formal volunteering (…) active citizenship also means involvement in participative democracy, namely that people are involved in developing policies that directly affect them" (Irish Traveler Movement 2006, 3). This concept of active citizenship is furthermore "underpinned by a set of fundamental values that includes respect for the rule of law, democracy, justice, tolerance and open-mindedness, and regard for the rights and freedoms of others" (European Economic and Social Committee 2012, 7). The concept of active citizenship outgrows the formal engagement of citizens in democratic institutions and places their proactiveness in shaping the policy field based on acquired information and knowledge followed by a constantly present readiness to engage in matters related to the common good of society. This definition, however, lacks the element of friction between social movements and the state, and directs the debate towards other civil society actors prone to cooptation and cooperation. Thus, the concept of active citizenship needs a broader elaboration, so one could effectively see the connection between active citizenship and social movements.

Larsen (2001, 81) goes a step further giving active citizenship the quality of a redistributive mechanism of social welfare. This understanding relates active citizenship to "the relocating of obligations and responsibilities to the community level" followed by a refreshed communitarian approach (as in contrast to the increasing individualization of society) as well as "co-operation and a division of labor between private, public and volunteer actors and organizations regarding the production and delivery of welfare services". In this case, active citizenship is defined in terms that directly defy its original meaning, which is however insufficient to establish a direct relation between social movements and active citizenship, unless social redistribution is being achieved through means that surpass dialogue and cooperation between civil society actors and the state.

One of the most prominent authors in the field of active citizenship, Engin F. Isin, approaches the problematics of active citizenship from a broader, philosophical perspective. His definition of the concept of active citizenship distances the term from its formal aspects of citizenship as a legal status or a relation between the state and the individual. In this sense Isin and Nielsen (2008, 2) stress that "what is important about citizenship is not only that it is a legal status but that it involves practices – social,

political, cultural and symbolic (…) formal citizenship is differentiated from substantive citizenship and the latter is seen as the condition of the possibility of the former." The accent here is not merely on the individual's formal belonging to a community defined by an act of legal regulation, but more to a proactive and activist community of citizens, which by no means limit themselves in their "repertoires of contention" (Haunns 2007, 157).

Moreover, Isin (2009, 381-382) proposes, in essence, three prerequisites when researching acts of citizenship meaning the following:

1. the first principle of investigating acts of citizenship is to interpret them through their grounds and consequences, which includes subjects becoming activist citizens through scenes created[1];
2. The second principle of theorizing acts of citizenship recognizes that acts produce actors that become answerable to justice against injustice;
3. The third principle of theorizing acts is to recognize that acts of citizenship do not need to be founded in law or enacted in the name of the law.

These three fundamental principles of active citizenship proposed by Isin[2], completely change the understanding of the term in a direction that has far more social outreach and expands the possibilities for social action in times when injustice cannot be resolved through legal means, or there is no political will for such a resolution. Legal regulation in many societal spheres is either insufficient or even biased in favor of specific social groups, thus the need for broader social action is implied as a necessity. This specifically means that "active citizenship is about being willing to contribute to social action as well as to political debate, to be willing to get involved" (Scheithauer 2016, 19) which speaks on behalf of an ideological and proactive carrier of such social action and involvement. This is the link between active citizenship and social movements whereas it is exactly the role of social movements to promote and strive

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[1] Here Isin (2009, 381) even proposes to replace the term 'active citizens' with 'activist citizens' whereas "activist citizens engage in writing scripts and creating the scene, active citizens follow scripts and participate in scenes that are already created. While activist citizens are creative, active citizens are not."

[2] Glover proposes three dimensions of active citizenship (see in Scheithauer 2016, 19): "ethical citizenship, integrative citizenship, and educative citizenship. Ethical citizenship understands active participation in a collective strive towards the public good as an essential feature of citizenship. The personal sacrifices that are made aid some public benefit and are hence ultimately also enjoyed by the person who sacrifices. Integrative citizenship needs engagement in a wide sphere of participation that can go beyond formal political practices and institutions. The concept involves the belief that every individual plays an assortment of roles, and that this form of citizenship enables the individual to integrate their various roles, and to immerse themselves into the community, hence causing them to have a greater appreciation of the collective. In addition, this stance holds that one needs an understanding of the personal interests of members of the wider community as well if they are to truly act as members of the public, and hence, the democratic activity that is associated with citizenship aids such an understanding as well. However, educative citizenship (Dagger, 1997) refers to the process that develops a moral, practical, and intellectual sense of self in individuals when they practice their citizenship."

at efforts resulting in social change, based on their understanding of what is just and what is not, very often devoid of legal limits. Social movements, being organized and having a common internal denominator in the face of specific social challenges, are the fundamental *modus operandi* in the efforts for achieving change in times when societies might experience idiosyncratic democratic deficits or plain authoritarianism. In such cases, social movements can be a powerful democratizing agent, a possibility often neglected on account of political elites.

Social movements and democratization

Both strands of literature focusing on democratization and social movements have been surprisingly neglecting the link between activism of societal actors and democratic change. Most of the seminal literature on democratization has emphasized the role of elites in the processes of democratic transition (O'Donnel and Schmitter 1986, Przeworski 1991), paying little attention on the role of popular organizations (Bermeo 1997). In a similar vein, the literature on social movements for a long time has been predominantly tied to inquiries within the realm of the well-established democratic regimes in Western Europe and North America (Rossi and della Porta 2009). However, the processes of post-communist transition that emerged at the end of the 20th century have triggered a growing academic interest on the role of civil society actors and social movements in toppling authoritarian regimes and assisting the processes of democratic consolidation. Societal push for change is considered to be of major importance for a successful democratic transition, as "both civil society organizations and social movement organizations possess agency that is important for advancing democracy in a country", the former providing a channel for participation and monitoring of policies and the latter being crucial for confronting authoritarian rule (Noutcheva 2016, 695). In this sense, Linz and Stepan (1996) have pinpointed civil society as one of the five arenas that are necessary for successful democratic transition and consolidation. The emerging global civil society has also been advocated as a powerful democratizing agent (Kaldor 2003, Keane 2003, Kaldor et al. 2012). On the other hand, it has been argued that the mobilizing force of social movements has played an important role in the outcomes of the 1989 revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe and the Arab spring revolutions in 2011(della Porta 2014a). Similar examples can be traced in the postcommunist contexts of the Western Balkans and the former Soviet space, from the Serbian revolution in 2000, through the various 'color revolutions' such as the 2003 'rose revolution' in Georgia, the 2005 'orange revolution' in Ukraine, the 2005 'tulip revolution' in Kyrgistan, up to the 2014 'Euromaidan' revolution in the Ukraine and the 'colorful revolution' in Macedonia in

2016. In this sense, the social movements literature has also emphasized the cross-national aspects of diffusion of pro-democracy societal mobilization and spillovers of protest experiences across countries (Steward 2009, della Porta and Mattoni 2014)

Tilly provides an important argument on the correlation between social movements and democratization. His historical account of social movements detects a strong correspondence between democratization and social movements which is based on three causal factors: first, "the same processes that cause democratization also independently promote social movements", second, "democratization as such further encourages people to form social movements" and "third, under some conditions and in a more limited way social movements themselves promote democratization" (Tilly 2004, 131). Therefore, social movements provide agency for democratization when they are able to broaden and equalize the range of participants in public politics, limit the proliferation of categorical inequalities into public politics and provide integration of previously divided networks into public politics (Tilly 2004, 143). Similarly, Rossi and della Porta (2009, 182) observe six enabling factors for democratization: a non-syndical strike wave and/or a pro-democracy cycle of protest, increased political organization in urban areas, an actively engaged church (in Catholic countries), external pressure from human rights networks, division among the authoritarian elites on whether to continue to sustain the non-democratic regime and existence of pro-democratic elites that can absorb the demands for democracy coming from below.

However, there are important limitations to the effectiveness of these bottom-up approaches to democratization. Politicization and inconsistency of civil society actors and social movements, limited capacities for representation, accountability deficits as well as profound mismatches between grass root and elite conceptions of the role of civil society in the political system have

been pinpointed as significant barriers to the effectiveness of popular agency in democratic change (della Porta 2014a, 2014b). In this sense, while pro-democracy mobilization has been able to influence authoritarian elite change, in many cases of post-communist transition, the long-term democratization effects have been underwhelmed by stagnation or even regression of the processes of regime transformation. It is precisely this oscillating quality of democracy that brought about the revival of social movements in Southeast Europe.

The revival of social movements in Southeast Europe

The debate on social movements in the last decade has been enriched with voluminous contributions from Southeast Europe, both in practice and theory. The political and social conditions in the countries of the Western Balkans, and more specifically in former Yugoslavia, have given birth to a plethora of social movements

that seem to mushroom in the volatile political ambient of the countries in the region. Some of the reasons for the appearance and the expansion of social movements are more obvious and stem from deeply enrooted democratic deficits of the societies in the region, while other social movements address more particular and specific grievances of individual societies.

The constant backsliding of democratic standards in the region (Nations in Transit, 2018; Wunsch, 2016) as well as the constant threat of state capture in almost all countries in former Yugoslavia (see Dzankic 2018, Bieber 2018, Pesic 2007) seem to be the fundamental provocation for the appearance of social movements. However, it is almost a rule that social movements in the region do not instantly expose themselves as massive nor they instantly become an umbrella under which different unsatisfied groups unite against a common adversary, predominantly in the face of local authoritarian regimes. On the contrary, most of the social movements find their origin in very particular issues and gradually "snowball" to massiveness as popular dissatisfaction grows.

The initial moment for organized social actions and initial appearance of social movements can vary. In some cases, such as Serbia, Croatia or Macedonia the motivating agent can be commodification of public spaces ('Ne davimo Beograd' in Belgrade, 'Pravo na grad' in Zagreb or 'Prva Arhibrigada' in Skopje) where the protest is aimed at specific state/city projects of arranging urban parts of the city (predominantly city centers) in a manner that is highly inappropriate aesthetically, economically or even in terms of a symbolic or historical content (Vangeli, 2011). Dolenec and associates (2017) designate this abrupt transformation of urban parts of the city as "neoliberal urbanism" indicating that the struggle for the city overpasses the framework of the urban locus in which social conflict occurs while "it encapsulates larger processes of economic and political change" (ibid, 1). Such a manner of commodification can have exclusively economic origins but can also aim at "hegemonic representations" (Muhic and Takovski, 2014) of national myths and historic content, and has a deeply divisive political potential. Nevertheless, in all mentioned cases, popular dissatisfaction occurs as commodification attempts intensify whereas social movements answer in a manner of "anti-instrumentalism" (Matkovic and Ivkovic 2018, 2) meaning opposing neo-liberal logic of urbanization through commodification of public spaces. These movements later reveal themselves as the embryo of the equivalential chains of unfulfilled demands (Laclau 2005, 74) which later form new chains just to grow to full scale anti-authoritarian revolutions such as the 'Colorful revolution' in Macedonia or the 'One in five million' movement in Serbia.

In other cases, societal grievances have a completely different origin. Failed (or better failing) states in the region frequently fail to satisfy sometimes even the basic needs of their citizens which creates dissatisfaction that can be a combination of social disenfranchisement followed by constant ethnic capture, as in the case of Bosnia and

Herzegovina. As Mujkic (2016) argues, ethno-nationalist elites in Bosnia and Herzegovina in both 2013 and 2014 were not just forced to combat social dissatisfaction with problems such as social identification numbers or corrupt privatization but were also forced to regain their position of ethnic entrepreneurs challenging their class position as well as "the rarely questioned ethno-nationalist ideological hegemony" (ibid, 1) they constantly benefit from. The protests in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 (problems with social identification numbers) and 2014 (false privatization of companies in Tuzla resulting in firing workers), as well as the newest set of protest in Banja Luka directed against the unresolved murder of David Dragicevic ('Justice for David') seriously endanger the deeply rooted positions of ethnic elites in Bosnian society and cause cross-cutting solidarity, on the border of a global social but also anti-ethnic revolution, still successfully kept under control by ethnic entrepreneurs on all three sides.

In a similar fashion, but devoid of any ethnic burden, the protests in Slovenia in 2012-2013 had an exclusively social component having "an anti-establishment orientation, with the movements made up of diverse groups of individuals, indignant that the political and economic elites have been unable to provide decent living standards following the 2008 financial crisis" (Toplisek and Thomassen 2017, 1384). These protests resemble the movement of the *Indignados* in Spain and the anti-austerity movement in Greece addressing exclusively social dissatisfaction but causing visible ruptures in the political tissue of the specific states where such movements appeared. Regardless of the reasons for their revival in the region, social movements use a more or less predictable set of instruments in their actions. Protests, blockades, public mock events, live performances or even throwing paint at state institutions are a number of methods that repeat, more or less throughout the region. The questions arise: can social movements innovate? Is democratic innovation compatible with social movements? What does the concept mean in its essence? What modalities of democratic innovation have proven successful? Can democratic innovation be reconciled with the concept of social movements?

Theoretical approaches to democratic innovation

In contrast to the elitist theories of democracy (Schumpeter 1976) that have dominated the academic debate in the second half of the 20th century, theories of participatory democracy (Pateman 1970) that have started to develop since the 1970s have stressed the importance of wider citizen participation in modern democracies. These theories on participatory and deliberative democracy, including ones on social capital, claim that participation gives citizens a more direct 'say', giving individuals and minorities a voice, it encourages civic skills and civic virtues, leads to rational decisions

based on public reasoning, increasing support for the process and the outcomes (Michels 2011, 276). They advocate an inclusive approach that seeks mechanisms that will provide platforms of representation of diverse and often marginalised groups (Young 1990, 2000). Authors have even argued for empowerment of the excluded groups to challenge the existing institutions (Blaug 2002, 107)

Citizen participation can take many different forms that often go beyond the mainstream institutional setups that are common in democratic polities. Following the emergence of a plethora of divergent and creative participative mechanisms around the world, the literature on democracy has coined the term 'democratic innovations' which denote "institutions that have been specifically designed to increase and deepen citizen participation in the political decision-making process", which engage with citizens directly and are formaly institutionalised at a local, national or transnational level (Smith 2009, 1).

Citizen involvement outside the electoral process may take various forms depending on whether citizens are approached as individuals and asked for opinions or votes, or collectively as a group. Combining these two criteria, four types of democratic innovation can be distinguished: referendums, participatory policy making, deliberative surveys, and deliberative forums (Michels 2011, 279-280).

Similar types of participation are often described with different concepts. For example, what is considered participatory policymaking can also be referred to as interactive policymaking or governance, citizen governance, or citizen participation in decision making. Deliberative surveys are also referred to as deliberative polls. Deliberative forums can include citizens' juries, citizens' conferences and dialogues, consensus conferences, and planning cells. Comparative research has shown that referendums and participatory policymaking have more impact on decisions compared to deliberative surveys and forums (Michels 2011, 281). The former provides instant results and engages more people, while the latter arises the share of opinions and exchange of arguments but takes longer and includes fewer people. The argument of 'participatory democrats' that participation gives citizens a say in decision-making appears to be accurate in the case of referendums and participatory policymaking. Likewise, the emphasis on public reasoning by 'deliberative democrats' applies more frequently on deliberative surveys and forums (Michels 2011, 290).

Constitutional deliberative democracy is a term very often referred to all cases which have the aim to involve the general public in the deliberation. It is based on inclusiveness as a principle that should motivate the presence and the voice of marginalised social groups, helping to create a mechanism for their effective recognition and representation. In addition, Fung and Wright (2001) introduced the concept of Empowered Deliberative Democracy which favours democratic experiments of participation based on "(1) a focus on specific, tangible problems, (2) involvement of ordinary people affected by these problems and officials close to them,

and (3) the deliberative development of solutions to these problems" (Fung and Wright 2001, 17). According to the authors, such types of deliberative democracy enhance the practice of practical orientation, bottom-up participation and deliberative solution generation.

The actual involvement of citizens, how they transform public service, and how they are themselves transformed by the service is another aspect that affects democratic innovations. Such involvement of citizens allows the public sector to deliver services differently, at the same time, incorporating them into the institutionalised system of provision. This also calls attention to differences between co-production, co-management and co-governance regarding citizen participation (Pestoff and Brandsen 2008, 496).

Bovaird defines the process of co-production (also see Whitaker 1980; Percy 1984; Alford 1998; Needham 2006, 2008) as a "provision of services through regular, long-term relationships between professionalised service providers and service users or other members of the community, where all parties make substantial resource contributions" (Bovaird 2007, 5). This is also highlighted by Pestoff, who emphasises the essence of reciprocity between the service and the citizen (Pestoff and Brandsen 2008). The process of co-production, in Bovaird's words, not only involves the connection between a provider and a set of users, but it specifically appears when this relationship is supported by community activists and professional staff (Bovaird 2007, 5). Bovairds uses as an example the Participatory Budgeting (PB) in Porto Alegre, Brazil, project widely used in the literature as a model of engaging citizens in the policy-making process. For Alford, clients, volunteers and citizens are the three main actors who participate in this co-production process together with government organisations. The relationship of each one of these actors with the public institutions differs. Thus, Alford considers an "exchange" of the link between the client and the government organization, though a deeper one than just changing money for a received service: it is an exchange that calls "for new capacities and skills on the part of public organizations and their staff, but it also holds out the promise of better government" (Alford 2002, 51). To develop his arguments, Alford explores the academic legacy of Elinor Ostrom (see Ostrom et al. 1978), Parks et al. 1981, Ostrom 1996), who developed the concept of co-production at the end of the 1970s. Her work, in Alford's words, "offered a new way of understanding the roles of citizens and clients in the political economy, which bridged the gap between the market and the state" (Alford 2014, 313).

Exploring further into the concept of co-production, Bovaird identifies the main benefits and limitations of the process. In his opinion, one of the main pillars of the co-production process is the relationship developed by both parties, professionals and users, where the two of them inevitably take risks and are somehow forced to trust each other. Another benefit is the role played by leaders of community groups, who

often mediate between public organisations and individual co-producers, using this position to amplify the views of the latter. On the other hand, however, Bovaird considers that the relationship created among these actors could reduce public accountability by "blurring boundaries between the roles of public, private and voluntary sectors." (Bovaird 2007, 17).

Another extansivelly explored concept in the literature is that of deliberation in the decision-making process. For authors like Bobbio, deliberation changes depending on the several entry positions of the participants in the process. He highlights different features "depending on whether the dialogue comes about among insiders (experts, politicians, bureaucrats, stakeholders, representatives of interest groups) or among lay citizens" (Bobbio 2010, 3). He concludes that although politicians, militants, and activists are not so willing to be helped, the support for the decision-making process is "absolutely necessary". The author recognises that "not all deliberative processes are equally capable of guiding participants towards a constructive and not manipulated dialogue" and that the best configuration "is that in which participants have a good understanding of the issue but are willing to suspend their judgment" (Bobbio 2010, 7). He summarises his arguments by underlining the inevitability of negotiation and co-operation processes between citizens and administrations.

The phenomenon of the 'minipublics' (small groups of citizens carefully chosen according to different criteria to represent several viewpoints in order to deliberate on a given topic) serves Reuchamps and Suiter to explore the changes in deliberative democracy that have made countries such as Iceland and Ireland reform their constitutions towards a more deliberative democracy. The authors take many other empirical cases to draw a broader tendency of a "constitutional turn" in deliberative democracy in Europe. The scholars agree on several features shared among all the deliberative democracy experiments conducted in Europe: "they are based on some form of deliberation among samples of citizens; they aim to foster positive and constructive thinking about solutions (they are not simply protesting movements); they seek genuine debate about policy content; they seek solutions beyond adversarial politics, and they seek to identify common ground" (Reuchamps and Suiter 2016, 2).

Some other authors like Michels and De Graaf insist specifically on the role of citizens in participatory processes. The authors defend the idea of integrating the citizens in the process at an early stage to increase the support and legitimacy of the policies. Michels and De Graaf take as an example one of the instruments of citizen participation in the Dutch town of Eindhoven: the digipanel, "a citizens' panel on the internet, which allows a permanent group of citizens to be regularly consulted on different policy issues" (Michels and De Graaf, 481-482).

Admitting the pressures that public administrations face from a more demanding public, Bradwell and Marr take a look over the tensions created among the different actors of the new trends in the policy-making process (administrations and citizens,

mostly): "between top-down strategy and bottom-up aspirations; between the demands of large-scale services and smaller, localised solutions; and between the new ideas and problems posed by users and the legacy of traditional service delivery" (Bradwell and Marr 2008, 45). By conducting a survey, both scholars come to the conclusion that we should go beyond "the language and constraints" of the process but also recognising the variation by sectors and territories of the deliberative processes (Bradwell and Marr 2008, 45).

Methodological considerations

Two issues relating to the design of stakeholder dialogue need elaboration, as they are critical for the methodological implications of constructive conflict. The first issue concerns learning as the aim of stakeholder dialogue; the second issue concerns procedures for stakeholder selection that are congruent with the nature of sustainability issues (Cuppen 2011, 25). Stakeholder dialogue aims to learn through constructive conflict about the properties of the concept of "diversity", in order to identify it. "Variety" refers to the number of categories into which the elements can be divided. "Balance" refers to how the elements are distributed among the categories. "Disparity" refers to the degree and nature to which the categories themselves are different from each other." (Cuppen 2011, 28). As an example, the "Biomass Dialogue" aimed to develop ideas about sustainable biomass chains for the Netherlands and to identify what is needed in order to realise these chains. (Cuppen E. 2012, 33). "Elaborating on constructive conflict as a central design issue for stakeholder dialogue on wicked problems, we observe a need for (both theoretical and empirical) research on methods to support the design of stakeholder dialogue. Especially stakeholder selection procedures that are based on the empirical identification of diversity of perspectives require more attention" (Cuppen E. 2012, 40).

Although the importance of the first phases of a dialogue (identification of perspectives and stakeholder selection) are vital, that hardly touches upon the phase of synthesis of a dialogue. Sometimes it is relevant (or tempting) to evaluate the quality of dialogue by its outcomes (such as the usefulness of results, the agreement on courses of action and the uptake in actual policymaking). However, significant errors can ensue from a strong focus on outcomes as it may mean neglect of input to the dialogue. The 'wicked' character of the problems under consideration and the subsequent aim of problem structuring legitimate a strong focus on input to the dialogue, i.e. bottom-up identification of perspectives and stakeholder selection. Obviously, as a next step, synthesis is an integral part of a dialogue that needs attention as well. Further empirical research can shed light on how synthesis can be attained in a dialogue where diversity is at the core (Cuppen 2012, 41).

The intense focus on the outcome might neglect input or *vice versa,* leading to the question does it take „two to tango"? (Osborne and Strokosch 2013). Understanding the principles of co-production of public services can be done by integrating the services management and public administration perspectives. Co-production of public services is the opposite of producing an actual good that is the final product of a process. Production and consumption in such a case are two separate processes, but when it comes to the production of public service both occur at the same time. Democratic innovations are influenced by co-production based on the input and output game. It is not the provision of a standardised and pre-packaged product, but rather a value-based interaction. In reality, such elements are more of a continuum than a steady state. Services such as residential care and education are instances where the co-production is high, because consumption and production take place both at the same point in time and in the same place, with direct face-to-face contact (Osborne and Strokosch 2013, 11).

Implementation of democratic innovations is highly determined by an actual understanding of the process of introducing new habits. The main intentions of co-production are user empowerment and participation. Both are long-time goals of public services, though with only limited achievement. User empowerment is challenged by the abilities of individuals to influence the outcome of public service experience. As such, it is best approached through the mode of consumer co-production (Osborne and Strokosch 2013, 38). Participation by users, on the other hand, is concerned with the role of the service user in taking part in the public service planning process, so that the public service system can address their needs more effectively in the future.

Participants in the execution or delivery of public service are as important as the policy-making that leads to solutions. How can deliberative mini-publics as innovation affect policies on controversial issues?

Structured deliberation 'takes place in ad hoc mini-publics involving lay citizens in structured discussions on a particular public decision, with the support of professional facilitators who design the processes and lead the discussions' (Ravazzi and Pomatto 2014, 1). The Genoa mini-public arena is one of the examples where the first meetings were open to all the residents, and the participants in the planning workshops were recruited through the "outreach" method. Indeed, the arena had its flaws, but it produced three key mechanisms:

1) giving space for expression to committees and associations, it favoured the legitimation of the process by activists usually hostile to the deliberative approach;
2) using the outreach method to include citizens during the process, it favoured the access of innovative ideas and the emergence of useful "bridge-proposals" to redefine the stakes and to stimulate the formulation of constructive solutions;

3) making the potential for citizen mobilisation visible to the institutional authorities, it highlighted the costs (concerning the loss of consensus) of the missed consideration of the citizens' recommendations (Ravazzi and Pomatto 2014, 10).

To reduce the possibility of conflicts when sharing unpopular opinions with unknown people the need for facilitators when designing the deliberative mini public is crucial. However, when the issues are highly controversial, as in the case of land use policies, the pressures of the deliberative setting can collide with common cognitive dynamics. "When a conflict is developing, the actors tend to accentuate the common mechanism of categorisation, attributing negative prejudices, such as incompetence or opportunism to the people with opposed opinions" (Ravazzi and Pomatto 2014, 13). Since these types of mini-publics do not usually have the formal power to make the final decisions of the political authorities binding, understanding how they could improve their capacity to influence policy decisions becomes a crucial matter. The empirical studies that have so far addressed this issue have shown that some factors are relevant in specific cases of participatory and deliberative processes: the existence of an active civil society interested in the topic, a clear commitment by the institutional authorities who are responsible for the final decisions, and a proper timing of the mini-public, when several options are still available in the decisional process (Ravazzi and Pomatto 2014, 16).

Empirical findings

The Belgian experience with a citizens' summit involving a large number of people inspired many groups of citizens and politicians in the Netherlands to organise a similar type of event. Although the designs of the G1000s differ, they do share a number of features common to all mini-publics. Mini-publics are, first and foremost, characterised by the realisation of structured deliberation, enabled by independent facilitation (Reuchamps and Suiter 2016, 1-2). They are designed with the aim of being deliberative, which means that the focus is on following the ideal deliberative procedures; opinion formation and the exchange of arguments are more critical than decision-making. A second key element is the participation of a broadly inclusive and representative subgroup of an affected population. Except for the G1000 in Uden, sortition was used as the selection mechanism to obtain a diverse body of participants. Such experiences cannot be easily transferred elsewhere, as democratic innovations are context-based. With its complicated, and, arguably, not entirely completed democratic transition, as well as its strategic commitment to European Union (EU) accession, Serbia is an illustrative case, representative of similar (post-communist,

non-EU) countries where democratic innovations are seen as another means to increase participation of the citizens and bring the democracy closer to EU standards (Damjanovic 2018, 2). As an example, building on a case in Serbia, the theoretical conceptualisation of the role of ICTs in democratic innovations was further hindered by at least three other factors. Firstly, the relations between ICTs and democracy are studied in different disciplines with almost no overlap (Damjanovic 2018, 3). The second is the burden of technological determinism, which dominated the first studies in the field, and has led to distinctly techno-optimistic and techno-pessimistic evaluations of the potential impact of ICTs on democracy. High expectations in the exploration of the concept have only recently been replaced by more temperate observations based on empirical studies. Finally, given the diversity of ways ICTs can be used to enhance democratic practices, it is difficult to identify the features that are common enough to constitute a discrete category of democratic innovations (Damjanovic 2018, 3).

Based on empirical results derived from different experiments, Alarcon and Font come up with different general conclusions on the deliberative and participative decision-making processes in Southern Europe. In this region, the authors argue, the bottom-up promotion of these institutional practices is not typical since public institutions have directed most of these processes: "participatory experiences do not start from below: they are mostly commissioned by public authorities that maintain significant control over their development and that, in many cases, carry out these experiences by themselves, mostly using workers from the administrations" (Alarcón and Font 2014, 21). They also draw interesting conclusions regarding the sign of the political forces behind these processes, concluding that "the left is generating participatory mechanisms in municipalities where there is no prior institutionalisation to a greater degree than the right, which has tended more to maintain already existing instruments" (Alarcón and Font 2014, 10). The scholars underline the weakness of civil society in the region, which brings, however, a more powerful strength of participatory over the deliberative tradition.

Brownhill also draws some thoughts on participation models based on his case study: Cowley Road Matters (CRM), a plan in the Oxfordshire County Council for the renovations of roads which included in the process of deliberation a local organisation to consult the residents and a team of national consultants to design the road. The project shows that the initiative brings the results of "the uneasy coexistence of different modes of governance", highlighting the "tensions between the construction of categories of the public and the mobilisation around the complexity of diversity within society" (Brownill 2009, 373). Brownhill concludes that although participatory planning "remains elusive, a focus on the dynamics of governance can contribute to opening up the possibilities for participation while being aware of the limitations" (Brownill 2009, 373).

Font and Blanco have researched the citizen juries in Spain, which consist "of a randomly selected group of people who decide on a given public policy after an exhaustive informative process" (Font and Blanco 2007, 561). After carrying out several interviews, both authors realised that most of the organisers and participants were satisfied with the results of the juries, but also recognised that had created excessively high expectations about them. Font also highlights the need for promoting new mechanisms like this in order to create political trust, but remarks that in order to do it, "these mechanisms need first to gain a wide degree of public acceptance and eliminate some of the problems that still generate reluctance" (Font and Blanco 2007, 584). The authors underline the exceptional nature of these mechanisms, which are "an isolated experience in a context with very limited opportunities for participation" (Font and Blanco 2007, 585). However, despite all these mechanisms found and analysed in many countries around the globe, we are still far from generalising these deliberative and participating processes in the EU. According to the 2013 Eurobarometer (Eurobarometer 2013) on the degree of engagement of the European citizens in participatory democracy, just an 18% of respondents had taken part in a public debate at a local or regional level, a figure which dropped to 4% and 1% in the cases of a national or EU level, respectively. On the other hand, nevertheless, some 34% of the respondents signed online petitions and 28% shared their concerns on public issues on social media (Eurobarometer 2013, 27).

Generally speaking, research has pointed towards several factors that can limit the success of democratic innovations. Most of the barriers are related to the design of the instruments for deliberation. In many cases there are structural problems with the representation of citizens, as most forums of citizen participation tend to be overrepresented by people that are wealthy, well-educated and already civically and politically engaged (Michels and de Graaf 2017). In this sense, criticism has been raised on weather citizens have the competence and skills for political judgements (Smith 2009) in addition to resource deficits that often severely limit the range and the quality of the respective democratic innovations (Smith 2005). Finally, external factors by definition play a crucial role, as in many cases the variation in the effectiveness of democratic innovations has been dependent on political commitment by state public authorities (Bierle and Konisky 2000; Abers 2000; Baiocchi 2005).

Conclusion

Both social movements and democratic innovations in modern societies emerge as a reaction to the deficits of representative democracy to provide a wider platform for inclusion of diversity of interests and values of common people. However, both phenomena at the same time operate on two divergent paths. While the modus

operandi of social movements has been the accumulation and expression of protest energy in regard to failing institutional designs of democracy, innovative democratic practices seek (quasi) institutional mechanisms to fill the gap in democratic participation by promoting democratization from below. This tension has also been evident in scholarly research where the two disciplines have been reluctant to engage in interdisciplinary endeavours. The lack of interaction is a reflection of a wider separation in the literature on social movements and civil society in general (della Porta 2014b) which emphasizes the contrast between a social movement research agenda that emphasizes the role of conflict, grassroot contention and extra-institutional deliberation; and a civil society research agenda which favours a more structured, moderated and peaceful platform for democratic participation based on co-optation and cooperation.

However, empirical examples demonstrate that innovative democratic practices can be utilized by social movements as a platform for realization of their policy demands. The much discussed case of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre is often used as a reference point (della Porta 2013, 182) for a democratic innovation that has been able to establish participatory bodies which are "both effect and cause of a wider political mobilization that enabled groups to participate who had not participated before, and, importantly, those bodies have much wider powers than the more policy-specific bodies considered in the US cases' (Cohen and Rogers 2003, 251). In this sense, more emphasis should be put on notions of complementarity between the functions of social movements and democratic innovations. While social movements serve as platforms for raising the voices against exclusion of divergent and discontent societal groups from the political processes, innovative democratic practices can serve as bottom-up platforms for channelling those voices into the policy making institutional arenas.

In sum, the analysis of the literature presented in this paper raises several questions of interest for a wider research agenda of the linkage between social movements and democratic innovation: are there connecting points between social movements, active citizenship and democratic innovation? How can democratic innovation contribute to participatory democracy? Are social movements compatible with the concept of democratic innovation? Upcoming comparative research should aim to provide comprehensive answers to some of these questions.

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