

# Protest and Social Movements in Political Science

Kateřina Vrablıkova<sup>1</sup>

## 1 Introduction<sup>2</sup>

Political science is next to sociology, which is a home discipline of social movement research, the second most important discipline that contributes to the study of collective action, social movements, protest, and contentious politics (Diani & Cısař, 2014; Meyer & Lupo, 2010). For instance, 65 percent of the authors that published in the last two years in *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* (a major journal publishing social movement research) are affiliated to sociology; and 22 percent of authors have their primary affiliation to political science.

How does political science study collective action, social movements, protest, and revolutions? There are several excellent reviews on the topic (Andretta, 2013; Cısař, 2015; Meyer & Lupo, 2010). For instance, Cısař (2015) embeds the most important works of social movement and political participation literature in traditions of classical political and social theorists like Marx, Weber, Polanyi or de Tocqueville. Meyer’s and Lupo’s (2010) chapter in the previous edition of this volume traces contributions that political scientists have made to research on protest and social movements since the 1950s. They argue that contentious politics is studied in political science to a greater extent than is usually assumed. Individual studies are, according to them, not connected to one paradigm or literature, as in sociology, and are more dispersed across various sub-disciplines of political science.

The goal of this chapter is to map current research on social movements and protest in political science. Drawing on findings of Meyer and Lupo (2010) the focus is put on studies that do not necessarily fall under the field of research that is recognized as “social movement literature”, which is mostly developed in sociology, shares similar theoretical approaches (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001, p. 14) and is produced by a relatively interconnected network

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<sup>1</sup> The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, USA; vrabljkova.1@osu.edu.

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of authors (Diani & Císař, 2014). This analysis should thus allow the detection of political science research on social movements and protest that we do not usually read in social movement outlets, such as *Mobilization*. Specifically, the chapter examines topics and puzzles, theoretical and analytical approaches, and methods and data that appear in political science scholarship on movements and protest. Based on results from the analysis of abstracts that were presented at conferences of the American Political Science Association and European Consortium of Political Research and focused on contentious politics, the chapter identifies several aspects where the two fields – political science and social movement literature developed mainly in sociology – can contribute to each other.

## **2 Approach**

The observation of Meyer and Lupo (2010) – that political science scholarship on social movements and protest is not connected under one literature, as in sociology, and that it is rather dispersed across various sub-disciplines of political science – is a starting point of this chapter. If they are correct, it means that it is probably harder to detect political science production on social movements and protest and that there actually might be important research that we are missing. Thus, in order to capture political science contribution to research on contentious politics, we need to go beyond our usual citation networks in social movements literature as well as in various sub-fields of political science.

This chapter tries to achieve this goal by conducting a content analysis of contributions presented at political science conferences. The chapter is thus not a typical literature review of substantive debates in the most important works. In addition to Meyer and Lupo (2010), there are a number of reviews providing this type of evidence, such as the Oxford handbooks and Blackwell encyclopedias and companions on social movements, political science, political behavior, political sociology or comparative politics (e.g. Boix & Stokes, 2009; Dalton & Klingemann, 2009; Della Porta & Diani, 2015; Goodin, 2011; Nash & Scott, 2004; Snow, Della Porta, Klandermans, & McAdam, 2013; van Stekelenburg, Roggeband, & Klandermans, 2013). Readers are urged to consult those reviews and entries on the development of research on the specific topics and sub-fields. In contrast, this chapter aims to systematically analyze recent research on social movements and protest in political science and to map the main trends in topics studied and methods used in this discipline.

Specifically, I analyze papers presented at the most recent conferences organized by two most important political science associations: the American Political Science Association Annual (APSA) Meeting 2015 and the 2015 General Conference of European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR). Both the APSA and ECPR conferences represent the most important and widely attended political science events. The American Political Science Association is a world leading professional organization for the study of political science. It was founded in 1903 and has more than 13,000 individual members in more than 80 countries (APSA, 2016). There were 3,905 papers presented at the 2015 conference that took place in San Francisco from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

The ECPR was founded in 1970. Unlike APSA, the ECPR is organized on the basis of institutional and not individual membership; it has 320 institutional members in more than 50 countries world-wide (ECPR, 2016). There were 1,351 papers presented at the General Meeting that took place in Montreal between August 26 and 29, 2015. The 2015 ECPR General Meeting differs from the previous ECPR conferences in the fact that the meeting took place outside of Europe. This is probably related to there being a lower number of papers than in the previous General Meeting in Glasgow (1,613 papers). It also stands behind a higher share of Canadian authors (eleven first authors among 94 papers on contentious politics) than at usual General Meetings organized in Europe. The results presented at this paper should thus be seen with this caveat. However, still 68 first authors of papers on contentious politics (72%) came from European universities. Also the share of other non-European presenters of contentious politics papers – seven authors from US universities and eight from universities based in other countries – might be similar to a distribution of authors at other ECRP conferences organized in Europe.

To be sure, there are other important political science associations and their conferences, such as the Midwest Political Science Association or the International Political Science Association. A wider coverage of other conferences or more years would go, however, beyond the practical possibilities of this paper. Also there are other outlets than conferences, such as books or journal articles where current research in a discipline is presented. Conferences, however, seem to be the best tool to indicate the disciplinary affiliation in this case. There is no political-science-only journal or book edition on social movements, and the field is anyway expected to be dispersed across various sub-disciplines. Also, it can be expected that political science conferences will be attended mostly by scholars, who consider themselves political

scientists. Nevertheless, though this analysis probably provides a more or less reasonable picture, it still draws only on abstracts of papers presented in only two conferences. The result, thus, should be read with this fact in mind.

I searched papers' titles, abstracts, and keywords (in the case of the ECPR) available in electronic archives of programs of the two conferences with keywords indicating contentious politics: protest, contention, movement, mobilization, and activism. The fact that any of the keywords was included in the abstract, title or in keywords indicates that the topic of contentious politics is relatively important in a given paper (i.e. important enough to be mentioned in the limited space of a title or of an abstract that should represent the main argument of the paper). Then I manually coded all abstracts. In the first round, I excluded abstracts that did not focus on social movements or protest, such as abstracts that used a word "mobilization" in a sense of "army mobilization" or "mobilization of voters".<sup>3</sup> This process revealed 94 papers presented at the ECPR and 284 papers presented at the APSA. Also I coded a number of standardized variables for each paper, such as primary sub-field field or geographical region. In the second step, I read the abstracts again and used more qualitative approach to track specific research topics within individual sub-fields. This second round of coding was also used to correct mistakes in coding of standardized variables done in the first step. The following analysis relies on this data.

The text proceeds as follows. First, it discusses research on social movements and protest in political science in general, connects it to dominant social movement literature and to the differences between American and European scholarship. The subsequent section focuses on sub-fields in political science that study contentious politics; it depicts their main research questions, approaches and data analyzed. The paper then examines methods used in political science to study social movements and protest. The final section provides a general evaluation of political science research on contentious politics and outlines suggestions for future research in the discipline and inter-disciplinary collaborations.

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<sup>3</sup> I also excluded a few APSA papers that did not have abstracts available in the archive.

### **3 Social Movements and Protest in Political Science**

Many social movement scholars, particularly those drawing on new social movement theory (Cohen & Arato, 1994; Melucci, 1996), see movements and protest mainly as cultural phenomena and emphasize their expressive character. Social movements, however, have an important relevance in politics as well. They belong among the main political forces in democratic as well as non-democratic political systems; influence public opinion, public policies and regime transformations (Amenta, Caren, Chiarello, & Su, 2010; Giugni, Mcadam, & Tilly, 1999); and protest is a conventionally used participatory repertoire by ordinary citizens as well as by political parties (Norris, Walgrave, & Aelst, 2005; Vráblíková, 2017, pp. 96–97). Given that social movements, collective actions, protest or revolutions are political phenomena par excellence, it is striking that the home discipline of this research is sociology and not political science.

Political scientists are probably to blame for the origins of the strange disciplinary allocation of social movement literature in sociology and not in political science (Meyer & Lupo, 2010, p. 112). At the time when protest politics and social movements boomed in Western democracies in the 1960s and 1970s, (American) political science was dominated by behavioralism, systems theory and structural functionalism. The normative grounds of this paradigm were inherently anti-movement. The static perspective of politics that praised systemic equilibrium and advocated status quo was normatively biased against actors aiming at more fundamental social change. Conservatism and anti-movement sentiments of political scientists also reacted to political demand to ideologically defend American democracy against non-democratic threats. The fact that mass mobilization played an important role in Nazi Germany as well as in the communist Soviet Union probably played a role in the demonization of more intense forms of people's involvement in politics, social movements and collective action in general (Almond & Verba, 1989, pp. 1–3).

Political science mostly kept this reserved attitude toward social movements despite already at that time available empirical evidence (Inglehart, 1979; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Parkin, 1968) that clearly showed that the scary picture of protest in Western democracies drawn by this paradigm – irrational, alienated from institutional politics, democracy-threatening – is not even close to reality. The distance from and a low interest of political science in contentious politics is noticeable also in the fact that sociologists have used political science concepts for the

analysis of social movements and protest to a greater extent than have political scientists themselves. It has been mostly sociologists, who actually developed and used originally political science concepts like political opportunity structure or resource mobilization, and not political scientists (Meyer & Lupo, 2010, p. 112).

How much attention does political science pay to social movements and protest today? As already said, Meyer and Lupo (2010) suggest that political science probably focuses on contentious politics more than we might think. Looking only at the two studied conferences; the discipline produced in one year almost four hundred papers that dealt with social movements and protest. Those numbers constitute 7% of all papers presented at the ECPR and 7% of the APSA papers. Given that political science is not a primary home discipline for social movement research and that this discipline is traditionally dominated by research focused on electoral politics, public opinion or international relations, the numbers can be read as relatively high.

Moreover, the number of political studies that focus on social movements or protest in a broader sense will be probably even higher. Several political science sub-fields study objects that are very similar to social movements and protest but give them different labels, such as civil society organizations or interest groups, or they include protest under more general categories, such as political participation. Though social movement literature on one hand, and civil society, interest group or political participation literature on the other, focus on partly overlapping and similar phenomena, the communication among those sub-fields is limited (see more below); they use different theoretical frameworks and cite different literature. Interest group or participation literature also does not usually use keywords characteristic of social movement research, such as protest, contention or mobilization, and thus a vast majority of those studies do not fall under our sampling frame.

Though rigorous over-time comparison is not possible as we do not have similar data on past conferences, it seems that the interest of political scientists in contentious politics has generally increased compared to previous decades. The foundation of the ECPR Standing Group on Participation and Mobilization in 2004 illustrates this trend. The standing group brings together scholars focusing on social movements and researchers working in the field of political participation and gives an explicit institutional recognition to the topic of social movements in European political science. It organizes or co-sponsors panels at the General Conference, one-

week workshops at the Joint Session and endorses Summer School on Social Movements (“ECPR Standing Group on Participation and Mobilization,” 2016).

#### **4 Social Movement Literature and Political Science**

In order to capture the dispersed character of most of political studies on contentious politics (Meyer & Lupo, 2010), it is useful to distinguish between studies that are recognized as “social movement literature” (Della Porta & Diani, 2015; Diani & Císař, 2014; Klandermans & Roggeband, 2010; Snow, Soule, & Kriesi, 2004; van Stekelenburg et al., 2013) and other studies that deal with the topic of social movements, protest or collective action but do not belong to this field of literature.

Our data shows that a great majority of research on social movements and protest in political science does not fall under the “social movement literature.” Specifically, I coded a reference to social movement literature if the abstract either explicitly relates to this literature (e.g. it states that “social movement studies have shown...”) or mentions “classic agenda” of social movement research. Social movement scholars (McAdam et al., 2001, p. 14) agree that there is a classical theoretical paradigm in social movement research consisting of political opportunities, mobilizing structure and framing processes. Even though not all authors in this literature agree with the classical agenda or focus on its concepts (Della Porta & Diani, 2015; Klandermans & Roggeband, 2010), this theoretical framework is considered a standard “default” view to refer to if people are to publish in this literature. If an abstract named specific authors working in social movement literature (for European scholars see Diani & Císař, 2014) or used some of the concepts (e.g. “policing”, “consensus mobilization” or “political opportunities” when discussing the effect of context) it was coded as referring to social movement literature.

Only 20 percent of political science papers on social movements and protest made a reference to social movement literature. 80 percent of papers did not use concepts that belong to the classical social movement paradigm and/or used a different theoretical framework and vocabulary to describe very similar phenomena (i.e. instead of the word “framing” the abstracts talked about “narratives” or “discourse”). These numbers clearly show that the fact that political scientists do not belong to the main crowd publishing under the brand of social movement literature does not necessarily mean that they would not focus on the topic. Political scientists

actually study protest and contentious politics; however, these studies are not usually embedded in the classical social movement literature that is developed primarily in sociology.

This evidence, more importantly, points to the low level of inter-disciplinary research on social movements in general and limited communication between sociologists and political scientist studying contentious politics (Klandermans & Roggeband, 2010). On the one hand there is a field called social movement literature that is dominated by sociologists and includes a smaller number of political scientists, on the other hand there is a larger group of political scientists, who work on contentious politics but do not belong to, and do not communicate with, the dominant social movement literature. The question of how this separation matters for substantive findings on social movements and protest and what the two groups can learn from one another is the main focus of this analysis.

## **5 The American-European Divide**

The gap in research on social movements and protest (i.e. sociology dominating the “social movement literature” and political scientists using mostly a different label and literature to study protest and social movements) goes very much along the lines of the American-European divide (Diani & Císař, 2014; Klandermans & Roggeband, 2010). The concentration of social movement literature in sociology and low presence in political science is most profound in the United states; in Europe the contribution of both disciplines to social movement literature seems to be more balanced (Meyer & Lupo, 2010). Our data show that only 16 percent of APSA papers on protest and social movements make reference to social movement literature; among ECPR papers there are 31 percent of abstracts that cite social movement literature or use concepts and theories developed by it. We can also see the greater connection between political science and social movement literature in Europe than in the US in the very existence of the ECRP Standing Group on Participation and Mobilization that was already mentioned above. While such a political science institution focused explicitly on social movements and run by scholars who publish under the brand of social movement literature exists in Europe, APSA has no similar section.

## **6 Political Science Sub-Fields Focusing on Protest and Social Movements**

What topics in social movements and protest do political scientists study? What research puzzles do they focus on and what methods do they use to address them? Figure 1 shows sub-fields in political science that study protest and social movements. The list of sub-fields is based partly on deductively pre-defined categories and is partly data driven. A research sub-field is understood as a more or less independent and coherent branch of literature. Studies falling under the same sub-field focus on similar topics or view different phenomena through the lenses of the similar topic; use similar language, theories, and some similar methods. The identification of a primary research-subfield is based on a) the branch of political science literature that the abstract identifies with (i.e. “drawing on political economy literature” or “most of political participation studies”) or on b) a topic or approach that the abstract deals with the most (e.g. opening sentence “democratization and regime transitions ...” or “most Western democracies experienced a great rise of populism”). A large number of abstracts fall under more research sub-fields. The primary sub-field is the field that is mentioned as the first one or the most often.

A high number of abstracts come from political violence (14%), social movements (13%), gender and LGBT politics (11%), ethnic, religious, immigration and regionalist politics (10%), and political theory (10%). Electoral and party politics (7%) and democratization and authoritarian regimes (5%) have a lower share. The following section discusses each of the important sub-fields in greater detail. Other sub-fields reach less than 5 percent share amongst the articles. Interestingly, the already mentioned fields that focus on very similar and partly overlapping objects of study, such as political participation literature or studies on civil society or interest groups constitute only a very small fraction of abstracts. Those sub-fields not only constitute separate fields of literature, but they also do not communicate much with each other. Studies on interest groups, civil society and political participation do not usually refer to studies and concepts from social movements and vice versa.

– Fig. 1 –

### ***6.1 Political Violence and Conflict***

Political scientists contribute to the study of protest and social movements to the greatest extent with studies that focus on political violence. The relatively high scope of political research on

this topic originates probably from the fact that research on political violence is, in general, “truly inter-disciplinary” (Peterson & Wahlström, 2015, p. 645). Unlike research on social movements that is primarily tied to sociology, research on political violence does not belong predominantly or solely to one single discipline. It draws on a number of academic disciplines including political science, international relations, sociology, law, criminology and security studies and developmental studies. This sub-field also shows one of the strongest connections to the social movement literature compared to other sub-fields. 24 percent of studied abstracts mention standard social movement concepts, such as policing or political opportunity structure, or explicitly recognize this literature.

Political science abstracts focused on violence and contentious politics fall under three clusters of studies according to the analytical level they use to study political violence: macro, meso and micro. The first type – macro-level studies – focus primarily on the level of national politics and examine political violence that is exercised or sponsored by the state and is directed against collective actors that challenge the existing relations of power (Peterson & Wahlström, 2015, p. 636). General social movement literature has extensively examined this topic under concepts like repression or policing (Davenport, Mueller, & Johnston, 2005; della Porta & Reiter, 1998; Earl, 2011; Peterson & Wahlström, 2015; Tilly, 1978). Similar to this literature, political science abstracts examine, for instance, the character of repressive strategies used against protestors (e.g. Caouette, 2015; Dukalskis, 2015), the effect of repression on protest and resistance of movements (e.g. Aytac, 2015; Earl, 2015; Jentsch, 2015; Shadmehr, 2015) or the influence of opposition movements on the regime’s repressive capacities (e.g. Sher, 2015).

The second type, meso-level studies focus primarily on the level of groups and organizations and studies how non-state actors deploy political violence (for recent review, see Bosi & Malthaner, 2015). The original bias of social movement literature towards non-violent and non-extremist movements has changed and social movement scholars have started to study issues, such as terrorism or violent regime opposition (Bosi & Malthaner, 2015, p. 441; Goodwin, 2012). The social movement literature seems to be, however, dominated by sociologists and only a few political scientists contribute to this field.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, political science abstracts focus on very similar topics to sociologists, such as the character, interactions

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, there were only three political scientists among 19 authors that contributed to two special issues in *Mobilization* on terrorism and political violence (published June 2007 and February 2012).

and repertoire of rebel and terrorist groups (e.g. Arellano, 2015; Mendelsohn, 2015; Stewart, 2015) or violent protest events and insurgencies (e.g. Johnson, 2015; Moutselos, 2015). Similar to literature on movements of ethnic and religious groups (Muro, 2015), some of the abstracts also study the role of ethnicity and religion in political violence and examine how ethnicity and religion are mobilized in secessionist movements, terrorist groups or civil wars (e.g. Feinstein, 2015; Huang, 2015; Isaacs, 2015; Schaedel, 2015).

The third group of studies takes a micro-level perspective and analyzes political violence at the individual level of radical or militant activists. Those studies examine, for instance, the effects of political violence (e.g. being a radical activist or experiencing repression) on future political activism (e.g. Accornero, 2015; Bautista, 2015; Cormier, 2015; Reynolds, 2015), reasons of demobilization of insurgents (e.g. Sen, 2015) or participation of women fighters in violent insurgencies (e.g. Tezcur, 2015).

Unlike other political science sub-fields and initial social movement research on political violence (Bosi & Malhaner, 2015) that devote a lot of attention to contentious politics in North America and Europe, this sub-field studies political violence particularly outside this region: in Middle East (25%), Asia/pacific (23%), Africa (9%), South America (7%) or use world-wide comparative framework (9%). Most studies are single country studies (52%) or focus on a few country cases (25%). Half of the studies are qualitative (56%); typical examples are analyses of how authoritarian states repress a specific movement or studies describing interaction among a few terrorist groups. 39 percent of abstracts rely on quantitative research; they use surveys of individuals or (violent) protest event analysis. This sub-field is one of the most theoretically oriented among the studied abstracts. 43 percent of studies aim at theory testing and 38 percent focus on building new theories.

## **6.2 *Social Movements and Protest***

Thirteen percent of the abstracts fall under the sub-field of social movements and protest. Though all studied abstracts focus on protest and movements, this sub-field examines contentious politics as a primary object of study or uses it as a main analytical perspective. Specifically, the empirical cases of contentious politics are viewed by those abstracts as indicators of social movements in general and not as instances of some other theoretical categories. For instance, a study that analyzes the women's movement as an example

representing other social movements falls under this category whereas a study approaching the women's movement from a perspective of women's politics and not as an instance of contentious politics belongs to sub-field of gender and sexual politics. Also, those abstracts focus primarily on social movements or protest, i.e. use contentious politics as crucial dependent or independent variable (e.g. case study of environmental movement and not a study of environmental policy advocacy in general), and do not primarily focus on other specific topics defined in other-subfields, such as violence or democratization. This category also includes abstracts that identify themselves primarily as social movement studies.

Unsurprisingly, this sub-field shows the strongest connection to social movement literature (46%). Those studies use concepts and theories, such as framing (e.g. Reisinezhad, 2015), political opportunities and action repertoire (e.g. Lamier, 2015; Wu, 2015). The rest of the abstracts that do not refer to social movement literature are not dominated by any other theoretical paradigm. Actually, a large number of abstracts that do not refer to theories from social movement literature do not rely on any other more developed theoretical framework. Those studies conduct rich description of interesting cases of social movements or protests in specific country contexts from a perspective of area studies, such as ethnographic study of anti-mining movement in Guatemala (e.g. Mneina & Van Thuyne, 2015) or of German autonomous "non-dogmatic" leftist groups (e.g. Leach, 2015).

There is a relatively high share of research that focuses on individual participation in contentious politics (e.g. Cha, 2015; Fenner & Slater, 2015; Ong, 2015; Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2015). Individual level studies are probably less common in general social movement literature (Diani & Císař, 2014). This trend corresponds to behaviorist tradition in political science that often uses nationally representative surveys of individuals to study public opinion and political behavior in general. Interestingly, those abstracts do not refer to concepts and theories used in political participation literature that focuses on a very similar topic (in addition to individual participation in demonstrations it studies also other forms of political activism) and uses in some cases similar methods (individual surveys).

The sub-field is in general dominated by qualitative approaches. 31 percent are descriptive studies that do not use advanced case study designs or developed techniques of primary data collection. Typically, those studies provide an inductive description of an interesting movement or a particular protest mobilization and use secondary data or use primary

data that is not based on extensive or systematic collection (e.g. a compilation of several semi-structured interviews and quotes from documents). 27 percent of studies are based on ethnographic research, and 10 percent on case study designs. 27 percent of studies rely on quantitative research, which is slightly below average compared to other sub-fields. Interestingly, this sub-field shows a lower focus on theory than the previous group of abstracts focusing on political violence and social movements. Only 64 percent of abstracts expressed the intention to develop or test theories (more or less average level compared to other sub-fields).

### **6.3 *Gender and Sexual Politics***

Students of women's and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) movements constitute one of the largest clusters within political science literature on contentious politics (Meyer & Lupo, 2010). Both the APSA and the ECPR have large standing groups/research sections on gender and sexual politics and provide a vibrant platform for political research on gender and sexual contentious politics.<sup>5</sup> However, despite this fact, a vast majority of existing women's and LGBT studies in social movement literature comes from sociology and not from political science.<sup>6</sup>

Similar to gender and sexuality movement studies in general social movement literature, political science production on this topic is fairly disconnected from the dominant social movement agenda (Diani & Cisař, 2014; Meyer & Lupo, 2010; Wulff, Bernstein, & Taylor, 2015). Only four abstracts (9%) in this sub-field use classical social movement concepts or refer to social movement literature. The separation of the two literatures originates from different paradigmatic perspectives (Wulff et al., 2015). Students of women's and LGBT politics see the distribution of power along the lines of gender and sexuality as the primary sources of domination and oppression. Because of that, gender and sexuality should be the key categories in the analysis of politics, including social movements. This perspective is, obviously, not shared by dominant social movement literature.

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, social movements and political participation constitute the largest paper sections at the biennial European conference on Politics and Gender organized by the ECPR Standing Group Gender and Politics organizes.

<sup>6</sup> Most of the classical authors in this sub-field of social movements are sociologists (e.g. Taylor, Bernstein, Epstein, Whittier, Staggenborg or Gamson) and only a few come from political science (e.g. Costain or Katzenstein), see Wulff and colleagues (2015).

Three types of studies can be distinguished among the studied abstracts in this sub-field. One group examines women's and LGBT activism within other movements, such the role of gender or sexuality in radical groups (e.g. Rajali, 2015; Tait, 2015) or in Occupy or Black Lives Matter movements (e.g. Gramby-Sobukwe, 2015; Montova, 2015; Navarro, 2015). The second group focuses on political advocacy in general. Along the lines of "multi-institutional politics" theory (Armstrong & Bernstein, 2008), those studies analyze protest and movements in multiple institutional arenas (e.g. church, family or market in addition to state), focus on various political repertoires, and study women's and GLBT movements together with many other actors that are involved in gender and LGBT advocacy. A large amount of abstracts thus focus on gender and sexual policy (state feminism or gender mainstreaming) as such. They examine how women's and LGBT groups interact with other advocacy actors in affecting policy-making or gender/sexual equality or how they are influenced by those policies (e.g. McKinney, 2015; Morgenstern, 2015; Winter, 2015). They study a whole variety of repertoires used by women's and LGBT movements: from lobbying over shelter volunteering, to protest (e.g. Adam, 2015; Delage, 2015). In addition to movements, they examine political activism done by various types of actors that mobilize around the feminist and sexual agenda, such as experts, NGOs or party leaders (e.g. Hoard, 2015; Schreiber, 2015).

The third group of studies focuses on cultural aspects of women's and LGBT activism. However, the focus on cultural aspects is not as dominant in political science as it is in sociological literature on gender and sexual movements (Wulff et al., 2015). Also, unlike sociological studies that primarily focus on identity (Taylor & Whittier, 1992) or emotions (Jasper, 2011) and use an interpretative/constructivist perspective, political science abstracts examine cultural aspects of contentious politics in more objectivist/positivist fashion<sup>7</sup> and study, for instance, the substance of arguments that activists make or feminist or bisexual self-identification (e.g. Avanza, 2015; Smith, 2015).

This sub-field is dominated by qualitative research. 84 percent of the abstracts specified some type of qualitative research (case study research (two abstracts), interpretative research (five abstracts), ethnographic research (18 abstracts), Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) (one abstract), non-specified description (four abstracts)) as a main method. Interestingly, a vast

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<sup>7</sup> Only five abstracts studying women's and LGBT movements used a strong version of interpretive/constructivist paradigm (i.e. not only seeing gender and sexuality as social constructs but also using interpretivist methods).

majority of those abstracts do not indicate a theoretical ambition to study causality. Only five abstracts aim at testing theories (12%); 11 papers (26%) focus on theory building, however most of those theory-building abstracts deal with concept specification and not with the development of causal theories. More than half of the studied abstracts do not have ambition to bring a theoretical contribution.

#### **6.4 *Ethnic, religious, immigration and regionalist politics***

About 10 percent (39 articles) of political science papers on protest and movements focus primarily on ethnicity, nationality, race, religion or immigration and examine contentious politics of groups “whose distinctiveness is based on national origin, culture, language, religion, territory, or phenotype” (Okamoto, 2013, p. 861). This area of research is well established in general social movement literature that studies protest mobilization of those groups, such as movements of immigrants, as well as their role in state-building, such as separatist movements (Eggert & Giugni, 2015; Muro, 2015; Okamoto, 2013; Olzak, 2013; Tarrow, 2012).

Political scientists studying contentious politics and ethnic, religious or regionalist mobilizations do not often cite classical social movement literature. Only seven abstracts (18%) refer to this literature. Similar to studies on gender and sexuality movements, most abstracts in this sub-field perceive the ethnic, religious or territorial group status and identity as a central research problem. Most of those studies thus primarily focus on racism, nationalism, or religion *per se* and view protest and social movements only as one of many other elements related to this topic.

Specifically, one group of abstracts examines policies and discrimination related to ethnicity, race or religion. For instance, they study how movements fight racism, how immigrant, ethnic or religious movements interact with other advocacy actors to influence policies and how they, in addition to protest, use other repertoires of action, like activism in community self-help groups or party politics (e.g. Evans, 2015; Filler, 2015; Spense, 2015; Tungohan, 2015). A second group of studies focuses on the role of ethnic, religious or territorial identity for individual participation in protest. Those abstracts study protest and other political activities within the identity groups, such as political activism among migrants in Europe or Black communities in the USA (e.g. Garcia-Casanon, 2015; Manatschal, 2015) or focus on how having the minority status affects individual level political activism (e.g. Immerzeel, 2015).

A third group of studies examines the topic of ethnicity, religion and regionalism from the perspective of the state and focuses on nationalist and separatist movements (e.g. Fliervoet, 2015; Kernalegenn, 2015; Sambanis & Schaedel, 2015). This group of studies is closer to political violence sub-field than it is to studies on gender and sexual movements. However, unlike similar studies in political violence that study violent separatist movements or civil wars, this literature focuses on non-violent separatist movements and mobilization outside of armed conflicts. According to Muro (2015, p. 187), social movement scholarship is biased toward violent and rebellious aspects of ethnic and nationalist protest and pays less attention to actually more numerous non-violent ethnic and national movements. Political science production on this topic seems to be more balanced in this sense as more attention is given to non-violent aspects of ethnic, national, religious or regionalist mobilization.

In general, studies on ethnic, religious or territorial minorities do not focus on cross-country comparisons very much. 60 percent of the studies examine only one country and 28 percent compare a few countries. A majority of the studied abstract (67%) also focuses on North America and Europe; those studies examine for instance, Vietnamese or Latino minorities in the United States or African immigrants in France. 10 percent of studies focus on Middle East and 10 percent on other countries in Asia/Pacific region. 56 percent of studies in this sub-field are qualitative. They use ethnographic research (six abstracts, e.g. field study among immigrants), case-study designs (three abstracts, e.g. comparative analysis of two religious groups), interpretive approach to analyzing discourses (six abstracts, e.g. study of anti-racist discourse used by activists) or provide descriptive analyses that do not rely on systematic collection of primary data and/or do not use a developed case study research designs (two, e.g. a description of one campaign of a specific ethnic group). 37 percent of studies are quantitative. Quantitative studies in this sub-field rely either on individual-level surveys or analyze counts of events. Unlike abstracts on gender and sexuality movements, this sub-field indicates a relatively high level of theoretical ambitions. Almost a half of studies test theories and one quarter focuses on theory development.

### ***6.5 Political Theory***

Social movement literature does not pay much attention to political theory. Though a lot of social movement studies have their roots in the work of classical political and social theorists or in

democratic theory (Císař, 2015; Eder, 2015), vibrant philosophical or normative debates are not being developed in this field. An important exception is new social movement theory that was booming in the 1980s and 1990s. It draws on social theory and political philosophy developed in continental Europe by authors like Melluci, Touraine, Habermas, Arato or Cohen (Buechler, 1995). The few works on social movements that recently dealt with political theory discuss authors coming from radical leftist, feminist or democratic theory (Barša & Císař, 2004; della Porta, 2013; Vráblíková, 2017, Chapter 8; Wulff et al., 2015).

Interestingly, political science production on political theory and contentious politics does not have much in common with work published on similar topics in social movements literature. Only two abstracts mention concepts or literature of social movement theory. Also, the studied abstracts do not deal with authors and philosophical concepts that are discussed by social movement scholars focusing on social and political theory (e.g. participatory, deliberative or radical democracy or authors like Habermas, Pateman, Fraser or Mouffe). Political theorists focus primarily on philosophical concepts like personhood or freedom and they use specific social movements or protest campaigns as illustrative examples (e.g. Davis, 2015; Goodman, 2015; McGravey, 2015; McWhorter, 2015). Other abstracts analyze protest or revolutionary politics from the perspective of classical political philosophers like Rousseau, Kant, or Machiavelli (e.g. Frank, 2015; Vieira, 2015) or examine work of political thinkers and activists, such as analyses of Ghandi's philosophy on the Indian political system (Dasgupta, 2015) or Wright's "protest novels" (Grattan, 2015).

## **6.6 *Electoral and Party Politics***

Seven percent of abstracts presented at the two political science conferences study contentious politics primarily from the perspective of electoral and party politics and look at how the two fields of politics interact and affect each other. Social movement literature disagrees on whether dominant social movement literature pays enough attention to parties and elections or not. While American research on social movements did not until recently pay much attention to the issue of political parties (Goldstone, 2003; McAdam & Tarrow, 2010, 2013), European students of social movements have worked on the topic to a greater extent (Kitschelt, 1986; Koopmans, 1995; Koopmans, Statham, Giugni, & Passy, 2005; Kriesi et al., 2012; Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, & Giugni, 1995; Rüdig, 1988). This difference is probably related to the already mentioned fact

that the division of the two topics between the two disciplines – social movements in sociology and political parties in political science – is more profound in the US than in Europe. Our data concur; the ECPR had relatively more abstracts on movements and parties than the APSA and a number of the APSA presenters in this sub-field actually came from European universities.

This sub-field shows one of the strongest connections to classical social movement literature compared to other sub-fields. Nine abstracts (35%) use concepts and theories coming from this literature or explicitly mention it. Two types of abstracts can be distinguished in this sub-field. One group takes a meso-level perspective on the topic. Those papers study the dynamics of interactions between social movements and parties (e.g. Cano & Caiani, 2015; Císař & Vráblíková, 2015), movements “within parties” (e.g. Draege & della Porta, 2015; Gervais & Morris, 2015), the development of parties from social movements (e.g. Macdonald, 2015; Trejo & Neto, 2015; White, 2015) or the capacity of protest to discourage electoral fraud (e.g. Lankina, 2015; Svolik, 2015). The second group of abstracts examines individual level political participation. Those abstracts study how movements and protest events mobilize voters (e.g. Campi, 2015; Draege & Masullo, 2015) or examine determinants of people’s decision to vote and participate in protest (e.g. Bush, 2015; Hale & Onuch, 2015).

Interestingly, only 11 of those studies (42%) focus on the region of North America and Europe; the rest of the studies come from all over the world: three studies from the Middle East, three studies from the rest of Africa, three studies from the Asian/Pacific region, and two from Southern America (the other four studies either do not indicate the region or conduct greater comparisons across several regions). While studies from North America and Europe mostly focus on the dynamics of relations between parties and movements, studies from other regions mostly analyze protest and electoral manipulation or electoral and protest mobilization of ethnic and religious minorities. Studies on movements/protest and parties/voting have the highest share of quantitative methods compared to other sub-fields (46%). The majority of the quantitative studies use surveys of individuals and study their voting and protesting. Most of the qualitative studies focus on social movement organizations. They are mostly descriptive and rely on secondary data and rarely use more advanced qualitative methods; case study designs, QCA or ethnographic research are not much used in this sub-field.

## 6.7 *Democratization and Non-Democratic Regimes*

20 abstracts (6%) focus on democratization and non-democratic regimes. One group of these studies examines the interaction between non-democratic regimes and protest. They study, for instance, how authoritarian regimes de/mobilize protest (e.g. Balta, 2015; Holbig, 2015), accommodate themselves with protest (e.g. Cheng, 2015; Liu, 2015) or how autocrats perceive protest (e.g. Weyland, 2015). The second group of abstracts focuses on the role of social movements and protest in democratic transition and consolidation. They study, for example, how mass mobilizations during regime transition affect consolidation of democracy (e.g. Haggrad & Kaufman, 2015; Taraktas, 2015) or the role of church in democratic movements (e.g. Kuhonta, 2015).

This sub-field completely ignores social movement literature. None of the 20 abstracts make any reference to concepts, such as action repertoire or political opportunities, or includes reference to this literature. The lack of communication between the two fields – democratization/non-democratic regimes literature and social movement studies – mirrors a long-lasting division (Meyer & Lupo, 2010). Research on democratic transitions and non-democratic regimes was traditionally dominated by studies that focused exclusively on interactions of a country's political elites or socio-economic conditions (Carothers, 2002; della Porta & Rossi, 2013; Meyer & Lupo, 2010). Those studies mostly reject the potential of mass based democratic revolutions to sustain democratic transition or see it as potentially harmful and anti-democratic (but see Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Similarly, social movement scholars have not paid much attention to non-democratic regimes or their transitions and focused mostly on contentious politics in democratic countries (but see della Porta & Rossi, 2013; Klandermans & van Stralen, 2015). As a result, most of the existing political science studies on democratic movements or protest in authoritarian regimes draw on specific area studies literature and not on social movement theory.

Eleven studies (55%) in this sub-field focus only on one country. This fact is striking, as the main independent or dependent variable of those studies is often at the country-level (e.g. either authoritarian regime or transition of this regime) and thus a majority of those studies does not have a variation in this variable. Those studies are mostly based on rich qualitative expertise on one country in a specific area. Five abstracts compare a few countries. Large N analyses of countries are very rare in this field (only two cases). In general, only five studies are quantitative,

six studies use qualitative description without advanced case study design or extensive data collection, and five studies rely on ethnographic research.

Unlike other sub-fields, studies on democratization and authoritarian regimes focus, understandably, primarily on regions outside Northern America and Europe (only one study), where there are non-democratic countries or states that currently go through democratic transition. Five studies focus on the Middle East and nine studies on Asia/Pacific. Four abstracts did not specify the geographical region of their study and imply comparisons of all cases of a specific type of non-democratic regime or a world-wide comparison. Interestingly, with the exception of one abstract that was presented at the ECPR, all studies were presented at the APSA. This is related to a greater geographical diversity at the APSA and Eurocentric character of the ECPR (see below).

## **7 Geographical Scope**

What are the countries where the contentious politics takes place that is studied by political scientists? How many countries do studies of social movements in political science usually compare? Figure 2 shows geographical regions and the extent to which they are examined in the studied abstracts. Abstracts focused on political methods and political theory are excluded. Since one abstract can focus on more regions, the N is greater than the number of abstracts (however, only 18% of abstracts focus on more than one region). The figure shows results for the two conferences separately as they significantly differ in their geographical focus. As we can see, the ECPR is considerably more focused on Europe compared to the APSA's focus on the US – 54 percent of the ECPR studies analyse contentious politics in Europe. This probably mirrors a general trend in European political science; consisting of two dozen national political science fields, the scholarship tends to focus more on the individual European countries than on international politics outside Europe.

The APSA shows much more balanced distribution in its geographical focus. APSA papers on contentious politics study countries all over the world and focus less on the United States (25%) compared to the attention that Europeans pay to Europe. The low presence of studies on American social movements at APSA is probably also related to the disciplinary differences between Europe and the US. Scholars studying American contentious politics in the US are primarily concentrated in sociology and attend sociological conferences whereas

researchers working on the same object of study in countries other than the US or Canada are in the US context more likely to be boxed in comparative politics and attend political science conferences.

Outside the US, Canada and Europe, the most attention is given to the Asia/Pacific region (69 abstracts in total). Here the most studied countries are Russia and post-soviet countries (16 abstracts), China (nine abstracts), India (eight abstracts) and Korea (four abstracts). 49 abstracts studied contentious politics in Middle East, particularly the Arab Spring uprising that is most often studied in Egypt (12 abstracts), Syria (seven abstracts) or in all involved countries (six abstracts). 16 abstracts examined contentious politics in Turkey. A lower number of studies focused on Latin America (most abstracts on Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru) and the rest of Africa (most often studied countries are Algeria, Mozambique, South Africa or the region as a whole).

– Fig. 2 –

A vast majority of countries from those regions are studied in single-country studies. 54 percent of abstracts focus only on one country and 25 percent study a few countries. Only 10 percent of all studies are large N comparative analyses that examine more than 20 countries.

## **8 Methods**

Political science scholarship on social movements and protest is dominated by qualitative research (64%).<sup>8</sup> However, only half of these studies rely on more advanced qualitative research designs and techniques, such as ethnographic research or case study designs. Specifically, 21 percent of all studies aim at deep, contextualized, qualitative knowledge gained via ethnographic and field research, in-depth interviews etc. This tradition of research does not focus greatly on specification of units of analyses or research designs; its strength lies in the gathering of a great amount of original empirical data on a given case. 10 percent of studies use case-study research

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<sup>8</sup> The method used is indicated by the analytical approach used to study the main argument of the abstract; i.e. it is based on the unit of analysis and not on the unit of measurement, and is based on a general paradigm and a research tradition used. This means, for instance, that a study testing an argument about differences across four countries was coded as a case study method even though it uses a large number of measurement units (e.g. protest event analysis in the last 20 years in the four countries).

designs (George & Bennett, 2005; Seawright & Gerring, 2008); i.e. the selection of one or two cases is guided by theory and focuses on a limited number of variables or mechanisms. Five percent of studies fall under interpretative research/paradigm – i.e. they strongly rely on a constructivist perspective on empirical reality and examine meanings and use interpretativist methods (e.g. discourse analysis). Only very few studies used Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA).

Half of the qualitative studies (27 percent of all abstracts) do not specify any advanced qualitative research design or more extensive primary data gathering technique. Those abstracts do not justify the selection of their cases (no research design or theoretical reasons mentioned) and do not specify methods of how they gather their data. The fact that the abstracts do not specify their methods in more detail does not necessarily mean that the actual papers do not use more developed methods. Unfortunately, the vast majority of papers are not uploaded to the conference databases (particularly at APSA) and thus it is not possible to examine this issue more systematically. However, I read some of the available papers and it seems that both trends are present. Some papers actually used more developed qualitative methods but did not write about them in the abstract. A larger number of papers seem to follow the second trend. Those papers do not write about and do not use systematic (qualitative) methods. They do not have a methods section, do not explain the system of how their data was collected and analyzed.<sup>9</sup>

31 percent of all studies are quantitative – they mostly rely on regression analyses studying surveys of individuals (48% of quantitative studies) or country-time units of analysis counting events (36% of quantitative studies).

What instances of contentious politics does political science study, i.e. what units of contentious politics are examined? Individual participation in protest or people's activism in social movements constitutes the largest portion (25%). The great focus on individual-level analyses of contentious politics is very different from the focus that the classical social movement literature has. Social movement literature examines mostly meso-level phenomena, such as movements, groups or protest events (Klandermans & Staggenborg, 2002), and not very much individual level participation. As already said, this focus in political science scholarship on movements matches the general political science behaviorism, interest in individuals and usage

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<sup>9</sup> For instance, they compile findings from different studies and reports with primary data from participant observation or a few semi-structured interviews, but do not explain how systematic the collection of data was, how they organized the field notes or how the respondents were selected, etc.

of surveys. However, standardized surveys are used only by a half of those studies, the rest relies on semi-structured interviews, biographies etc. Qualitative analyses of individual activism are practically lacking in political science literature on political participation.

Similar to social movement literature, examination of organizations (17%) and protest events (19%) are popular in this field as well. Only 10 percent of the studies focused primarily on the analysis of framing (i.e. statements). 27 percent of studies do not focus only on one aspect of contentious politics but study more instances at the same time; using mostly case studies those abstracts analyze “all about one case”, i.e. study specific protest campaign, movement organizations, their framing etc.

## **9 Opportunities for Interdisciplinary Research**

The analysis of abstracts from the two most important political science conferences showed that a vast majority of studies on social movements and protest in political science are not connected to social movement literature that is developed mainly in sociology. How does the low communication between social movement literature (homed primarily in sociology) and political science (that mostly does not relate to this literature) affect social movement research in general and what can the two fields learn from each other? The above presented analysis revealed some important insights.

### ***9.1 Theory and qualitative research***

Considering the strengths of social movement literature, this field has a robust theoretical framework. Particularly theoretically oriented qualitative research, which focuses on the development of concepts, mechanisms, and causal effects, has a very strong tradition in this field. As the analysis presented above showed, qualitative political science studies on contentious politics lag behind sociological qualitative research in this sense. There is a significant portion of political science studies that use description of various aspects of a given political phenomenon without theoretical guidance or ambition to develop theories. Though such studies might bring interesting empirical observations, their empirical contribution is also limited as they do not rely on more developed and systematic techniques of qualitative data collection. More theoretically ambitious and systematic empirical research would benefit qualitative political science scholarship on movements. Given that those studies often focus on regions and/or aspects that

have not been much examined by social movement literature (democratization or generally understood political advocacy in specific policy domains), there is a great potential in those studies to bring new theoretical insights.

## **9.2 Methodology**

Political science studies on contentious politics show, in general, lower diversity in methods and designs used. Quantitative studies mostly use either individual-level surveys or analysis of events; more advanced qualitative techniques, such as interpretive discourse analyses, QCA or even case study designs and process tracing, are not that much used. A productive combination of quantitative and qualitative research is also very rare here. This considerably limits the types of questions that political science studies can answer. Though we do not have similar data on social movement literature, it seems that the field combines a greater variety of research designs and methods of analysis (Klandermans & Staggenborg, 2002), such as surveys of social movement organizations, network analysis, historical research, frame analysis; and is generally more flexible in combining those methods in individual studies. Those methods and methodological flexibility seem to be mostly lacking in political science scholarship on social movements. Political science uses a limited variety of methods and types of data and shows a high level of specialization in specific methods and types of data used instead of flexible combinations of different methodological approaches.

The methodological strength and potential contribution of political science studies on contentious politics, however, lies in their focus on individual-level survey research, which is, in contrast, not so much developed in social movement literature. Combination of those methods could help social movement research empirically examine some important questions that have not been addressed so far. For instance, the integration of protest event analysis or of organizational surveys with surveys of individuals can be used to analyze the effect of social movement's recruitment on individual protest or the interplay between public opinion and protest mobilization – important questions that have, in general, received very limited attention.

## **9.3 Social movements and politics**

Considering other strengths and potential contributions of political science scholarship, the analysis showed a great advantage that political science has in comparison to social movement literature, i.e. that it is able to see social movements and protest together with other political

phenomena. One of the most important findings across various political science sub-fields studied above is that social movements and protest are usually studied as part of more complex political advocacy structures and action repertoires, such as NGOs, parties, experts, voting, contacting politicians etc.

In contrast, social movement literature seems to be rather movement-centric; it tends to study protest and movements mostly in isolation from other political forces. For instance, Kriesi (2015, p. 668) identifies this trend in the area of electoral politics: social movement scholars “tend to see movements everywhere, but do not connect them to political parties.” As he further explains, though political parties play a role in social movement theory of political process that conceptualizes them as potential allies, the more fundamental linkage between institutionalized and non-institutionalized politics between movements/protest and parties/elections – is overlooked by most social movement literature. Similarly, scholars of social movements and sociologists in general do not often study interest groups (Burstein & Linton, 2002, p. 383), civil society organizations or other advocacy actors (Anheier & Scherer, 2015).

As a result, social movement literature has not really examined the relationship between movements and other political actors or between protest and other forms of political advocacy and participation. How does protesting differ from voting or other forms of political participation? Is not protesting at pro-gay rights demonstration more similar to voting for Greens than it is to protesting at Pegida anti-refugee demonstration, which might actually be more similar to voting for AfD (German radical right-wing party)? This type of empirical question has not really been examined, either by sociologists or by political scientists.

The separation of social movements from politics is obvious also at the conceptual level. Social movement literature does not see social movements and protest as a component of a greater political realm including other political actors and strategies. Consider, for instance, the very definition of social movements or contentious politics. Most definitions name criteria, such as: collective claim-making or conflictual challenging of opponents or government; collective identity and some form of organization; some authors mention certain level of continuity and protest or extra-institutional forms of action.<sup>10</sup> Such criteria, however, characterize also other

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<sup>10</sup> Social movements are, for instance, defined as: “a distinct social process, consisting of the mechanisms through which actors engaged in collective action: are involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents; are linked by dense informal networks; share a distinct collective identity” (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 20); “collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites,

political actors and politics in general. Political parties, interest groups, trade unions or non-governmental organizations are also collective actors that get involved in conflictual relations with other political actors, make political claims, have collective identity and next to other activities also organize protests or are/can be extrainstitutional. Social movement scholarship mostly fails to see this connection and does not ask how movements relate to or are different from political parties or interest groups (but see Burstein, 1999; Císař, 2013; Kriesi, 2015), or how protest is connected to other types of political repertoires.

Those questions are, obviously, challenging as they might put the very foundations of social movement literature as an independent field of study into question because they can show that protest and social movements are not as special and unique as social movement scholarship usually assumes. However, this is still an open empirical question. Social movement research should actively search for those challenges and study next to movements also other political formations to be able to contribute to understanding of important political phenomena, such as right-wing populism, political advocacy in general, terrorism, political participation or civil wars.

Importantly, social movement scholars probably never intended to exclude social movements from politics. For instance, according to McAdam and Tarrow (2013, pp. 325–326), Tilly’s central claim was “that social movements and systems of institutional politics are mutually constitutive” and cannot be studied without each other. A lot of social movement concepts actually come originally from political science, such as political opportunity structure or resource mobilization (Meyer & Lupo, 2010), or aim at expanding the range of objects studied beyond traditionally understood social movements (e.g. the research program of contentious politics, McAdam et al., 2001). However, such interdisciplinary debates do not have a character of continuous, intense and up-to-date academic exchange and the discussion is rather self-contained among social movement scholars. Once social movement scholars appropriate political science concepts, they rarely keep the discussion with political science experts on given concepts open. Consider for instance, the concept of political opportunity structure that was imported to social movement literature decades ago. Though it is very closely related to the role of political

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opponents, and authorities” (Tarrow, 1998, p. 4); “collective and sustained efforts that challenge existing or potential laws, policies, norms, or authorities, making use of extrainstitutional as well as institutional political tactics” (Meyer, 2014, p. 12); “first and foremost, they are challengers to or defenders of existing structures or systems of authority; second, they are collective rather than individual enterprises; third, they act, in varying degrees, outside existing institutional or organizational arrangements; fourth, they operate with some degree of organization; and fifth, they typically do so with some degree of continuity” (Snow & Soule, 2009, p. 6).

institutions; most social movement literature on the topic does not get into more extensive debates with existing research on political institutions developed in political science. With the exception of two original political science studies on the effect of political institutions on protest (Eisinger, 1973; Kitschelt, 1986) and Lijphart's (1999) general study on political institutions, social movement writings on political opportunities have not really debated any other or more recent political science work on political institutions (e.g. Beyeler & Rucht, 2010; Kriesi, 2004; Meyer, 2004; Tarrow, 2011, pp. 175–176).

To be fair, mainstream political science, on the other hand, often does not seem to see social movements and protest as phenomena worthy of special attention and usually do not even consider contentious politics to be a theoretically relevant component in the political processes they focus on. For instance, the above mentioned democratization literature does not consider protest or movements to be relevant or beneficial actors in transition processes; also studies on voting behavior and party politics do not deal with protest or movements very much either (see analysis of political science production in McAdam & Tarrow, 2010, p. 327). We should not forget that over 90% of abstracts presented at the two political science conferences do not even mention social movements or protest. Political scientists working on contentious politics also often seek non-political science outlets to publish their work on social movements and present their work at sociology conferences. Also, teaching curricula of political science departments typically do not include courses on social movements and protest.

This situation opens a great opportunity for scholars interested in social movements and protest, both sociologists and political scientists, to expand social movement research into research on politics to a greater extent. Political scientists and sociologists should get involved in more intense inter-disciplinary research including alongside social movements and protest also other political repertoires and actors.

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## **11 Cited Abstracts**

### ***11.1 Papers Presented at the Annual Meeting and Exhibition American Political Science Association, San Francisco, September 3 – 6, 2015.***

Adam, E. (2015). *Queering Rights: LGBTQ and Immigrant Coalition Building through the Law*.

Arellano, A. (2015). *Cooperation Failure: Rebel Fragmentation and Splintering*.

Avanza, M. (2015). *Women Against Abortion: Understanding Pro-life Women activism*.

Aytac, S. E. (2015). *Protests and the Paradox of Repression: Lessons from Turkey, Brazil, and Ukraine*.

Bautista, M. A. (2015). *Pushing Back: Heterogeneous Effects of State-led Repression - The Chilean Case*.

Bush, S. S. (2015). *International Election Monitors & Perceptions of Election Credibility in Tunisia*.

Campi, A. (2015). *Parental Autonomy and Market Freedom: Evangelical Anti-Welfare Rhetoric*.

Cha, H. (2015). *Unexpected Combination: Personality and Ideology for Protest Participation*.

Císař, O., & Vráblíková, K. (2015). *At the Parliament or in the Streets? Issue Composition of Contentious Politics in the Visegrad Countries*.

Cheng, C. (2015). *Lessons in Authoritarian Accountability*.

Dasgupta, S. (2015). *Gandhi's Failure: Decentralization and Social and Political Power*.

Davis, L. (2015). *Anarchism and the Democratization of Democracy*.

Feinstein, S. G. (2015). *Assessing Secession in Eurasia through Qualitative Comparative Analysis*.

Fenner, S., & Slater, D. (2015). *Contextual Threat Perceptions: Protest in Southeast Asia and the Middle East*.

Evans, L. (2015). *"Endowed with the Same Right and Claim": American Indian Political Activism in Congress, 1889 to 1970*.

Filler, N. (2015). *Social Justice Activism among Asian Pacific Americans in Two Cities*.

Fliervoet, F. E. M. (2015). *The Enemy Within: Causes of Fragmentation in Separatist Movements*.

Garcia-Casanon, M. (2015). *Minority Communities and Law Enforcement Political Socialization*.

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Goodman, L. E. (2015). *Practical Pluralism*.

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Grattan, L. (2015). Richard Wright and Prison Abolitionism: The Refusal to Compromise with Reality.

Haggrad, S., & Kaufman, R. R. (2015). Distributive Conflict and the Consolidation of Democratic Rule.

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Hoard, S. (2015). Turning Away from the State? Market Feminism, Expertise and Feminist success.

Holbig, H. (2015). Xi Jinping and the Art of Chrono-ideological Engineering.

Huang, R. (2015). Religion and Strategy in Civil War.

Isaacs, M. (2015). Faith in Contention: Examining the Salience of Religion in Ethnic Conflict.

Jentzsch, C. (2015). Peasant Resistance to Insurgent Violence during Mozambique's Civil War.

Johnson, K. (2015). Disentangling the Political Violence Puzzle in China.

Kuhonta, E. M. (2015). The Catholic Church and Democratization in the Philippines.

Lamier, V. (2015). Diversity in Demobilization.

Lankina, T. (2015). Local Protest and Election Fraud: A New Test of Authoritarian Regime Uncertainty.

Leach, D. K. (2015). Anarchism and Radical Democracy in the German Non-dogmatic Left.

Liu, L. (2015). Accommodating the Green Participation: China's Local Environmental Governance.

Macdonald, G. (2015). Institutional Incentives for Inclusive Electoral Mobilization.

Manatschal, A. (2015). Direct Democracy and Immigrants' Civic Engagement.

McGravey, K. J. (2015). Public Rights: Petition, Protest, and Privacy in Liberal Democracy.

McKinney, C. C. (2015). The Mobilization of Family in the Breast Cancer Non-Profit-Corporate Alliance.

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Weyland, K. (2015). Facing Contentious Waves: The Threat Perceptions of Autocrats.

Wu, W. (2015). Lesbian Groups' Confrontation in Contemporary China.

### ***11.2 Papers Presented at the 2015 ECPR General Conference, Montreal, August 26 – 29, 2015.***

Accornero, G. (2015). The “Authoritarian Paradox”. Militants' Trajectories in Portugal between Dictatorship and Democracy.

Balta, E. (2015). Elections and Contentious Politics in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes: The Case of Turkey.

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Caouette, D. (2015). Resisting Accumulation: Confronting Multiple Forms of Land Privatization and Concentration in Southern Negros, Philippines.

Cormier, P. (2015). The Biographical Consequences of Radical Activism and Repression Through Diverse Life Spheres: The Case of the Radical Turkish Left Since the 1970's.

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Draege, J. B., & della Porta, D. (2015). Occupy#PD and Occupy#CHP: Movement Politics within Political Parties.

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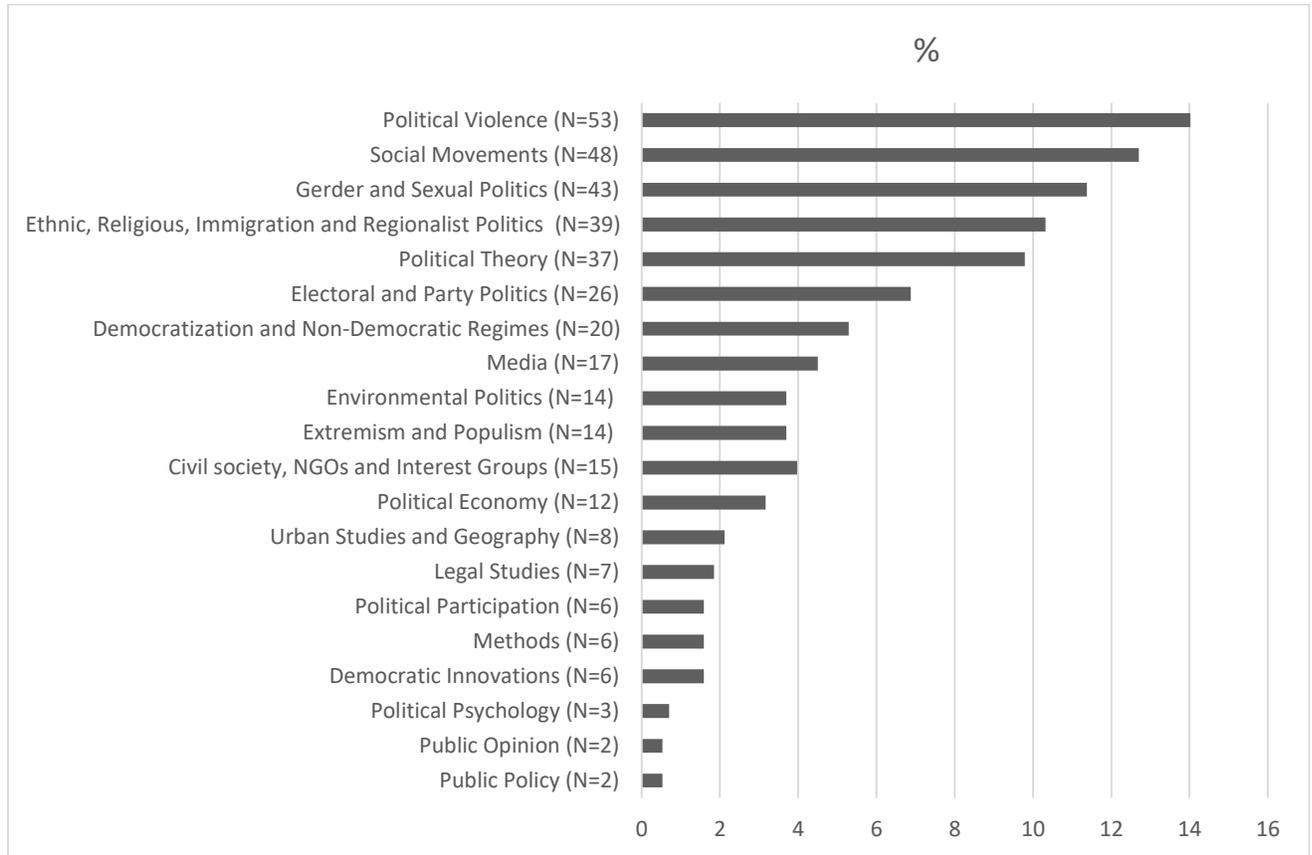
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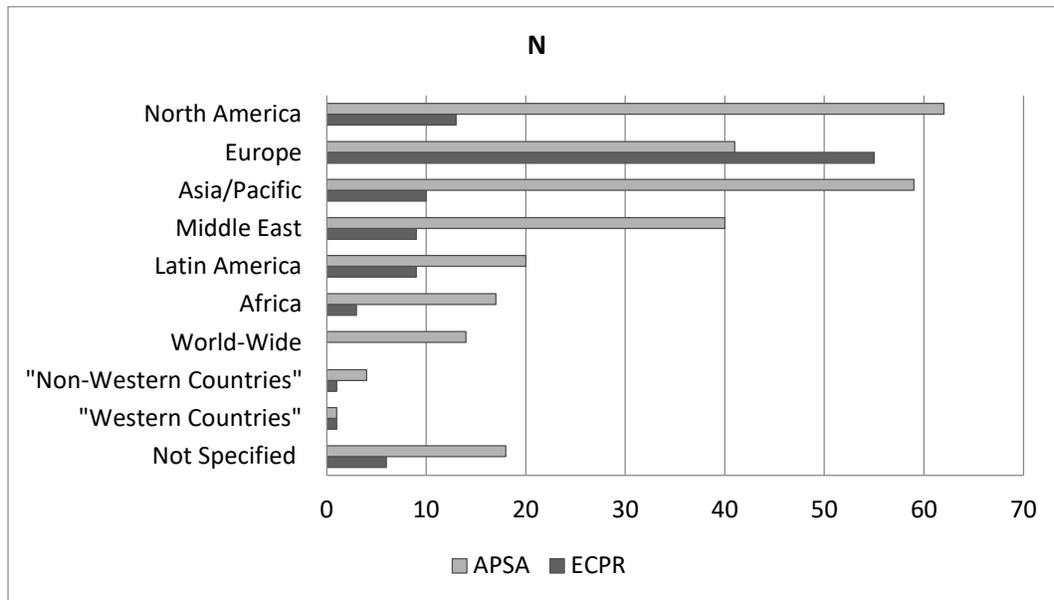
## Figures

**Fig. 1** Social Movement Research in Political Science Sub-Fields



Note: Abstracts focusing on social movements and protest presented at the APSA and ECPR conferences in 2015, N = 378.

**Fig. 2** Geographical Regions Studied in Political Science Research on Social Movement



Note: The absolute number of references to regions in abstracts focusing on social movements and protest presented at the APSA and ECPR conferences in 2015, N = 383.