



centre on
social movement
studies



MOBILIZING
FOR DEMOCRACY

The ERC Advanced Grant Project **Mobilizing for Democracy** addresses social movements participation in democratization processes, from transition to the deepening of democracy.

The research is directed by Donatella della Porta.

THEORETICAL MODEL

As planned the first months of the research project have been devoted to a better refinement of the theoretical model presented in the proposal, to the conceptualization as well as to the selection of the sources and the specification of the instruments for the empirical research. The results of this theoretical work helped me in conceptualizing the phenomena to investigate as *eventful democratization* as well as *democratic deepening* and locating them within the social science literature on democratic transitions and democratic quality. The results of this part of the work are reported in a Donatella della Porta, *Can Democracy be Saved?*, Polity Press, 2013 as well as in some entries I have written for the *Blackwell Encyclopedia on Social and Political Movements*, David Snow, Bert Klandermans, Donatella della Porta, and Doug McAdam (Blackwell, 2013). Issues of deepening democracy are also addressed in the volume *Meeting Democracy*, edited by Donatella della Porta and Dieter Rucht (Cambridge University Press 2013) as well as in several articles.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS: COMPARING 1989 AND 2011

The second part of the project consisted of the analysis of a (relatively) large number of cases of democratization in Eastern Europe, and was oriented to testing under which conditions civil society organizations a) support democracy; b) play an important role in the transition to democracy. As foreseen in the original project, in this “large N” part of my research I have proceeded through the analysis of secondary literature, as well as interviews with experts. Given the relevance of the Arab Spring (which was not included in the project, as it had not yet unfolded at the time of submission) some of the recent cases were added in order to introduce a cross-area comparative view to the research. While different in many respects (geopolitical area, previous regime, social structures etc.), the two waves of protest for democracy in 1989 and 2011 show some similarities in the processes of participation of civil society, going from the mobilization of existing resources to the framing of the emerging actors and the appropriation of political opportunities. The results of this analysis are reported in 14 expert reports as well as in the volume Donatella della Porta, *Mobilizing for Democracy* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Researchers who contributed to this part are:

- Kivanc Atak, who analysed transitions to democracy in Turkey.
- Luisa Chiodi, who analysed transition to democracy in Albania.
- Teije Donkers, who analysed transition to democracy in Tunisia.
- Grzegorz Piotrowski, who analyses transition to democracy in Poland.
- Federico Rossi, who analysed paths of transition in the Baltic area, in Bulgaria and in Rumania.
- Daniel Ritter, who analysed cases of transition in the Balcans, in the Czech Republic and in the GDR.
- Jana Warkotsch, who analysed transition to democracy in Egypt.

FAILED DEMOCRATIZATION: WHY MOVEMENTS FOR DEMOCRACY FAILED

This part will look at failed mobilization for democracy, bridging literature on social movements, democratization and revolution.

Researchers who are contributing to this part include:

- Teije Donkers, who is conducting research on Syria
- Emin Poljarevic, who is conducting research on Libya
- Daniel Ritter, who is conducting research on Ukraine and Russia

WHERE DID THE REVOLUTION GO? SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

Another aim of the project is to understand the consequences of previous participation of civil society organizations in transition on the successive stages of consolidation. Paired comparisons of cases of 'democratization from above' and 'democratization from below' are developed, addressing the time evolution as well as the causal mechanisms of civil society participation in democratization processes. Empirical evidences come from quantitative analyses of protest events, collected from the press and other sources, as well as oral history and archival research. Comparison addresses Poland, Hungary and Spain as cases of participated pacts with Czechoslovakia, GDR and Portugal as cases of eventful democratization, Portugal a. In a longer term perspective, the research address processes of democratization in Italy and Germany. Comparison on effects is also addressed in the MENA regions (in particular, Egypt, Tunisia and Turkey).

Researchers working on this part include:

- Kivanc Atak, looking at the effects of democratic transition on consolidation in Turkey

- Tiago Fernandes, looking at the effects of democratic transition on consolidation in Portugal
- Herbert Reiter, comparing the development of conception of democracy in the labour movement in Italy and Germany
- Eduardo Romanos, looking at the effects of democratic transition on consolidation in Spain

Interviews with former activists were conducted by:

- Teije Donkers in Tunisia
- Milan Hrubes in the Czech Republic
- Jochen Kleres in the GDR
- Grzegorz Piotrowski in Poland
- Lili Torek in Hungary
- Jana Warkotsch in Egypt

Protest event analysis is conducted by:

- Kivanc Atak on Turkey and Tunisia
- Matteo Cernison on Central Eastern Europe
- Hugo Leal on Egypt

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE DEEPENING OF DEMOCRACY

Another part of the research addresses the deepening of democracy. Research is underway on recent campaigns of protest for "real" or "direct" democracy, embedding these protests in the historical development of social, political and cultural systems. A volume titled *Bringing Capitalism Back In. Protest and Democracy in Times of Crisis* is forthcoming with Polity Press; another on *Spreading Protest* is forthcoming with ECPR Press. Another volume, on Participatory democracy in Southern Europe has been just published by Rowman and Littlefield.

Researchers working on this part of the project, based on in depth-interviews and press analysis, include:

On protests against austerity

- Massimiliano Andretta on Italy
- Tiago Fernandes on Portugal
- Joseba Fernandez on Spain
- Francis O'Connor on Ireland
- Eduardo Romanos on Spain
- Markos Vogiatzoglou on Greece, Iceland and Cyprus

On the "2013 protest"

- Kivanc Atak, on the Gezi Park protests in Turkey
- Chiara Milan, on protests in 2013 in Bosnia
- Mariana Mendes, on protests in 2013 in Brasil
- Juan Masullo, on protests in Latin America
- Francis O' Connor on South Africa
- Julia Rone, on protests in 2013 in Bulgaria

On conceptions of democracy in specific movements

- Matteo Cernison on environmental conflicts
- Lorenzo Cini on student movements

On social movements in institutional politics

- Daniela Chironi, on social movements within political parties
- Francis O' Connor, on mobilization from below for the consultation on Catalonia independence
- Martin Portos, on mobilization from below for the consultation on Catalonia independence
- Anna Subirats, on mobilization from below for the consultation on Catalonia independence