Political socialization and social movements. Escaping the political past?

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Even the staunchest authoritarian regimes allow citizens to raise their voices from time to time. In the Soviet Union, for instance, where political and social life was heavily controlled by the communist regime, citizens were allowed to complain about certain issues by writing a letter to newspapers or authorities. While no fundamental critique of the political system was permitted, this offered citizens a manner to try to resolve their daily problems and unfairness they encountered (Smale 1985; White 1999: 46-47). Once communism collapsed, many Soviet citizens saw their lifestyle being destroyed – most of the social services they have known all their lives fell apart. Faced with this transitional disaster, many of them kept complaining to the newspapers by writing letters. What citizens did not take into account was that the political system which made their letters count did not exist any longer – citizens kept writing letters which no one was reading anymore. This story teaches us that while the political and social system might change almost overnight, citizens might need more time to adapt their political behaviour to changing contexts.

In theory, citizens' political behaviour includes a wide range of activities which can roughly be divided into two patterns – party politics and movement politics. As we explain later on in this chapter, this division is increasingly seen as obsolete and not reflective of citizens' everyday political practice. Yet, as much of the literature on political participation is demarcated by this division, we depart from party and movement politics as being two separate realms. Party politics involves activities such as voting, contacting, campaigning, donating money, party membership, doing voluntary work, running for office. Movement politics centres around activities such as signing petitions, mass demonstrations, occupations of public sites, boycotts, strikes, blockades, violence against property and people, but also

organizing these activities – both by volunteers and professionals. In daily life citizens employ party and movement politics in various ways – inter alia, because they live under very different regimes – Western style democracies, transitional democracies, semi-democracies, totalitarian religious regimes, communist and non-communist one-party systems. Under each regime citizens must deal with profoundly different socio-political contexts, ranging from full freedom of political participation in both party and movement politics to extreme restriction of political freedom where only very risky underground dissent exists. As a consequence, they employ very different repertoires of political behaviour. Think for instance of citizens in Western Europe who see participation in political parties, freedom of speech and demonstrating as completely normal. But also think of those living suppressed and resorting to what Scott (1990) named infrapolitics – covert resistance found in everyday practices while living under severe oppression.

Yet, socio-political contexts are not static, vividly exemplified by the contemporary waves of democratization surging throughout the world. As a consequence, many countries experience(d) regime transitions toward democracy. What will the political future of the formerly repressed citizens be, if the current system of oppression and violence ends? How can citizens who have learned to live under severe oppression adapt to and help to maintain freedom and democracy? But also, how do citizens who were socialized under relative freedom, participate when the political system gets more authoritarian or just less reliable and less orderly? Or, in more general terms, *how does the political past shape citizens' political future?* Answers to this question boil down to the process of political socialization, the focus of this chapter.

Political socialization holds that individual political attitudes and behaviour are shaped by an individual's political past – what citizens learn about politics and participation during their youth has, at least partially, a lasting influence during the rest of their (political)

lives. The field of political socialization is characterized by its broad focus and has in the recent years undergone a revival. However, political socialization scholars mainly focused on participation in party politics, thereby largely ignoring political socialization into movement politics. Only recently has the political socialization literature started to include studies on youth orientation towards activism in less traditional forms of civic participation (Hahn and Alviar-Martin 2008:81). Social movement scholars, on the other hand, have largely ignored political socialization as a factor explaining movement participation. As we describe later on in this chapter, when social movement scholars do deal with political socialization, it is often referred to indirectly. However, just like citizens are being socialized for participation in political channels typical for party politics, we see citizens being socialized into activism, and thus into channels of political participation typical for movement politics. To understand citizens' actions and reactions to fast and sudden changes of political systems, social movement scholars could employ political socialization frameworks in order to have a better understanding of how past circumstances influence today's patterns of participation in both party and movement politics. This might help us to understand whether and to which extent profound changes in political behaviour are possible even at advanced age and how political learning might help citizens to escape the pitfalls of their own undemocratic past.

In this chapter we aim to show that political socialization might be as important for scholars of movement politics as it is for scholars of party politics. First, we will provide an overview of the literature on political socialization in party politics by reviewing both its classical background and more recent focus. We continue by an overview of the literature on political socialization in movement politics. Two important tasks of social movement scholars will be identified – first, we will discuss the relationship between party and movement politics and political participation in times of democratic transition. Next, we will

discuss how a focus on political socialization might help social movement scholars to deal with those two tasks and conclude the chapter by discussing avenues for future research.

Socialization into party politics

Political socialization is defined as the process by which individuals learn to behave politically and subsequently endure in this behaviour (Hyman 1959). Most definitions of political socialization highlight the importance of the relationship between an individual and the political system. Easton and Dennis (1969) see it as a process of teaching citizens to belong to their political system and community. Greenberg (1970: 3) defines political socialization as "the process by which the individual acquires attitudes, beliefs, and values relating to the political system of which he is a member and to his own role as citizen within that political system". Arnett (1995) sees political socialization as a process which is responsible for the inter-generational passing on of norms and traditions. Greenberg (1970: 4) also argues that "childhood political learning is relevant to later adult orientations and […] that individual political attitudes and aggregates of individual attitudes have an impact on the operation of a nation's political life".

In general, political socialization has widely been mentioned as one of the decisive factors when it comes to whether and how citizens participate in politics (see Verba et al. 1995; Brady et al. 1995). The core idea of political socialization is that during adolescence political ideas and skills crystallize and remain relatively stable with advancing age. Hence, political behaviour in later stages of life bears marks of the way citizens came to understand politics in their youth. Traditionally, the influence of family, school, peers and extra-curricular activities have been common factors of interest in studies on political socialization (Settle et al. 2011). Recently, scholars have found that the broader socio-political context

also matters for the way citizens are politically socialized (Sandell Pacheco 2008; Gimpel et al. 2003; Campbell 2006).

The field of political socialization has a rich history. In fact, according to Sapiro (2004), many a scholar sees it as an old-fashioned field, often basing their judgment on some of the pioneer studies. During this early period political socialization was seen as a matter of great hopes. Sears and Levy (2003: 60) note that many "liberal social scientists saw a chance to avoid the great historical and social evils like ethnocentrism, prejudice and oppression by proper political socialization". In the course of 1960s and 1970s the field flourished. The original focus laid on the earliest childhood and hypothesized the crucial influence of this life period for the formation of political attitudes which were then to persist throughout the rest of individuals' life without significant changes. The late 1970s and 1980s brought a decline to the field of political socialization. The number of published studies dealing with political socialization declined and hardly any academic attention was given to the field any more. Political socialization and childhood as a factor of influence more or less disappeared from political science (Cook 1985). According to Niemi and Hepburn (1995: 7) "the field atrophied because it was based on exaggerated premises and because of misinterpreted and misunderstood research findings (and lack of findings)". After a virtual stand-still in the 1980s, the field of political socialization has recently made a notable come-back. One of the key reasons for this renewed interest was the concern about citizens' civic and political participation. Led by Putnam's (1995) image of decreasing levels of civic participation in developed democracies, many started worrying and wondering how citizens could be educated about their civic duties. Today, the field of political socialization covers a broad range of topics and differs from the classical studies in several important aspects. Rather than being old fashioned, the field is now typified by two periods: the early field of political socialization and today's field of political socialization.

Early field of political socialization

The idea that early political experiences might have a permanent formative influence on people's political attitudes and behaviour appeared rather early. Already in the 1920s Karl Mannheim proposed his classical thesis of political generations. According to Mannheim, political generations are formed when youth is exposed to similar major historical events during their formative years. Thereby, a "concrete bond is created between members of a generation by their being exposed to the social and intellectual symptoms of a process of dynamic de-stabilization" (Mannheim 1952: 303). Major historical events which occur within the same socio-political context influence a group of youth and have a long-lasting influence, conditioning the political life course of a whole generation.

Not long after Mannheim proposed his thesis, empirical evidence has showed that even experiences which are not major historical events may mark political attitudes for the rest of one's life. The famous Bennington study by Newcomb(1943) presents us with a colourful account of political socialization and a fine case of political attitudes being formed in the period of late adolescence and early adulthood. In a longitudinal study conducted between 1935 and 1939 Newcomb found that within the four years of college life, socio-political attitudes of the Bennington students got more liberal in general. Follow-up studies which were conducted 20 and even 50 years after the original 1930s study have shown that the socio-political attitudes of the Bennington women have remained reasonably stable ever since their college years (Newcomb et al. 1967; Alwin et al. 1992).

Late 1950s and 1960s brought a kick start to the field of political socialization. Hyman (1959) both named the field and unlocked the attention into it by complaining about the lack of interest into the relation between socialization and political behaviour. Soon, a range of

studies appeared which dealt with how individuals internalize political traditions and political behaviour. Initial studies identified primary agents (mainly family) and secondary agents (schools, occupations, mass media, political parties) as possible socializing agents to political socialization and extensively debated the interface between them, but also focused on the distinction between conscious and unconscious transmission of political feelings, values and beliefs (see for instance Bender 1967).

Work of Greenstein (1965), Hess and Torney (1967) and Easton and Dennis (1969) saw children in the United States as having an idealized, positive image of political authorities. This image was paired with the assumption of persistence – once the socialization process was completed, political views would remain stable throughout adulthood. Also, political socialization was seen to be taking place rather early – being essentially completed by the time children reached adolescence. A seminal study based on longitudinal data from three US presidential elections by Campbell et al. (1960) found that the parents' party identification influences the party identification of their children, especially if the parents are politically active, meaning that early family years are crucial for the development of party identification. Others focused on the formation of different political and moral orientations as patriotism (Connel 1971) or racial images (Stevenson and Stuart 1958). Hopes were raised that education and intervention during childhood could resolve the problem of racial prejudice (Stember 1961; Proshansky 1966).

In her review of the subfield, Conover (1991: 127-128) describes the critique and the eventual decline of the idea that early childhood experiences play such an important role. In the course of the 1970s, Conover argues, three major points of critique were forwarded. First, the children who were earlier found to have a positive image of the political authorities led the protest events in the 1960s – their positive image turned into rebellion against the very authorities they had positive image of during their childhood. Second, empirical

evidence showed that the idealized image of political authorities was not shared by many (often minority) children. Also, the use of survey research among children was criticized. Finally, the theoretical assumption of persistence got seriously questioned as the empirical evidence suggested that important changes do occur after childhood period.

Today's field of political socialization

Unlike earlier research which focused on very young people, the contemporary wave of research focuses on political socialization in later phases of life- such as late adolescence and early adulthood - and in particular on the role of the socializing agents more suitable for these life periods, such as peers, schools, media etc. The key period in political socialization seems to be the period of late adolescence and early adulthood. McLeod and Shah (2009: 8) argue that "the transition from late adolescence to early adulthood, from the end of schooling to the start of individuals' occupational lives, is perhaps the most important period for political socialization research. For most young people, this change means a loss of social capital that supports civic engagement. Support from family, peers, and community diminishes, while the demands of the new occupational world delay reintegration." While people might face intense changes such as immigration, college, first political or military experiences, all of these dramatic events in one's life tend to happen in the period of life we can describe as young adulthood. Even then, the influence of these experiences on political attitudes and behaviour is shown to be rather limited (Sigel 1989, Jennings and Markus 1977).

More attention is nowadays given to the balance between what citizens learn during their youth and what is learned over the rest of the life course. The possibility of political socialization as a lifelong learning process has been considered (see for instance White et al.

2008 but also Sapiro 2004). There is a lively discussion on the possibilities and the extent of change among adults, especially if the socio-political context changes, which is expected to condition their political attitudes and behaviours. This interest in lifelong learning is in all likelihood activated by the wave of democratization surging throughout the world. The possibility for citizens to meaningfully adapt to democracy brings hopes for the future to many countries with long authoritarian tradition searching for a sustainable model of democratization. In this, the normativist tradition of the political socialization field (see Sears and Levy 2003) seems to continue.

Contemporary political socialization research deals with a broad range of topics regarding almost every aspect of socio-political life. More prominent topics include a classical theme of partisanship (Achen 2002; Ventura 2001), immigration (Tam Cho 1999; Wong and Tseng 2008; Wong 2006) and racial, gender and ethnic identities (see for instance Rosenthal et al. 2003 or Hughes et al. 2006). In this chapter, we give attention to two topics which might be of special significance for future research in social movements, namely civic engagement and education, and political socialization in shifting socio-political contexts.

Civic education

Recently, inspired by concerns about declining or weak civic engagement (ranging from classical political participation to more private and non-political patterns of participating in the community), civic education has become a prominent subject for numerous researchers (Sears and Levy 2003).Although very close to political socialization, the field of civic education is seen to be a discipline in its own right. Unlike earlier political socialization research which focused on how agents of socialization teach youth, the field of civic education is dominated by a constructivist paradigm where youth also actively construct,

debate and negotiate meaning and not only passively receive what the agents of socialization are presenting (Hahn 2010).

Brady, Verba, and Schlozman's (1995) already identified the importance of schools and civic organizations as workplaces in which trust accumulates and people learn the virtues and skills of democratic citizenship. More recently, McIntosh and Youniss (2010) allude to the importance of youth having direct participatory experience provided both by school and the community in order to build their political skills and foster engagement. Outside developed democracies, numerous studies deal with the possibility of citizens being educated for a meaningful role in a democratic system (see for instance Torney-Purta and Wilkenfeld 2009; Kahne and Sporte 2008; Grossman et al. 2008). Concerns surrounding a decline in active citizenship in developed democracies have led scholars to research and think about "old" democracies in similar ways. Take for instance citizens' knowledge of and engagement with political institutions of the European Union. Within the Western world, the European Union as an institution has suffered from maybe the highest levels of disengagement expressed through the lack of knowledge and low levels of participation (see for example Dekker and Rijkhof 2009).

For social movement scholars it might make sense to extend the focus towards learning to participate through movement politics channels. The very first time people participate in protest is often experienced as a significant event changing one's identity from an inactive bystander to an activist. Verta Taylor (1995) found that feminist activists were not only motivated by anger but also by the joy of participation, the friendship and love of other women, and pride at maintaining their convictions in the face of strong opposition. A 1950s feminist said it best: "It's as thrilling as a love affair, and lasts longer!!!" (Rupp and Taylor, 1987: 97). Participation in social movements also requires knowledge and skills – not only for the organizers but also for those who participate in social movements' activities.

We might, for instance, ask ourselves how these skills are acquired and whether the knowledge needed for participation can be obtained even at advanced age. If we consider the frequently violent Gay Prides in Eastern Europe we might also wonder how citizens of new democracies learn about the freedom of protest as a basic democratic value.

Shifting socio-political context

Another key theme of importance for social movement scholars is the shifting socio-political context. Consider for instance countries which went through large scale political and social transition, such as the post-communist societies in Eastern Europe and in the future possibly countries which were swept by the Arab Spring. These specific major transformations pushed large groups of people used to communism or totalitarianism into new socio-political relations, whether democratic or semi-democratic ones. It also creates groups of citizens whose youth has been marked by political, social and economic transition. These are the events which - in Mannheimian terms - create political generations. However, these profound changes in socio-political context also leave an impact on those who are well beyond their youth. In Eastern Europe, for instance, older generations seem to be nostalgic about their communist past (Rose and Carnaghan 1995), while the period of political socialization impacts on contemporary political attitudes as well, especially left-right self-placement. That is to say, older citizens tend to lean more to the left than the younger ones, reflecting their attachment to the communist era which marked their youth (McAllister and White 2007; Evans and Whitefield 1998), while in Hungary the very oldest citizens with early memories of the pre-communist period tend to lean to the right (Evans and Whitefield 1998). This corresponds to findings from the United States. While it is often argued that conservatism represents a life cycle effect, where aging leads to conservative beliefs, studies from the United States show that conservatism can rather be seen as a generational effect,

where the attitudes of the whole generation have been formed by the period of their socialization (see overview by Sears and Levy 2003: 89).Thus, the period of political socialization conditions contemporary political attitudes.

However, while the period of political socialization seems to matter for political attitudes, we still do not know how political socialization in non-democratic periods influences the pattern and ways of political participation once democracy has been established. At the very beginning of this chapter we described how Soviet citizens, used to letter writing as an official instrument of complaint, kept doing this even though this action became rather useless during the Russian transition. But is this example a rule? Are citizens who grew up in a repressive system which suppressed any political activities outside the conventional, totalitarian organizations able to use the alternative actions once democracy has been established? And what about the generations which went to the streets to topple the regime? Do they continue to protest and see movement politics as a rightful way to influence policy makers or do they turn to parliamentary and party institutions once democracy has been established?

These profound socio-political changes are not confined to former communist Eastern European countries or totalitarian North African countries. In fact, shifting political context might also mean moving towards *more* instead of *less* authoritarianism. Diverse historical examples in Latin American democracies which descended into dictatorships lead us to similar types of questions regarding the political socialization and the possibilities and extent of change. Mature Western democracies might also undergo profound socio-political changes. Take for instance the recent economic crisis since 2008. This crisis might in the end mean a change on similar scale for many a citizen in Southern Europe. In these developed democratic countries, daily lifestyle and political life are under enormous pressure. High (youth) unemployment, huge welfare cuts and especially the inability of the

political elites to come up with feasible solutions are striking. These developments might put huge number of citizens, including adolescents and those of advanced age, in the same fluid situation. We might wonder whether this crisis will, in Mannheimian terms, create a political generation. That is to say, a group of youth coming of political age under severe economic circumstances which might evolve a cynical view of democracy. How will these circumstances condition the political life course of this generation? How will it affect their democratic citizenship? In fact, the same question may be posed for citizens of advanced age, to what extent will their political attitudes and behaviour prove to be stable in face of these changes in the socio-political context?

Socialization in movement politics

We already mentioned that social movement literature rarely refers to political socialization. This is not to say that social movement scholars do not examine the process by which individuals learn to become active in movement politics. To the contrary, they do explore the influence of embeddedness in activist milieus at early age on the engagement in social movements in later life. However, while they essentially describe the same phenomenon as political socialization, they seldom refer to it explicitly. Moreover, to our knowledge, political socialization is not studied as a mechanism conditioning the social movement political life course. That is say, the core idea of political socialization that during late adolescence political ideas and skills crystallize and remain relatively stable with advancing age has primarily been examined in the context of party politics rather than participation within social movements.

Yet, especially for people's long-standing involvement in social movements, youth political socialization has found to be of importance. For many activists there is a long

personal history behind their involvement and their political views. They grew up in activist milieus surrounded by activism of their parents and were practically born into the dense activist networks their parents were involved in. This experience marked the rest of these children's lives and had a crucial influence on their value orientations and propensity to be activist themselves. Indeed, social networks, socialization and activism are closely related (Passy 2001).

In a collection of personal stories assembled by Kaplan and Shapiro (1998) we can read about the experiences of so called "red diaper" generation who grew up in radical leftist milieus in the United States in the 1950s. The stories they tell describe a generation which throughout its childhood witnessed the intense political experiences of their parents. The radical leftist upbringing left lasting effect on their lives – marked by their political childhoods many went on to play an important role in social movements later on (Keniston 1968).

Early political socialization is not only confined to radical leftist milieus, Klandermans and Mayer (2006: 270) describe radical right activists who have in many cases been "exposed to the same kind of ideas and values since their childhood". Family was the most important socializing agent with activists being involved in the "scene" even before they really joined the movement. In Italy, for instance, where radical right movements exist for a longer period of time, involvement was even a family tradition lasting for three or four generations. Blee (2011) cites socialization as one of trajectories into racial extremism in the United States. While this path is relatively uncommon, some of the extremist women Blee (2011: 244) interviewed describe "being raised by racial extremist parents and sometimes in isolated self-identified racist communities where they are exposed to extreme ideologies and actions from an early age". Førland and colleagues (2012) used a retrospective survey to put the hypothesis forwarded in the literature that birth order influences radicalization to a test.

By looking at the experiences of former students of University of Oslo in the 1960s they found birth order to be irrelevant but upbringing, especially in the cities had a consistent significant positive effect. But, most important in the context of political socialization, they found that upbringing in a home with radical parents had an enormous positive impact on radicalization and activism, an impact which they describe as "colossal at the extremes" (Førland et al. 2012: 830).

Becoming a long term activist is to a large extent a matter of embeddedness in milieus conducive to protest. In these milieus people discuss politics, are individual grievances turned into collective claims and people are mobilized for protest, in other words in these milieus people are socialized into movement politics. Moreover, people are more likely to be targeted and persuaded in protest activities in these milieus. Take for instance McAdam's (1988) study of participation in the Mississippi Freedom Summer. This project was a campaign launched in June 1964 to attempt to register as many African American voters as possible in Mississippi which had historically excluded most blacks from voting. Well over 1,000 students mostly from white, elite universities such as Yale and Stanford participated in this project. In his study based on interviews and questionnaires with hundreds of activists, McAdam shows that knowing someone else who also participated was *the* most important predictor of participation. Thus, embeddedness in pro-protest milieus was crucial for participation. But what about embeddedness in anti-protest milieus? Unsupportive parents appeared to be a constraint to participation in this high cost/high risk action for freshmen, as one of the withdrawals' interviewed by McAdam (1986: 84) explains: "I was only a freshman. A year later I'm sure I would have, but at that point I'd only been out of the house for a few months and wasn't yet in my 'defy the parents phase' ". And McAdam indeed shows that more senior students felt less constrained by unsupportive parents. Hence, unsupportive parents played a role in withdrawing from participation, but

more so for freshmen than senior students. Moreover, for many Freedom Summer activists, the experience of violence, community life and struggle for civil rights led to a lifelong involvement in different kinds of social movements. Corrigal-Brown (2011) assessed several factors affecting persistent participation. Most important in the context of political socialization, after periods of individual abeyance, those embedded in activist networks, were more easily reactivated than those not (anymore) embedded in activist networks. Hence, embeddedness in milieus conducive to protest, i.e. milieus were people are socialized into movement politics, plays a crucial role in becoming, staying and returning to activism.

It might not be a coincidence that many studies we mentioned focus on students engaging in protest. In the previous sections we repeatedly referred to the creation of political generations with specific characteristics, all under influence of a specific socio-political context which conditioned the processes of political socialization of these groups. However, not all specific characteristics found among citizens of certain generations can be ascribed to generational effects. Life cycle effects might matter as well – having certain age goes paired with certain type of political behaviour. A typical example is the lower participation in voting among younger voters, either because of lack of political experience or specific biographical situation typical for young adulthood. On the other hand, younger cohorts are reported to show a higher propensity to engage in protest activities (Verba et al. 1995, Dalton 2006). In fact, this is part of common knowledge –a revolutionary will most certainly not be someone on the verge of his retirement. Indeed, just like during the Freedom Summer or in the Serbian Otpor movement, many major protest waves are led by students.

While political socialization was successfully applied to highlight the influence of upbringing on the development of activism, we believe that the socialization framework has more to offer. Much has been written on processes, mechanisms and agents of political

socialization in party politics, while there is little systematic knowledge available on the processes, mechanism and agents of political socialization in movement politics. We see opportunities to change this and identify two potential avenues of research where political socialization could be interesting for social movements scholars. The first concerns the relationship between party and movement politics and citizens' options when it comes to choosing between and combining these two paths to political influence. The second concerns political socialization in times of democratic transition.

Bringing party and movement politics together

The first theme where we see an important role for political socialization is the way citizens (learn to) combine party and movement politics in their quest to influence political outcomes. It is becoming increasingly difficult to see party politics and movement politics as two separate realms. With the waning participation in political parties, trade-unions, religious organizations and even elections (see for instance van Biezen et al. 2012; Ebbinghaus and Visser 2000; Crouch 2008) citizens are looking for new ways to engage in political life. Demonstrators and activists are not seen as trying to topple the democratic system anymore, but receive acknowledgement for their role of giving voice to the unheard and providing input to policy makers which does not come through traditional political organizations. As a result movement politics are becoming increasingly conventional (Goldstone 2003, 2004; Johnston 2011). In a way, social movements have become a normal way of engaging in politics, inseparable from more classical tools such as political parties (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995) which resulted in a "demonstration democracy" (Etzioni 1970) or "social movement society" (Meyer and Tarrow 1998) where protesters are not extremists but tend to resemble the general population (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001;

Norris, Walgrave van Aelst 2005). This is reflected in an increase in protest actions (see for instance Dodson 2011 and Dalton et al. 2009) but also in the fact that the number of those participating in protests is much higher than those participating in classic party politics if we exclude voting (Johnston 2011: 67).

Thus, explanations of participation in social movements must reflect the fact that the divide between party and movement politics is becoming increasingly obsolete. What we need, in contrast, is a framework which combines party politics and movement politics. Such a framework will help us understand how citizens who want to influence the state learn to choose between participating in social movements, participation in classical party politics, combining those two or doing nothing (Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2013). The interesting question is why citizens decide to take the one route or the other, or alternatively combine both routes or decide to do nothing. Studying this through the lens of political socialization, that is taking into account what these citizens learned and experienced during their "political past", might help us deal with this complex question. For instance, Corrigal-Brown (2011) finds a persisting influence of socialization on participation, an influence which seems to return even after periods of individual abeyance. This is only one example of how, looking at the roles of socializing agents, shaping influences of socio-political context and the origins of individual patterns which citizens follow when engaging in political activism—whether within party of movement politics—could help us reach a more general explanation for political behaviour.

Political socialization in times of democratic transition

The second theme where we see an important role for political socialization concerns political participation under (shifting) socio-political contexts. We know that the political

and social context matters and in many ways define collective action (Koopmans and Statham 2000; Roggeband 2002, 2004; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2009). One of the most important aspects is certainly the level of democraticness or the nature of the political system itself. Studies by Dalton et al. (2009) and Klandermans (2013) provide evidence for Goldstone's (2004) claim that movement politics profit from democratization, that is, the better democracy functions the more protest activity. On the other hand Mackin (2011) found a negative correlation between levels of democratic performance and protest activity. Especially interesting are the differences found between so called "new" and "old" democracies (see studies by Keman 2002; Teorell et al. 2007; Mackin 2011; Kirbis 2011; Lup 2011). Kirbis (2011) interprets the high levels of authoritarianism found among citizens of new democracies as the cause of their lower political engagement. Lup (2011) explains the participation deficit in new democracies by lower involvement in networks which cause less talking about politics and finally less direct involvement in political activities. Hence, democratization does not naturally translate into democratic citizenship. It is far from clear what processes and mechanisms shape the translation from democratization into actual active participation in the realms designated to practice democratic rights and plights; i.e. party politics and movement politics.

Teaching people how to 'do' democracy requires adequate political socialization. Most political socialization research is conducted in 'established' Western democracies. However, in countries under democratic transition not only children but every citizen has to learn to do democracy. This creates a *paradox of political socialization* in times of democratic transition, as many, if not all, socializing actors learned to do politics under diverging circumstances. Political cultures, civil societies, educational curricula change relatively slowly, and still breathe the models of the past. Similarly, most parents were politically socialized under the past regime. The political past weights on the future. How do

adolescents and early adults learn to do democracy in the paradoxical situation where traditional political socializers are still living in the political past? Yet, people *do* learn democracy in times of democratic transition. What is the story of their political socialization? How did they 'escape' from their political past? Who were their political socializers? Peers, parents, politicians, teachers? Did they rely on the Internet to create cut-and-paste-ideologies, the diasporas, national and/or international media, or organizations educating democracy? Were they involved in organizations where they could practice democratic decision processes? The crucial question to answer is, what makes some citizen's political socialization a success story while others remain apathetic, cynical, and inactive? Political socialization offers numerous hints when it comes to answering these questions. As we mentioned earlier, in the United States and more recently in Eastern Europe, ideological patterns have been found to correspond to specific generations. In addition to these ideological patterns, we also referred to studies who found children who grew up in activist families were found to be active participants of social movements throughout their whole lives. In that sense, it seems that completely escaping the political past will be difficult – consequences of what citizens have learned when they were younger will persist – and this should include the way they participate in politics. We expect for instance that those who in their younger age actively and fervently participated in demonstrations and activism will continue to do that later on. Older citizens who were often obliged to vote in the official, often meaningless, elections will most likely continue to vote once democracy has been established. Those whose youth was marked by an insecure and often disappointing transition are most likely to be cynical and inactive later on. Indeed, political socialization could help us resolve many questions. In these cases, hypothesizing should be followed by further empirical investigation.

Conclusion

The key message of this chapter is that social movement scholars can build upon existing insights offered by the field of political socialization. While early political socialization work might have been overly optimistic in its view that one's political orientations and political participation patterns are to be established during early childhood, the idea that past political experiences have a formative influence for later political life has survived. Since the 1990s the political socialization field has reappeared and is searching for a more nuanced view on the persistence of earlier influences and the possibilities of change at later stages of life. At the same time, it is a field which researches a diverse range of topics, many of them interesting to social movements scholars as well.

Until now, social movements literature recognized the importance of youth socialization into activism. Growing up among activists or a major participatory experience later in life often sets a path for a career of participation in social movements. In this chapter we proposed a more extensive role for political socialization in the study of social movements. We identified two important tasks students of social movements are facing and we have hinted how the social movement field could profit from employing and building upon insights already obtained by scholars who studied political socialization.

A focus on the socio-political context-individual citizen nexus answers both the theoretical need to relate the socio-political environment to individual behaviour and the practical problem of major contextual shifts. Social movement scholars are keen on explaining political behaviour of citizens in new, still unstable democracies and their sometimes disappointing democratic practices. We maintain that in socio-political systems which experienced profound changes, for instance after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Arab

Spring, or the current economic crisis, the political past continues to have an impact and must therefore be taken into account.

At the same time, we also see the need to deal with political behaviour typical for party politics and movement politics within a single theoretical framework. Here, political socialization might help us shed light on the origins of citizens' attempts to influence policy makers, irrespective of their choice for party politics or movement politics, or both. In this way, an image of political behaviour much more representative of real-life choices and decisions rather than artificial disciplinary divisions will be created.

Understanding participation in movement politics while incorporating contextual variation is a challenging task as little political psychological research has dealt with the subjective experience of meso- and macro-level factors (Klandermans and Van Stekelenburg 2013). What we need is a way to link contextual factors and especially contextual changes to individual political behaviour. The field of political socialization may offer mechanisms which explain how contextual factors translate into individual behaviour. Moreover, as political socialization is examined at the individual level of analysis, it may explain how and why individuals may differ in their political attitudes and behaviour, despite living under similar contextual circumstances. As people live in a perceived world, they respond to the world as they—personally—perceive and interpret it. In fact, this is what political psychology is about—trying to understand why people who are seemingly in the same socio-political configuration respond so different (Van Stekelenburg 2013). As political psychology explores the causes of the thoughts, feelings and actions of people—and primarily how these are influenced by socio-political context—it has a lot to offer to the study of political socialization, both in party and movement politics.

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