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Dialoguing Narratives of Social Movement Theories and Subjectivities

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Cover Page Footnote

This paper is an extracted part from my PhD dissertation at the Department of International Studies – University of Vienna. It has been slightly amended to suit the change in approach in dealing with social movements theories and subjectivity theories.

Social Movement Theories and Subjectivities¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper serves as a theoretical study for displaying a sample of the prime literature on social movement theories in comparison with one another, shedding light on the gaps and fundamental contributions. This will be carried out in comparison to the scholarship on subjectivity. Social movement and social movement theories have been inevitable tools of analysis since primarily the 1980s, serving as replacements for modes of apprehending popular mobilization. Since then, theoretical contributions in this field have grown and shown a multitude of orientations and focal strategies on how to focus and study social movements in their various forms and structure most accurately. However, recent history has shown that social movement theories may not always be as optimal as expected, as some movements or events, in terms of rupture moments, are not apprehensible through the classically opted-for social movement theories. In that respect, this paper approaches a selected sample of social movement theories that have been either brought to light once again or emerged over the course of the last 10-15 years (since the end of 2010) with the rise of various popular outbursts and movements between the Arab World, the European context, and the like. The paper tackles the prime social movement theories and the gaps therein and suggests an alternative approach to the study of what seems to be missing gaps and elements with reference to theories of subjectivities and the employment of political psychology as an underestimated field of study and alternative.

¹ This paper is an extracted part from my Ph.D. dissertation at the Department of International Studies – University of Vienna (Moneir 2019). It has been slightly amended to suit the change in approach in dealing with social movements and subjectivity theories to make it a purely theoretical paper for theoretical referencing.

I. Introduction

The focus is not to provide an all-inclusive coverage of the literature on social movements, state theories, and the like. In fact, the reserve for the theoretical choices made in this paper is based on two foundations. Social movement theories have evolved over the course of at least the past thirty years, employed as a method of apprehending movements and popular opinions countering neo-liberalism in its introductions to Western contexts as well as its rapid encroachment onto the rest of the global north and south variably. This partial explanation of the historical development is accompanied by social movements becoming widely resorted to structural analysis and interpretations of why and how social movements come into being and act. Over the course of time, gaps emerged in these interpretations, which were marked by the absence of the element of effect and psychological referencing as to why movements emerge and collapse or divert. The second premise of this study is the desire to provide a theoretical analysis of some of the pivotal sources and scholarly contributions on social movements and apprehend the significance of the work provided on subjectivities and the theories therein as a possible alternative viewpoint to the explanation of realities otherwise unseen precisely.

Having this at the center of attention of the paper, the prime question of the research revolves around what are the gaps and privileges in a sample of the modes of social movement theories, in addition to how can subjectivity theories be used (if not as an alternative) to provide a comprehensive understanding of social, individual, political, and emotional/affect-related behavior and decision? Can existing social movement theories profoundly explain the shifts and dispersion of activism? In tackling this, the research adopts the approach of analyzing theoretical narratives of social movement theories and of subjectivity theories with reference to examples from different contextual settings relating to or negating the applicability and gaps of each of the theoretical settings. The method used in dealing with the theoretical narratives at hand was a rather pragmatic process of categorization based on the induction method, organized according to the relationship drawn between the categories of relevance and inducing analysis of the theoretical contributions and their relevance to the research problem at hand.

II. Narratives of Social Movement Theories

i. Interpreting Processes of Mobilisation

One level of analysis in dealing with the modes of collectivities is the study of some social movement theories through the lens of mobilization processes to better apprehend the dynamics and features constituting such movements. Under this umbrella of literature contributions, scholarship in this section is divided into three intellectual phases. The first one is dedicated to framing processes of social movements and the roles of collective action frames. The second outlook depicts the shifting toward contentious politics and its impact on understanding mobilization and social movement dynamics (Tarrow, 2011; Tilly, 2008). In addition, thirdly, are the structure and discourses of social movements looked at through protests and emotions, filling a gap in contentious political literature (Goodwin & Jasper, 2004; Jasper, 1997). Some contributions observed acts of protests through the levels of development of protesting cycles, with respect to networking conducted during the protests to coalitions connecting and dispersing (Brockert, 1993; C. Davenport et al., 2005; Lichbach, 1987). Contemporary theories on networking strategies, or social networking theories to apprehend activism, expansion, and mobilization of (Jan Tobias Polak 2014; A.L. Kavanaugh et al. 2005; Diani/McAdam 2003) have gained greater attention. On this level of analysis, the strength and weaknesses of ties among networks and within networks play a paramount role in the power constellations respective social movements are taking part in or being forced to be part of. The emphasis on resources is another mechanism of apprehending collective mobilization. In Klandermans (1984), Kurzman (1996), and McCarthy and Zald (1977),

resource management and dissemination are studied as constructs with their own modes of impact on the size and expansion of social movements. Others perceived social movement studies through the lens of media and its impact on understanding social movements (C. Atton, 2003; W.L. Bennett, 2010; W.L. Bennett & S. Lyengar, 2008), where the emphasis is made on network construction and mechanisms that define the social movements. Another set of theoretical focuses shed light on global activism as part of understanding social movements (W.L. Bennett, 2010; M. Castells, 2000).

Returning to the prime directive of the literature layout in this section, the first outlook approach to social movement is the *collective action framing process*. Snow and Benford (2000) define this approach as follows:

“work the struggle over the production of mobilizing and counter-mobilizing ideas and meanings. From this perspective, social movements are not viewed merely as carriers of extant ideas and meanings that grow automatically out of structural arrangements, unanticipated events, or existing ideologies. Rather, movement actors are viewed as signifying agents actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists, and bystanders or observers.” (Snow and Benford 2000, 613).

This definition implies that through the use of the concept `framing` in the analysis of social movement scholars, the actions and processes of actions through the dynamism and agents involved are closely portrayed in the study. This involves agency and contention at the center in the making of processes through the activism of social movement organization processes (614). As collective action framing processes is a field that came into contentious politics at the beginning of the field's emergence, it is depicted as originating from social psychology and philosophy through Erving Goffman (1986). It entails the ways in which meanings and actions are closely observed to apprehend the reasons and patterns through which social movement organizations act and maneuver the action-oriented outlook to the world and events they encounter (Snow & Benford, 2000, p. 214). The emphasis here is that the collective action framing approach to contention does not approach the behavioral elements of individual action or the emotional or cognitive motives, for that matter. Rather, the key element of the approach to social movement is it being an outcome-based approach to the interaction among the individuals in the respective movements (Gamson, 1992a, p. 111), where frames are broader and more interpretive to what is going on rather than the schema or the cognitive interpretation of the event or moment (Snow & Benford, 2000, p. 614). The context of the collective action framing can be either *diagnostic* - looking for whom to blame and understanding the context of a problem in reality within which social movements are interacting, *prognostic framing* - adopting the question of `what is to be done`, or finally *motivational framing* - means, and methods of mobilizing agents in order to act and interact to solve the problem or dealing with the current status quo.

The concept of contentious politics has the notions of *performance* and *repertoire* at its center, as introduced by Charles Tilly, Dough McAdam, and Sidney Tarrow (2001). The notion of performance or *contentious performances*, as defined by Tilly (2008), is based on two observations he makes in shaping his argument. While actions (of individuals) and interactions (among and within individuals and groups) are paramount in Tilly's hierarchy of action components in contentious politics, the level of performance is the locus which is centered around what can be interpreted as protesting events, where individuals make clear statements and then disperse to follow their own public and private agendas (Kriesi, 2009, p. 342). Returning to Tilly's two arguments on the essentiality of contentious performances as a process of mobilization, he first of all declares, according to references to 17th to 20th-century French experiences in uprisings and protests, that techniques of protests are usually mechanical and repetitive over history, while at the same time, secondly, the ordinary people

of the respective society are seen to follow patterns of large performances rather than express themselves uniquely or participate in large forms of rebellions (Tilly 2008: xiii).

For Tilly, contentious performances (while not explicitly explained) are understood through methodological means of dealing with them, namely the cataloging process of counting and categorizing the protesting events by time and place (Kriesi, 2009, p. 343), which in return contributes to the understanding of interaction and communication among participants and thus the impact on major political processes (Tilly 2008: 5). He uses a quantitative method to historically contextualize events. The proposed 'middle ground', which looks at narratives and event counts, stresses the coding tools of subject, verb, and adjective (Kriesi, 2009, p. 344), where he primarily focuses on the action component (for the sake of contentious performances).

Through this focus, Tilly's understanding of repertoire turns into the analysis of interactions and performances within single events while still mapping or cataloging an overall scheme of related events or their development over a period of time. The focus on the interactions behind changes in dynamics of contention amongst individuals is criticized for still not providing an overall understanding of the dynamics of social movements and campaigns of performances for social change (346). The reflections of these ideas are profound in his earlier work on *Regimes and Repertoires* (2006), through which Tilly addresses that the relationship between regimes and contentious activities is determined based on the governmental capacity to deal with society and social actors through different violent and non-violent mechanisms, as well as the degree of democracy resulting from the governmental capacity. Tilly develops his claims within historical contexts of different case studies that assist him in developing theorization for an overall trend of this relationship while not as much addressing the discursive components behind the developments of repertoires (Burrige, 2008, p. 776), which he approaches as a shortage or grey box in his work, and yet still consciously refraining from addressing it in depth.

In addition to contentious performance, *collective violence* is another immanent component of the contentious literature of Tilly's (2003) contribution that is taken to the center of this field of research for understanding social change and social movement in relation to the element of governmental capacity to deal with the society. Through focusing on causes, combinations, and settings through which collective violence takes place across time and space, Tilly argues that the understanding of violence should not be universalized to apprehend contention. He states that 'to spread the term violence across all interpersonal relations and solitary actions (...) actually undermines the effort to explain violence (...) it blocks (us) from asking about effective causal relationships between exploitation or justice (...) and physical damage (...). It obscures the fact that specialists in inflicting physical damage (such as police, soldiers, guards, thugs, and gangs) play significant parts in collective violence' (4-5). Through this consideration, the process of differentiating between violent and non-violent acts initially intended by actors will be easier to address, making it essential to differentiate between the types of violence according to contextual interpretations. The essence of apprehending collective violence is not focusing on behavioral influences leading to violence or consequences of the patterns of violence while negating the importance of fluctuations in patterns of collective violence (7). Instead, he aims to produce alternatives to understanding the forms of violence and individual behaviors by assessing their effects on contentious politics, in which the government is a part of the interaction (8). Through the concepts of 'exploitation' and 'opportunity hoarding' (10), Tilly explains the two mechanisms as tools used by governments and actors of influence which affect the degree and effect of violence used on a collective basis.

Examples of early theoretical references to emotions and protests in the social movement literature go back to Goodwin and Jasper (in the coming section), who base their conceptions on the scholarly hypotheses of Ted Gurr (2016) and James Davies (1962). These

hypotheses depict the lack of fulfillment, and the desire to pressure regime and system change through quantitative and qualitative research through his introduced psychological frustration-aggression theory. In this, he observes the correlations between frustration due to working and living conditions in relation to the forms of aggression conducted by workers and individuals in respective communities. This is also seen in the work of James Davies (1962) on the relationship between the desired well-being of individuals and their expectations in their workspaces, what became known as the J-Curve model of studying desire and discontent due to workspaces and, thus, social revolts. This model structure of studying the levels of dissatisfaction as a driving factor of collective action focused on the state of mind as an intangible element. The centrality of the intangible element vests in that “political stability and instabilities (are) ultimately dependent on a state of mind, a mood, in a society” (6).

Further, Jasper (1997) contributes through his *morals of protest* and the element of moral commitment toward social change. His belief within this context rests on the importance of the cultural components that shape the drive to become involved in a social movement that drives for social change, and thus also the verbal and non-verbal symbolic expressions that depict this value system. Contrary to the classical literature on irrational collective behavior based on emotional outbursts, Jasper’s argument entails the very rationality of individual involvement in social change due to their cultural and historical background within the context of their dispositions. Having rhetoric at the center of his analysis in understanding how members are recruited and join social movements, Jasper’s analysis includes biographical analysis as well as inter-group analysis, which is unique of its kind at his time in the late 1990s. The role of rhetoric is double-edged, benefiting the cause for which members of the social movements are speaking and internationalizing their cause. On the one hand, it also can harm the interests of others whose position is not necessarily aggressively opposing.

ii. The (Counter) Multitude Approach

While the argument against other notions does not seem profound and critical (as will be highlighted later on in the ‘masses’ literature section of this section), Hardt and Negri sufficed with their stance and paid attention to distinctly position the multitude to the *working class* as the closest concept they could relate or compare their multitudes to. In that realm, the social class, as per the thinkers, is too much of a broad term that does not encompass the diversity of the nature of the movement that is happening or that they are trying to capture through their multitude. In other words, the working class as a concept is problematic in the sense that it “refers only to industrial workers, separating them from workers in agriculture, services, and other sectors, as its most broad, working-class refers to all waged workers, separating them from the poor, unpaid domestic laborers, and all others who do not receive a wage” (Hardt and Negri 204: xiv). Subsequent to the multitudes for Hardt and Negri were, in fact, exclaimed through other notions contextualizing the meaning of the multitudes. Emphasis was given to the idea of controlling society and policing the state, the empire as a capitalist monster based on globalization for expansionist purposes, the conception of biopower, and most particularly also, networking as a method for the existence and persistence of the multitudes for the sake of a revolution and resistance against war and mainstream democracy.

The essential characteristic of the multitudes is not only its lack of one uniform identity that keeps it intact, but rather its constant search “for a common that allows them to communicate and act together...it is not so much discovered as it is produced” (xv). It is through communication that networking is carried out among the components that make up the multitude, constantly welcoming differences and new traits that renew their connectedness. In other words, this is what Hardt and Negri explain as the “power of biopolitical production” (xvi). Accordingly, the use of the multitudes in biopolitical production is “one strong pillar on which stands the possibility of global democracy” (xvi).

This role taken on by the multitude towards global democracy against the giant economies of globalization is a very political one at heart, as some critics of Hardt and Negri might argue (Rilling, 2005; Munro, 2002), one that is defined by “the common.” In this sense, the common here is the production of common knowledge, for example, produced through acknowledging the singularities of those present making up the multitude, and only through which these singularities when finding grounds for communication and knowledge that the political and economic role of the multitude towards global democracy can be fulfilled. The conception of the multitude is taken onto another level as this sense of “the common” that is produced not only strengthens the bondage between the singularities that make up the differences within the multitude.

This leads us to the following element within which the conception of the multitudes unfolds, namely, the control state through policing and the empire. Putting particular emphasis on the Foucauldian and Deleuzian conceptions of power, Hardt and Negri also adopt the Deleuzian argument that “in the twentieth century, we have moved from a disciplinary society to a more invasive society of control” (Munro, 2002, p. 176). This is to say that the power vested in the state through police agencies and mechanisms of control that have “become life itself” (176). Here, the notion of discipline is central as it projects the struggle between the declining scope of the transcendental power of discipline (derived from religion and the state, for example) as a means of power versus the rather increasingly strengthening immanent aspects of the discipline, which “include the networks of production, the identity of those who constitute these networks and the webs of cooperation these networks presume” (177).

The perceptions of the notion of the multitude within its conceptual setting and the general messages that lay behind it particularly culminated onwards since the work on Empire can be looked through various loops. The first issue is that the multitudes very much resemble Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* or *Superman*. The philosopher backbone of the notion here rests on the power of knowledge and unity or integration of others who share common goals and needs that create a greater power to that which already prevails, namely that of the rulers or empires in their dominant and oppressive sense.

Furthermore, the concept of multitude itself, although it is claimed that it is based on heterogeneity, it yet does not encompass the same scope of heterogeneity in the needs and aims of the multitude and its multiplicity of singularities. In addition to this, despite the claim made by Hardt and Negri on empire and their multitude that these conceptions are not aimed at rewriting Marx’s Manifesto, it still tends to be rather prescriptive as to the steps out to be taken against the empire for the sake of global democracy and justice for the multitudes and states or cared to join this revolution and resistance. In fact, as often critiqued (see Chantal Mouffe 2011; Rilling, 2005; Munro, 2002), the concept of the multitude lacks empirical translation and often seems to not be able to distance itself much from its counterparts.

Chantal Mouffe (2011) criticizes this very. Clearly, the multitudes are found to be often generic and as a notion not peculiar per se in encompassing the diversity of a phenomenon such as that associated with this research. Hence, it is a concept that could not provide an answer to the shifting between mass-moment to atomization question. In contempt of the critique on the concept, Hardt and Negri’s work should still be given credit for providing an updated reading into Marxist thought and Deleuzian scholarship regarding the centrality of power and network, as per Deleuze and the fundamentals of Marx’s rise against capitalist corruption and the exploitation of labor and the poor. The link created between these ideas is insightful in that sense, shedding light on the importance of global justice and the deconstruction of the centrality of globalization in the hands of “empire”(s).

Noticing the gaps and contributions social movement theories have to offer to scholarship on shifts in activism and mobilization, the element of subjective constructions and

constellations are evidently not profoundly integrated into social movement theories. Narratives related to subjectivities and the construction of the subject must be shed light on to apprehend why social movement theories, alone, can no longer be a stand-alone toolbox for scholarly analysis of societal shifts and subjective constellations.

III. Apprehending Subjectivity Narratives

The notion of subjectivity refers to the understanding of the consciousness of individuals and groups, their realities and experiences of truth and other cognitive processes, through the power dynamics prevailing in their respective societies, and their position in relation to these dynamics (how individuals choose to deal with their socio-political engagements). Subjectivities become pivotal in apprehending the consciousness of collective mass orientations and assist in addressing the atomization question, also related to the Canettian conception of 'self-destructiveness'. In that respect, this section provides an alternative explanation as to why further elements of analysis are needed to provide a rather comprehensive canvas in studying social structures using alternative narratives to the structural analysis provided by social movement theories. The following sections are divided up based on what is seen as rather representative of subjectivities and narratives of individual or collective experience as part of constellations for social transformations.

i. Desire, Affect, and Psychology

One of the narratives of tackling subjectivity is the consciousness of a *lack* that mobilizes individuals to act in ways that bring them closer to satisfying their desire, let it be political or social, as seen in Lacan and Jameson's thought. For Jacques Lacan, this takes a psychoanalytical turn of meaning.

i.i. Psycho-Analysis

In understanding Lacanian subjectivity, the concepts of *the lack*, subjectivity due to the strife for enjoyment, and identity constructions are pivotal. Based on the Freudian *Spaltung*, or the split, Lacan depicts his subjects, describing them as ex-centric subjects, namely a subject that is not placed at the center but is positioned or torn between two or more fronts or domains (realities). The idea of the lack of a subject is translated in the constant and desperate search of the subject for any possible identity of the association through ideology, group attachments, or any other source of social behavior or roles available (Glynos & Stavrakakis, 2008, p. 261). This constant struggle of avoiding and combatting the lack and helplessness, if failed, will reconstruct the oppressive repercussions of lack of identification for the subject, and its negative dialectics, without having a sense of belonging. The constant desire for the *jouissance*, or enjoyment, produces different modes of evolved desires for identification (262). This is associated with what Lacan identifies as the "fantasmatic promise of recapturing enjoyment and saturation of desire" (262), often believed to be achieved through defeating a national enemy, for instance, or conducting a festival-like reaction to a grand achievement by the regime for the society. Following this victorious moment, a sense of lack of achievement persists. However, these achievements do not necessarily have a long-term impact on nourishing the enjoyment sensation and satisfying the personal desire for endured enjoyment (263).

The issue of fantasy is significant in the Lacanian understanding, as the social logic within which one exists imposes truths and realities of defeats, which necessitate the reshuffling of identifications. This is what Lacan identifies as "the search for a constant ideal life" (265), one which produces a counter-logic to the general social and political norms, signifying the role of fantasy and idealism (265). The desire for a better life can be understood through the concept of "lack" and "fantasmatic promises" made by protesters to one another for granting a better life. The overwhelming promises made were also for a sense of unity that

deconstructs hierarchies, and patriarchal patterns, which is derived from the sensation of *the lack*.

i.ii. Affect Theory and Consciousness

As the significance of desire and oppression play a significance in scholarly outlook on subjectivities, the significance of affect theory as employed through the work of Sara Ahmed (2010, 2014b) should be addressed. Ahmed's concept of *wilfulness* is essential, as she tackles the concept in depicting the ways in which subjectivities are constructed on the one hand, but also uses experience in order to affect social and political dimensions in their societies. Through her feminist and philosophical outlook, Ahmed believes that subjectivities should be viewed as the product of will, where "all predicated end up belonging to the will" (Ahmed, 2014b, p. 23). In her narrative, Ahmed focuses on how the belief that one owns a will, either individually or collectively in groups or other forms of collectivities, this sensation of owning the will can affect how one experiences events, views objects, and self-reflection and consciousness alike over time and events (24). In apprehending subjectivities, the subject's ownership, or belief in the ownership, therefore, affects the meaning of an object or even becomes viewed as.

This is what she terms as "the behind," "exclaiming the manifold meanings of the one and same-self object one can attain if the object/event is viewed from different angles, which is influenced by the status of the will as assumed by the subject at a given point in time (25). This viewpoint sets great emphasis on the modes of experiences of the will (producing sentiments), as well as the consciousness of the self and the object experienced. The will is also seen as producing its subjects through the protracted continuity of a moment or event over time (see Butler's *Exitable Speech* 1997a). Ahmed's approach to the will as an experience and its relation to the subject takes a turn into Edmund Husserl's phenomenological outlook on memory and the will in his *Experience and Judgement* (1948). This reflection on Husserl's conception of the acquisition of the will and memory is fundamental for the purpose of the research, in context with the subject. In his work, Husserl states that the reflection on the past that produces a continued will in the present to acquire or experience a particular event or object is proof that the will is influenced by sentiments and conscious reflections on past experiences that affect the experience of the present will.

Consciousness and the will in the shaping of self-positioned of and by the subject are taken onto another level, where Ahmed assumed wilfulness as a political means of expression (133). By that notion, the expression of "call of arms" is emphasized in her thought, where she depicts that the unity created through the body (fist symbols, hands-on posters as a sign of unity among individuals in protest) is one through which produces a wilfulness as a crisis that challenges the regime (199). It is a depiction of "a history of rising up, of not being reduced to dust, shows us the affinity between those various and varied beings that have been deemed property, as objects in which the will of others resides" (199). In other words, the narrative of the wilfulness of subjects to undo their subjectivities by their joined affect reflections on their experiences of events and perceptions of objects detaches subjects from being perceived as objects/containers (200) contrary to "bodies become objects, become arms, what is assumed to carry and to carry out the master's will" (200). At the same time, a wilful submission is also a wilful act, only a wilful act out of fear of becoming marginalized and oppressed (200-201). This is thus used by oppressed subjects in compliance as a legitimate reason for which they chose obedience, or becoming obedient wilful subjects, over becoming subjects of threatening will to the regime. This is an assumption Ahmed had addressed earlier on in her *The Promise to Happiness* (2010), where happiness and a better life are promised, by society and the regime alike, to those who comply with living their lives in the ethically acceptable way prescribed by the status quo.

i.iv. Political/Discourse Psychology

Mass movements and mass moments have marked paramount weight in the scholarship of social science since particularly 2011 within the Arab region, Occupy movements across the US and Europe, to say the least. Among the attempts to explain such movements through the use of social movement theories, the element of psychological motives and discourse was seen to be an edge lagging in the focus and scope of the study (Moneir, 2014; 2022). It was not until 2016 when work started to rise on the need to revisit the entire discipline once again was visible through the published Arabic translation of the original work by Cristian Tileaga (2015)¹⁴ titled *Political Psychology: Critical Perspectives* by *ʿAlam al-Maʿrefa*¹⁵ (The World of Knowledge) publishing house. Through this book and other contributions by Tileaga, individually or co-authored, the concept of discursive psychology was brought into the light and given particular attention as an alternative to the already existing cognitive approach to studying emotions and social change pre-existing through earlier works of Husserl and Walter Benjamin as part of phenomenological studies.

In the following section, conceptual revisions related to political psychology, with a special focus on discursive psychology, as a discipline and angle of analysis and perceiving various historical realities across different regions. This will be primarily resorting to the special volume by *ʿAlam al-Maʿrefa* in terms of presenting the central notions at the locus and reviewing their essence in terms of validity in how they were presented and the potential gaps and benefits that come along with such revived conceptual settings or deconstructed in the case of some. In that respect, the project tackles the composition of political psychology through various angles of analysis that explain the means of interpreting and employing the field of political psychology within the European context of the dynamics and functioning of societies and states through the aid of North American literature (11). These are as follows: linguistics and power, the sense of a common or collective, discursivity, and memory.

Discursive psychology was first coined by Potter and Edwards (1992) in their *Discursive Psychology*, calling out for perceiving this approach as a far-reaching means of studying social and political issues across social sciences at large, omitting the exclusivity to the field of psychology. Resorting to Wittgenstein's theory in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1986) that language and emotions must be brought in as tools of analysis, the development of discursive psychology was seen to be of incremental use in interpreting the challenges and developments of academia and social interpretation of the 20th and 21st centuries. The message Tileaga intends to formulate is to find an alternative to North American academia and psychology studies as it solely focuses on the behavioral approach through cognitive and positivistic studies (Nesbitt-Larking 2014: 71). He rather opts for a European alternative for the interpretation of reality, and thus the reinterpretation of the use of psychology within the political context. This alternative is within the framework of what he calls "interpretive political psychology," which gives prime for cultural, rhetoric, and semiotic elements of the society-politics relationship or dimensions and spaces that exist between and along this binary. This call, in fact, is very clear in the series of work not only introduced in this book on reconfiguring political psychology but also in Tileaga's general contributions on discursive psychology over almost the last decade, which legitimizes the intensive use of the proposed concept of discursive psychology through the interpretive political psychology framework. Political psychology, hence, is seen through the lens of identity and language or speech as central as opposed to the traditionalist approach of the cognitive approach (Carr, 2016, p. 354), which Tileaga embeds in his book, and yet most importantly framed so as to set emphasis on how social behavior and constructions at large change and are reshaped over time through symbolisms, speech, rhetoric and identity struggles impacting power struggles, all through the eyes of discursivity within political psychology (Tileaga, 2016, p. 17). In regard to language, which is paramount in the development of discursive psychology, it is

believed that it is not to be used or perceived as a descriptive tool of interpretation. In other words, "language is not treated as an externalization of underlying thoughts, motivations, memories, or attitudes, but as a performative of them" (4). Hence, it is to be understood as action-oriented, which allows the researcher to understand the daily life developments of the people studied through their memories, identities, social structures, and emotions while eliminating fixated settings of interpretation, unlike traditional or classical psychological scholarship. Political psychology in this work is also believed to deserve more critical attention than the all-encompassing and rather still limited cognitive approach to interpreting the phenomenon at hand (17).

The sketching of the proposed layout or methodology on perceiving and reusing political psychology while putting identity and speech (language) at the center studies how political psychology can interpret speech and transformations as well as challenges in identity structures through considering a set of assumptions. The first of which is that there needs to be a diversion from looking at racism and discrimination to looking at the notion of "intolerance" as it zooms into matters and dimensions of inclusions and exclusions of minority groups as well as excluded majorities in some other cases (18), and hence widens the scope of political psychology and takes it away from its historical contextual entrapment with cognitive and mere behavioral studies. In that respect, the issue of data collection also gets particular attention, focusing on "naturally occurring data" as opposed to the generated data by the researcher based on a dominant framework imposing its own tools and variables like the cognitive approach, according to Tileaga (Carr, 2016, p. 352). This would give more meaning and dimension to the interpreted phenomenon and enables political psychology, through the discursive approach, to lend its multidisciplinary to the respective issue observed. Tileaga goes on to say that "discursive psychologists should not abandon the concept of 'attitudes' but instead provide a more refined description of actual evaluative practices people use in their daily lives" (Tileaga /Stokoe 2016: 7). Hence, it is important to associated actions and attitudes to ideologies and values related to cultures and societies rather than imposing a set of predefined tools of data frames that must be collected in giving more meaning to the phenomenon observed, or what is referred to as the "embodies practices of social evaluation" (9), giving empirical practices a more comprehensive push towards critical thought.

ii. The Biopolitical and the Body Narrative to Subjectivity

Biopolitics as a concept, although infamously related to the works of Michel Foucault, goes notably as far back as Rudolf Kjellen (the study of the inter-social group struggles along the state, naming this biopolitics) and Robert Kuttner (through his work, among many of *Biopolitics: The Theory of Racial Nationalism* in 1956). This state/social group relationship developed through a poststructuralist approach in the Foucauldian sense to evoke the forms of states and systems that choose techniques of dealing with and categorizing human beings and the impact this has over circles of power relationships as well as experiences. The Foucauldian need to reassess the *biopolitical dispositive* was to find explanations for the impact modern states at times of nuclear wars have on the protection and the elimination of life. Hence, bringing on a sense of phenomenological angle to the study of the concept. Hardt and Negri, in their work on *Empire* (2000), too reference biopolitics in their context, giving it a more positive dimension rather than the production processes it entails to the creation of the subject or subjectivity. In their work, "the constitution of political relations now encompasses the whole life of the individual, which prepares the ground for a new revolutionary subject: the multitude" (Lemke 2005: 4) and not the subjectification of individuals.

For Foucault, the link "between forms of subjectification and political technologies" (Lemke 2005: 4) is set at the focus where he clearly distinguishes between biopolitics (or the biopolitical) and sovereignty, as well as the belief that space (the panopticon for instance) is both an object and an approach or paradigm of thought that related to the construction of

memory and the understanding of history. First introducing the concept 1975-1976 as part of a lecture series he held at the College de France (Foucault, 2003, pp. 239-264), Foucault's approach at the time was to relate the use of governments for statistics, thus the role of technology in the form of numbers, in dealing with their populations. Over time, this system would develop into the formation of institutions like health systems, clinics, and prisons in dealing with these statistics on one side, but also in the imposition of punishment mechanisms and holding system and order for the sake of practicing sovereignty over the respective categorization of individuals and thus subjectivities.

Processes of punishment and obedience shape this apparatus, through which the meaning of the individual, the body, and the territory of the existence of this individual, and hence the limits of the practice of individuality are all part of what constructs the *dispositif* of the phenomenon of experience and the politics of sovereignty over that territory that shapes the meaning of the individual and the politics of the body and population. It is also this sovereignty over territory that divides individuals into levels of humans based on their abilities, thus deepening the structure or the apparatus of what makes the subject by obedient-based categorization of the subject. Discipline also stands strongly in focus as he says that "discipline is centripetal, it isolates spaces and creates segments, it focuses and encloses... apparatus of sovereignty. On the other hand, they are centrifugal, and they aim to integrate new things in ever-widening circuits. Discipline strives towards the regulation of details, whereas security at a certain level allows things to run their course" (Wallenstein, 2013, p. 20). In a sense, discipline for Foucault is not necessarily an aspect that is negative, but it compliments reality where the panopticon is not necessarily the ultimate apparatus or *dispositif*, which is the argument of the physiocrats (Wallenstein, 2013, p. 20), which he explains as what becomes the model of liberalism which is "A technology of power, or a way to work with reality (...) does not preclude other perspectives, although it implicitly claims to precede them (...) it is way to make certain things real by working with, intensifying, tempering, or redirecting processes already underway in reality itself" (21).

Through the institutionalization of power, understanding of the normal and abnormal behavior, as well as modes of categorization of the individual, became central for the practice of power, which in return created the subject. These categorizations were produced through signs and slogans, hierarchies, and systems of punishments and rewards as integral to systems. From here comes the concept of discourse, which is central in the actions taken by institutions to legitimize their procedures towards the subjects in society. This discourse is a product of a set of norms and values supporting its respective power, or what Foucault calls power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980; Mansfield, 2000, p. 59). In that sense, the individual that was once seen as a free independent individual becomes entrapped at the heart of a larger system of power structures manifested in the institutional settings.

Unlike Foucault, Giorgio Agambian introduced biopolitics as the mechanisms that define a space of interaction where the juridical dictates the nature of power structures, which Foucault abstains from claiming its insufficiency for the understanding of discursive critique (Lemke 2005: 4). The Agambian discourse of the biopolitical scheme proposes perspectives worth observing regarding the notion of death and right to life or existence for that matter, ultimately bringing the body to the center of analysis, as in similarity with Foucault. However, as sovereignty comes to the foreground, unlike Foucault, Agamben believes that it is the tool that administers life and death, while Foucault believed it is a tool for surveillance and control to maintain a system. Agamben also diverts from Foucault with respect to the association drawn between bare life and the rule of exception through the notions of *bios* (political existence) and *zoe* (bare life). In his work of *Homo Sacre* (1998), Agamben indicated that "Foucault's death kept him from showing how he would have developed the concept and study of biopolitics (...) the entry of *zoe* into the sphere of the polis – the politicization of bare life as such – constitutes the decisive event of modernity and signals a radical transformation

of the political-philosophical categories of classical thought` (4). Along with this critique, Agamben, Arendt, and Benjamin, too, did not consider biopolitics in their work. It is seen to be rather crucial in Arendt's *The Human Condition*, for example, based on her work on totalitarian power (4). Also, she introduces the *homo laborans* yet does not take it further into elaboration. Walter Benjamin's biopolitical work traits that "meaningful change is possible and that the current conditions of law and political order contain elements of domination that can be eliminated through human action" (Pan, 2009, p. 43), depicts his perspective on the status quo and the position taken towards sovereignty and the practices of the state towards individuals of the society. However, this, too, was not processed in Benjamin's work.

Agamben defines *zoe* as "bare life" which is composed of two sides to the coin: being expelled from the polis and the political life, and on the other side, being included in political life or "becoming full legal subjects" (Lehmke 2005: 5). Sovereignty of the state over its subjects is what produces "the original political relation (which) is the ban (the state of exception as a zone of indistinction between outside and inside, exclusion and inclusion)" (Agamben, 1998, p. 181). The bios are thus the political existence, hence the legality of an individual in the eyes of the state if not banned from the political scheme produced and controlled by the state. The *homo sacre*, although contested originally for its validity as a concept as Agamben displayed in his work (see Harold Bennet 1930 "Sacre esto"), the concept lends itself to the original Greek meaning of "the sacred man (...) whom the people have judged because a crime. It's not permitted to sacrifice this man, yet he who kills him will not be condemned for homicide" (Agamben, 1998, p. 71). Hence, being expelled from society and whose life is legal for the taking.

The dynamics portrayed can be further understood through the subjectivity production vested in "the "kill-ability" of others, seen through the impact the sovereign has over the body to determine its destiny and thus its right to live or be excluded from the political life, hence constructing the object-subject relationship. In other words, space where bios and zoe are distinguished where on one side, an individual is a political object accepted within the sovereignty of the state, hence having bare life with political rights, which is the very paradox of this construct (being an outlaw with political rights who is also still a legitimate subject and target by permissible state violations). The state of exception, as per Agamben, is associated with what he calls "the camp", explained in the previous section of the space, which is the component of what defines the modern state and modern biopolitics. The politicization of life and the sovereignty practiced over deciding whose life does not deserve to live or is worth being given political rights and existence brings about the issue of the zone of distinction between what is life and what death is, which is what Agamben defines as "zone of indistinction" (122). Here he explains that "along with the emergence of biopolitics, we can observe a displacement and gradual expansion beyond the limits of the decision on bare life, in the state of exception, in which sovereignty consisted. If there is a line in every modern state marking the point in which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and biopolitics can turn into *thanatopolitics*, this line no longer appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones" (122). *Thanatopolitics*, is thus the status where death becomes means for mobilizing and processing political life. The state of exception here references back to Carl Schmitt, that the sovereignty of the state is acted in favor of the public good by the process of exclusion (bare life).

iii. The Rhizomatic Narrative to Subjectivity

In addition to the impact and relevance of the biopolitical narrative on body and subjectivities, the concepts of "rhizomes" and "rhizome processes", as presented by Deleuze, have paid special attention to the understanding of subjectivities. The botanical rhizome, in its rather raw sense, "(...) proliferates and runs along the surface of the ground. It is defined as an underground stem of perennial plants, as opposed to the roots, which are an axial part of

vascular plants. It is the very proliferation of its outgrowth that allows the rhizome to create new shapes of life` (Clombat 1991: 15). The reason for which Deleuze resorted to this conception is that it provides what he calls a `theoretical rhizome`, meaning that detaching it from its botanical meaning, the rhizome can very well be applied in different disciplinary axes as a researcher sees fit. It is also important to highlight that the schizoanalysis conducted is of literary discourse through a regime critique in the works of Kafka and Faust, for example, where `schizoanalysis` is a radical critique of the socio-political with respect to power and psychoanalysis, where revolutionary desires to deconstruct the capitalist corpuses take place (Stivale, 1980, p. 46). The aim is that metamorphosis is at the heart of Deleuze's work of the rhizomes presented in his and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (2005). Hence, the rhizomes within the schizoanalysis presented by Deleuze are to be utilized for readers and researchers to use freely within experimental fields from philosophy to science and art and everyday practices (Clombat 1991: 15).

Deleuze built on the Foucauldian conception of power and created his own framework and understanding of `desire`, deepening the interpretation of rhizomatic functions in criticizing the social and the political. Desire, in this context, denotes `a desire that is just a productive and creative energy, a desire of flux, force, and difference, a revolutionary desire that we need to think in ways that will disrupt common sense and everyday life` (Colebrook 2002: xv). Through this desire and breaking free of existing norms, the rhizome comes to being in the form of groups, movements, or individuals (47) and is hence escalated into networks that challenge existing norms and construct new roots and norms. These norms and hence this active and positive desire for this rhizome movement create what Deleuze and Guattari named `deterritorialisation` of already existing social pre-givens and the `reterritorialisation` of new ones as the new roots (Stivale 1980; Colebrook 2002). Through this process, the oedipal complex becomes untangled, where `self-prohibiting for the sake of some universal law or guilt` (Colebrook 2002: xxvii) becomes deconstructed.

Suppose this contribution were to be taken in comparison to Hardt and Negri's multitude. In that case, it becomes evident that there could be a similarity in Deleuze's deterritorialization and reterritorialization processes for establishing new roots and challenging existing regimes and Hardt and Negri's power off the biopolitical through communication and information channels. Both, in their own contextualization, present a form of combatting the existing regime or status quo. At the same time, the depth of defining them differs between the two sides of intellectuals. While Hardt and Negri refer to the multitude as the essential corpus that produces this power of the biopolitical where differences amongst individuals are overcome through produced channels of communication and cooperation, it still does not give the tools of how this is conducted as already depicted earlier on in the critique of their work. On the contrary, however, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize to a great degree how the psychological element affects the way the rhizomatic movements are constructed, held together, and eventually in their functioning as driven by their desire and interest in achieving change.

Despite the conceptual-empirics gap, the use of affect theory is found to be useful in addressing subjectivities through Ahmed's work, for instance, as well as Butler's understanding of death and the body. While Butler's work on death also rests on the Foucauldian power and the biopolitical, the concept of death has been developed from Foucault's belief that death is silenced. Surveillance and punishment are all about life; Butler added that death has various angles of perceptions, among which is that it causes guilt and self-punishment for the living. At the same time, it also determines whose worth living and whose life is legitimate for the taking (close to Agamben's kill-ability conception). On a rather micro-level of analysis, these concepts lend themselves as handy tools through which the retreating of groups and individuals from the political arena could be interpreted, how

their consciousness affects their political being, and their ability to perceive and deal with their subjectivity.

Conclusion

This research analyzes a wide spectrum of selected literature, pointing out and thoroughly synthesizing the way the conceptions and social movement, and subjectivity are formulated as narratives of collective action. Through this depiction, it becomes evident that the historical subject, with the question of consciousness and self-reflection on experiences and socio-political involvement in change, is paramount. Without this element, accounts of why and how atomization among subjectivities is/ was produced across historical examples if we use this research as a theoretical framework and analysis methods.

Although social movement theories are widely involved and provide famous tool-kit for the socio-political analysis of social-political challenges, scholarship on subjectivities offers alternative angles and viewpoints. This should prove the inevitable condition that scholarship should work parallel to apprehend different historical narratives comprehensively. Going back, the question of the historical subject, as a consciously existing being acting and influenced by experiences and memories, was dismissed from the contentious politics approach, leaving little to no room for unstructured domains of collectivities and the relations between emotions and revolutionary protests. Social movements theory is central to scholarly analysis of social activism and collectivity. In that sense, it is essential to conclude that the emotional shift that affects the political engagement, conscious reception of the surrounding environment, and the events over the course of time make the social movement theories, at times, incapable of proceeding with the explanations or proving a justification.

The narratives of effect and psychological angles of analysis of subjectivity were also fundamental in perceiving the construction of subjectivities. Through the affect theory and the psychological outlook on social change, sentiments, fear, memory, and experiences were fundamental in shaping subjectivities and how individuals accept or reject their subjective positions. The role of effect is also paramount as it relates to the biopolitical, the idea of ownership over the body, and affect as a production of power constellation. This concludes, within the realm of this research, that the various conceptions and theories discussed and analyzed should be taken a step further in implementing different historical narratives. In that respect, the apprehension of theory and narratives of realities will address the modes social movement theories and subjectivity can take on a grounded basis. This, in return, would encourage revisiting the mechanism of existing scholarship of social movement theory and its employability when realizing that the psychological and affect are paramount components of human collective actions and of de-subjectification (Moneir 2019; 2022).

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