**Solidarity Economy: Social Movements Beyond Politics of Recognition?[[1]](#footnote-1)**

New Social Movements (NSMs) and Contentious Politics (CP) dominate the research and analysis of social movements. NSMs display collective action as a battle for state’s recognition. CP depicts social movements as attempts to advance collective interests through the state. These approaches place emphasis on state concessions transforming collective subjects into claimants of either identity recognition or interests. In addition, structures, institutions, political process, demonstration, demands and reforms become pivotal in the analysis. During the financial crisis, activism and collective action questioned these approaches by highlighting their limitations. Scholars encountered difficulties in categorizing and analyzing newly emerging Solidarity Economy (SE) movement.

This paper discusses the relation of SE to social movements and traces what is new with this movement. It questions the relation of SE initiatives with CP and NSMs and reinforces the hypothesis that these initiatives constitute the quintessential paradigm in order to understand a shift of collective action from CP and NSM to new forms of social movements. It argues that the movement of SE and the radical alternatives it constructs offer a different view on social movements. As a paradigm of contemporary social movements, SE includes a set of practices deviant to NSMs and CP, and in many cases draws upon elements, such as direct action, self-management and prefiguration, from anarchist and libertarian socialist tradition. Recognition in this context becomes a matter of legal protection and not an identity concern. SE initiatives go beyond state-centeredness, politics of demand and polity model and challenge the dominant frameworks for the analysis of social movements. A need to re-think social movements emerges. To prove the above argument, the paper follows two alternative projects based in Greece: the self-managed factory of *Viomichaniki Metalleutiki* and a local network called *Proplasma*.

**Keywords: Social Movements, Recognition, Solidarity Economy, Social Change**

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