

13th Conference
of the European
Sociological Association

(Un)Making Europe:
Capitalism, Solidarities,
Subjectivities

ESA 2017
ATHENS

29.08

01.09



ABSTRACT BOOK

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HELLENIC
SOCIOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

Athens | 29 August – 01 September 2017
ESA 13th Conference | (Un)Making Europe: Capitalism, Solidarities, Subjectivities |
<http://esa13thconference.eu/>
Organisers | European Sociological Association | <http://www.europeansociology.org/>
Hellenic Sociological Society | <http://www.hellenicsociology.gr/el/content/1>
Graphic Design | Dimitris Fragoulakis | e-mail: dfragoul@yahoo.gr

ISSN 2522-2562
Abstract book (European Sociological Association)
Publisher | European Sociological Association (ESA), Paris, France
URL: <https://www.europeansociology.org/publications/esa-conference-abstract-books>
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exploitation, and critique or protest referring to everyday life practice as well as alternative visions. The contribution, first, shows how the consolidation of class-specific interests refers to and re/produces social inequalities and polarizations, also basing on gender and ethnicity. Second, referring to the example of care provision by care agencies and their promise to bridge the care gap demands for justice as well as pitting precarities against precarities become obvious. The conclusion, third, figures out how credible alternatives can interfere in the distributional struggles of a, in principle, careless society providing care as a privilege for a minority and what questions of inequality and justice arise and have to be considered.

New Distributional Conflicts and the Right-Populist Revolt

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Capitalism without rapid and permanent growth creates fertile soil upon which a new populist right can thrive. Class-specific inequalities and exclusion have increased dramatically, yet class movements and organised class politics from below are in many ways at an historical ebb. Class relations take effect even if experiences of injustice do not result in collective activity towards the improvement of shared grievances. In the absence of political orientations which mobilised classes could theoretically produce or at least prompt, class relations take effect via the mode of competition, and via collective social de- and re-valuation. The state assumes a vital role in this process. Political demarcations linked to the allocation of social goods trigger class-formation through collective debasement and stigmatisation of major social groups. Adding to this are collective debasement and negative classifications through which members of the lower classes seek to prevail in processes of social competition. In this sense, the central claim of this paper is as follows: the more difficult or impossible remedying distributional relations perceived as unjust from the top to the bottom (from the rich to the poor) appears, the more likely it becomes that wage-earners will tend toward exclusive solidarity and, consequently, become susceptible to right-populist slogans and concepts. One of the challenges facing the trade unions today emerges from the fact that right-wing orientations and sympathies for right-populism are often present among their active members. The article proceeds from a discussion of the situation in Germany and a comparison to other European countries, drawing on theoretical concepts developed by the author (capitalist Landnahme) as well as on empirical research.

Portugal: between 'Contraption' and 'The flying cow'

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The cycle of anti-austerity contention between 2010 and 2013 in Portugal reveals a complex picture, where traditional actors, including trade unions and left-wing political parties, emerged as key actors. Notwithstanding, the principal "engine" that gave rise to this change was a cycle of social mass protests who helped to break down the former Right-wing majority. It's true that, at that time, nobody in Portugal could admit that – meaning the proximity between PS/socialists and PCP/ communists – would be possible. One of the criticisms became a new concept focused on PS Government until today: «The Contraption» . This notion, suggested by a right-wing opinion maker, was initially directed to the Socialist Party, but the public opinion picked it up and spread it out until now. Other observers, more sympathetic, have also named this political solution as «The flying cow», a metaphor to emphasize the "miracle" that it would be to watch a cow flying, similar to such surprising agreement among this different – and normally divergent – political parties. Departing from that political scenario in Portugal we propose a sociological analysis about the role of social movements and their articulations/tensions they've played with political Left-wing political parties and questioning the current Government solution (and what will happens in the next future).

In spite of all negative expectations, the political alternative found in Portugal brought some important accomplishments regarding precarious work, social rights and working class conquests, albeit not being considered a consistent solution. Until now (January 2017), it has worked. So, "the cow still flies"...

RN06 | Session 04b Accumulation by Dispossession and the Possibilities for Hope

Logics of Exploitation: Subsumption and Imprinting

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Neoliberal policies are deeply traversed by circuits of exploitation. Yet it is unclear how they stand in relation to wage-labour as an institution, namely to the crucial element in Marx's description of subsumption – the process through which the social relations of production penetrate the labour process itself. From this perspective, exploitation is closely linked with wage-labour. In the last decades, however, wage-labour has lost much of its centrality in industrial relations.

Following a critical political economy approach, our paper advance the hypothesis that there are forms of exploitation which are not predicated on wage-labour. Those, we argue, show a different logic than the one shaping subsumption. Today, capital must grant/impose to social cooperation a certain degree of

self-government *ex ante*, in order to subsequently capture the value they produce, *ex post*. For this reason we propose a new concept, that of imprinting, to complement – not to supplant – the notion of subsumption. Imprinting works through a double injunction: “(1) be as different from the social norm as you wish, experience your autonomy in its fullness, (2) as long as the outcome of your behaviour is translatable into the variable metrics of financial conventions – money”.

Thus, imprinting grasps exploitative practices predicated on human capital as governmental control of self-entrepreneurship, as Foucault would put it. However, our conviction is that it is key to focus on the structural articulation of imprinting and subsumption: it is at such crossroads, in fact, that it becomes possible to understand new, emerging forms of subjectivity in the context of a permanent economic crisis – most notably in Europe.

Normalising corporate counterinsurgency: The everyday operations of RWE in Hambach and beyond

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The German Rhineland is home to the world’s largest opencast lignite coal mine – the Hambach mine. Over the last six years, the mine has experienced an increase in militant resistance, leading people to occupy the Hambach forest, civil disobedience and sabotage. The mine provides a European case study to examine the repressive techniques deployed by mining operator RWE and the state to legitimize coal mining in the face of a determined opposition, anthropogenic climate change, loss of ancient forests and displacement of local communities; manufacturing legitimacy and pacifying dissent. Drawing on different strands of political ecology literature and work on corporate counter-movements, this paper peers into extractive industries and their corporate social responsibility engagements through the lens of corporate counterinsurgency, by, first, providing some background on the Hambach mine and RWE’s unique (and powerful) position in the German political economy. After explaining the rise of resistance in the area, the paper then discusses counterinsurgency by outlining the different techniques used to win the ‘hearts’ and ‘minds’ of people around the mine. This includes securing the support of regional political leaders, lobbying, involvement in social events, infrastructure projects, astroturfing and ecological restoration and offsetting work, which combine with overtly repressive techniques by public and private security forces that together attempt to ‘divide-and-conquer’, legitimise the mine and intimidate and criminalise activists. This paper contends that counterinsurgency techniques are becoming normalised into the everyday operations of RWE, naturalising its image as “good corporate citizen” and legitimising the violence towards human and

nonhuman nature inherent in the corporate-state-mining-complex, as it is becoming part of the “green economy” and made “sustainable”.

Degrowth: A Bumpy Ride Towards Intragenerational Global Justice?
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Degrowth is a proposal from and for the Global North and according to Kallis, Demaria, and D’Alisa (2015: 5) it should be pursued in the North “not in order to allow the South to follow the same path, but first and foremost in order to liberate conceptual space for countries there to find their own trajectories of what they define as the good life”. In this sense, degrowth scholars and activists commonly claim that degrowth paves the way for intragenerational global justice. However, in various discussions with academics from the Global South (e.g. the Indian ecofeminist Bina Agarwal, personal communication, January 20th, 2017), degrowth is (dis)regarded an utopia of wealthy Global North countries that neglects the inherent ties of the Global South’s necessity to grow and the interlinked (at least not de-)growing demand in the Global North.

The proposed article aims at shedding light on this putative contradiction by elaborating on the following research question: To what extent can degrowth in the Global North promote intragenerational justice and how can possible negative (short-term) impacts on the Global South be offset? By the means of a profound literature review and expert interviews, the article tries to portray degrowth in the Global North as beneficial for both the Global North and the Global South and hence as a fruitful and holistic way forward towards a post-capitalist society.

RN06 | Session 05a Unravelling the Political Economy of Technocracy and Expertise

Lay practices of research to the study of technocracy in the EU
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In the midst of the European financial crisis, experts from international organizations have appeared in the political discourse as the only subjectivities capable of disciplining the attitudes of governments and citizens. Holders of expertise, an abstract quality, experts are often seen as the instrumental assets of government policies, private and public organizations, and are generally considered the actual pivot of global governance. Given that non-accountable functionaries act as agenda-setters, some scholars, both critical and not, have suggested that the European Union and other international institutions are essentially