

Welfare societies in transition

**Polanyi revisited through the lens of welfare state, social
democracy and solidarity economy**

CALL FOR PAPERS

EMES-Polanyi International Seminar

16th and 17th of April 2018

Roskilde University

Co-organisers:

EMES International Research Network

Collège d'études mondiales

Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy

Institut Karl Polanyi France

In partnership with



Following the previous seminar of 19th and 20th May 2016, which focused on a key question in Polanyi's work: the relationship between economic and political pluralism, at this conference we explore further how a renewed reconciliation between the redistributive capacity of the welfare state and the reciprocal and collective capacities of associative life may form a cornerstone in a new welfare society. This is an invitation to explore how a Polanyian framework may contribute to define a way forward for the welfare state in an international perspective.

1. Context

The social movements and political parties that built the universal welfare state in its most advanced form have failed to produce a vision for the future. Already in the late 1980s, scholars from the communitarian and critical traditions in the social sciences expected a gradual breakdown of the universal welfare state due to a combination of bureaucratization and a missing space for civil society. Since the beginning of the new millennium, a gradual privatization and marketization of social responsibility and citizenship has intensified on a global scale, including new tools such as social impact bonds and new management methods such as bottom of the pyramid. Political parties most directly affiliated with the public welfare state were stuck in the victories of the past, unable to define a way forward, while remaining uninterested in collaborating actively with new social movements and organized civil society. At the same time, there is a remarkable diversity and creativity found in vibrant citizen initiatives, some engaged in articulating new forms of reciprocity, others committed to social and societal goals. However, these cannot replace the vast institutions of the welfare state. Thus, the welfare framework seems fragile if not able to link positively the institutional and redistributive capacity of the welfare state to these new citizen driven initiatives and hybrid entities that are emerging at an increasing speed. The gap between a diversity of citizen initiatives and the welfare state creates a very dangerous situation for the future of democracy as well as for the social and economic sustainability.

Accordingly, it is of utmost importance to find ways of addressing and compensating the gradual withdrawal of the universal welfare state and its mass oriented types of solidarity with more flexible types of collective efforts and citizen engagement. If the withdrawal of the universal welfare state is happening without a simultaneous investment in the institutionalization of new links between the redistributive capacity of the state and the reciprocal and collective capacity of civil society especially in social and solidarity economy, citizens will intensify their competition and fight over scarce resources between themselves. In Europe, a continent renowned for its inclusive and rights' oriented social policies and services, a dramatic and yet silent change may be occurring without much public attention.

Research in different countries and continents is showing a converging trend of growing inequalities in multiple dimensions including housing, health, life expectancy, access to energy, pensions and education. How such multi-dimensional patterns of inequality are reshaping societies stays invisible. In Europe in general a dramatic and yet silent change is occurring without much public attention. Among other examples, in the city of Glasgow, recent research has shown life expectancy gaps up to 28 years between the richest and the poorest community. In Spain a young professional woman dubbed her generation as "mileuristas" with no chance to ever earn more than 1,000 Euros a month and thus forming a new professional precariousness. In Denmark, a country previously known for its universal welfare system, a multidimensional process of inequality is on the rise with big variations between municipalities in terms of quality and expenditure of important social services. Even in Scandinavia, the impact of multi-dimensional inequality remains profoundly un-addressed. These examples of a deeper European process of segregation, privatization and rising inequality among regions, local communities and citizens are directly attributable to changes in policy. The seminar aims to raise awareness of the need for a complete and renewed articulation between equality and freedom, between public institutions and civil society. For this matter, the seminar has several specificities at the international level.

The seminar provides a platform to discuss the vast number of experiments and initiatives, which exist but are not considered as important contributions to a new socio-economic paradigm. Furthermore, it aims to expand our awareness of different trends in research that are rarely brought together: social and solidarity economy, conceptualized often through empirical observations in Southern countries; reciprocity suggested as principles to overcome the divide between market and redistribution shared by neo-liberal and Keynesian thinkers; social innovation promoted as an emerging people-centred approach; the commons as promoting opportunities for citizen participation and political engagement through collective action. There are also complex hybridizations between reciprocity and house holding that must be better understood, as well as nation state questioning. States have hardly ever been comfortable about the autonomy of political and economic community initiatives. The situation is likely to be worsened if we refer to minorities or groups in diaspora – as they bring different perspectives and values which do not fit in the western imagery. In this case, neither are these people properly supported by the welfare state nor stimulated by public policies to foster economic autonomy by themselves. In times of globalization, in which the flow of people is inevitable and border identities are so common, it must be questioned in detail to what extent the welfare state in Europe is capable of going beyond homogenous public policies which neither have reached marginalised groups nor fostered their capacity of economic autonomy. That is to say: Is the Global North aware of the South within itself? Are public policies suitable to subaltern groups in the North? Do they foster their autonomy?

Accordingly, the objective is to address actions of solidarity, reciprocity and social innovation with the capacity of compensating or even altering some of the negative consequences of the deep changes in the social structure and the welfare state. If unchallenged by actions of solidarity and egalitarian reciprocity these changes will gradually speed up an already ongoing process of social disintegration. Thus, it seems urgent to ask if systematic investments in programs for the advancement of the social and solidarity economy, co-production and relational types of welfare provision can change the road towards continued downsizing, privatization and disintegration of the welfare society and thus contribute to a new type of welfare state: a model where civil society is equally recognized for its political dimension in matters of decision-making, for its position in the social and solidarity economy and for its capacity for service provision delivered by the third sector?

2. Seminar thematic axes

Communications may in particular address the following five thematic axes:

Axis 1 – Universalism revisited: Relational welfare and the reciprocal-institutional welfare state

Axis 2 - Analyses of the commons

Axis 3 – Reconfigurations of public action targeting solidarity economy, social enterprise and civil society

Axis 4 – Solidarity economy, people-centred social innovation and social enterprise

Axis 5 - Action research, social innovation and solidarity economy

Axis 1 – Universalism revisited: Relational welfare and the reciprocal-institutional welfare state

Welfare state theorists departing from Titmuss (1974) usually distinguish between three overall models of welfare states that evolved gradually in the wake of the Second World War. These models are the residual, the achievement-performance, and the institutional-redistributive model of welfare. Scandinavian countries were among the most advanced examples of the institutional-redistributive model in the sense of seeking to implement universalism as a founding principle in the welfare system. The institutional-redistributive model of welfare was well functioning as a political project after the Second World War, but it has proved inadequate to challenge the power of neo-liberalism and to produce a vision for how to expand the space of social justice and participation. However, the principle locus for the generation of an institutional-reciprocal welfare state, civil society, is so far the weakest societal sphere in terms of institutional power (Somers, 2008). However, with its success in stimulating equality and creating high levels of trust and social capital the Scandinavian welfare states would make a unique starting point for becoming an engine in the generation of an institutional-reciprocal welfare state as a horizon for a reinforced link between an empowered third sector and an institutional welfare state (Hulgård, 2016).

Initiatives of South have a long experience of combination of welfare policy with socially produced welfare leading to some positive results. Obviously, the restitution of welfare functions to civil society raises serious problems in relation to the autonomy of traditional systems of solidarity, since it implies a degree of formal organization which they do not possess. The institutionalization of the welfare society, through the conversion or integration of some of its forms of intervention into non-profit organizations, has brought about, in most cases, a loss of flexibility and autonomy. Thus, there is a concern with the high probability that these institutions become simply extensions of the state bureaucracy which finances them. In Polanyian terms the consideration of substantive forms of economy associated to civil society initiatives and the combination of redistribution with reciprocity at the local level stimulates a very fruitful reflection.

Communications are invited to understand better the link between social policy analysis targeting the role of civil society and the third sector and the Polanyian theory of plural and substantive economy. We particularly welcome contributions targeting welfare from the perspectives of new articulations between reciprocity and redistribution, and those bringing in experiences from the South.

Axis 2 - Analyses of the commons

Against the folding of the discussions focused around the market and the state, research initiated by Ostrom and her colleagues called for recognition of collective actions that allow for governing the commons. These ranged from management systems for natural resources to the management of knowledge. A whole school of thought currently claims the commons in opposition to a second wave of "enclosures" according to the Polanyian term, such as in the struggle against the monopolization of biodiversity or free software. Some even see a political project based on an institution of the commons. Numerous recent publications (Audier, 2015; Coriat, 2015; Dardot, Laval, 2014; Hardt, Negri, 2013) suggest that this debate is currently at a critical crossroads.

Moreover, the social and solidarity economy must be considered as largely convergent with the commons. This convergence points up the emergence of alternative conceptions of collective action and social transformation reinforced by new commons that are generating cooperative strategies. This happens in numerous fields such as agro-ecological production, cultural or economic self-management in urban cities, collaborative online spaces, caring economies, new communitarian approaches to education or social markets, etc.

This hypothesis is based on the fact that such approaches have developed in parallel according to three theoretical frameworks: the third sector and the common pool resources exemplify the diversity of organizations in a neo-classical perspective where there is an institutional choice; the social economy and the common property regime put greater emphasis on a key criterion: collective property rights. The involvement of stakeholders calls for new forms of collective action which are not solely interest oriented, but also democratically based; the solidarity economy and the new commons enrich the theme by deepening the conceptualization of the economy (beyond the market), and the conceptualization of politics (beyond the state).

Communications are encouraged on the dialogue between social and solidarity economy and the commons, particularly on the different modalities of institutional diversity and in particular on the relationship between public goods and the role of public administrations.

Axis 3 – Reconfigurations of public action targeting solidarity economy, social enterprise and civil society

As Habermas says, the quality of democratic life is suspended in the constitution of autonomous public spaces, linked with collective actions implemented by free and equal citizens referring to a common good. The concept of associationalism "enables the possibility of relationships that are spontaneously generated and free from domination in a non-contractualist way" (Habermas, 1989, p. 44). Therefore, Habermas joins Offe in emphasizing the connection between the association and the "eminent position of associations in civil society around which autonomous public spaces may crystallize, which justifies the attention given to voluntary associations and associative life as a crucial way to define public commitments" (Habermas, 1992, p. 186). Nevertheless, in his civic-republican model, epistemological obstacles remain in terms of taking into account associations. To overcome them, the first inspiration comes from the second School of Frankfurt whose internal debates on the work of Habermas deliver stimulating controversies.

Thus, Fraser offers ways to turn to complementary and relevant contributions in terms of "a critique of truly existing democracy" (Fraser, 2005, p. 107-144). She opens up a possible dialogue between public policy and subaltern initiatives. Moreover, the feminist contribution has underlined the hidden link between production and reproduction, which is very important to think about reconfiguration of public action including solidarity economy. For Dewey, problems of contemporary democracy can only be solved by additional democracy through the fight against the eclipse of the public and political apathy. "Self-determination of the citizen community is not considered through the exercise of popular sovereignty, through the legitimate production of norms, including the law. Rather, it is housed in public collective experience, supposedly able to orient and to guide itself through the formation of values" (Bidet, Quéré, Truc, 2011, p. 62). What

matters is the exercise of collective intelligence which alone restores a public consistency because "there cannot be a public without a full publicity with regard to all the consequences that concern it" (op. cit. p.264).

Communications are sought exploring issues related to new institutional frameworks (laws, public policies...) and their articulation with practices stemming from civil society.

Axis 4 – Solidarity economy, people-centred social innovation and social enterprise

From the research on solidarity economy we know that a much more differentiated understanding of economic integration is required than what is usually understood by the term 'market economy' (Laville, 2010; Fraser, 2014). To solidarity economy, a plural society requires full recognition of three economic principles. The first principle is the market, and economic integration through the market organized by an enterprise whether based upon the interests of shareholders in a conventional business or stakeholders organized in a social enterprise. The second principle is redistribution that is the power to move resources as well as negative consequences of market and growth between social groups. The welfare state as implemented in the decades after the Second World War is a typical example of a redistributive force in favour of potentially marginalized citizens. The third principle is reciprocity that is manifest in relational goods and services co-constructed with citizens, e.g. People-Centred Social Innovation (PCSI) or popular and solidarity economy in South America, especially the forms and consequences of mixes between reciprocity and house holding. Such experiences put emphasis on the way in which economic and political empowerment are intertwined. This means that people and organizations engaged in collaborative arenas can produce PCSI, which bring socially desirable outcomes by adopting processes that put faith in diverse forms of knowledge.

Thus, "process" and "outcome" are equally important in enabling social innovation (Hulgård & Shajahan, 2013). This process-outcome integration links equally to an emphasis throughout the social innovation literature on participatory governance and to the necessity of an intensified South-North dialogue on knowledge (Santos, 2008). Thus, an integrated approach emphasises the importance of participatory processes both in the generation of social enterprise and in broader examples of social innovation. Following Santos, the economic and managerial dominance represents a reduction of the understandings of the world to the logic of Western epistemology. The call for cognitive justice and the recognition of epistemic diversity is an important source of inspiration for the elaboration of people-centred approaches to social innovation and social enterprise. Thus, we invite to a South-North dialogue on social innovation between diverse forms of knowledge, cultures, and cosmologies.

Communications are encouraged around the explanation and discussion of such notions as people-centred social innovation, participatory approaches to social enterprise, democratically owned enterprises and *buen vivir*. We particularly welcome contributions offering a joint reflection on production and reproduction such as those aimed at opening up the canon of knowledge, and those developed recently at the nexus of feminism and the solidarity economy.

Axis 5 - Action research, social innovation and solidarity economy

The first International Handbook on Social Innovation was published in 2013 (Moulaert et al., 2013), defining social innovation as processes that generate the provision of resources and services in response to social needs; the development of trust and empowerment within marginalized populations; and the transformation of those power relations that produce social exclusion through the transformation of governance mechanisms. According to this understanding, social innovation concerns not just particular actions, but also the mobilization and capacity building processes which lead to improvements in social relations, structures of governance, and greater collective empowerment.

Action research can be defined as research that contributes to empowerment and social innovation. The DNA of action research tradition is to contribute actively to social justice and democratization of society by generating knowledge about strategies, methods and actions to combat exclusion and disempowerment in various forms (Brydon-Miller, 2008). Action research focuses on changing society through collective mobilization, connecting it to empowerment, which is about processes of awareness and capacity building which increase the participation and decision making power of citizens, and which may potentially lead to transformative action which change opportunity structures in an inclusive and equalizing direction by allowing social groups to improve their ability to create, manage and control material, social, cultural and symbolic resources (Andersen & Siim, 2004). The objective dimension of empowerment refers to the development of the societal and institutional opportunity structures for creating positive changes, e.g. legal and institutional platforms for development of solidarity economy alternatives (Satgar et al, 2014). The subjective dimension refers to the development and transformation of motivation, learning and capacities of citizens and associations to take action for change.

The international research on social innovation and empowerment indicates that there is a danger of falling into the trap of localism, where successful social innovations end up as one-offs or simply die out at the very local level (Andersen & Bilfeldt, 2017). It is therefore important to analyse how social experiments like solidarity economy initiatives that often occur at the micro level may form the basis for up-scaling development of stronger platforms or initiatives at the meso and macro level, with the potential for larger societal impact.

Communications are encouraged around the role and potential of action research engaged with facilitation of social mobilization and platforms for Social Innovation and Solidarity Economy for example in urban and rural contexts. In particular we want to encourage dialogue over differences and similarities between the North and South societal contexts, including the different welfare state regimes.

3. About the organizers and supporters

Roskilde University is a reform university that has defined Problem-oriented Project Learning as the pedagogical model with impact also on research and intervention. The Department of People and Technology is involved with the development of sustainable solutions. We use experimental approaches and support people's active commitment. The department is covering human, society, health and IT scientific fields as well as planning, intervention and design inclined fields. The department is particularly strong within such fields as social intervention and innovation, including social and solidarity economy within such fields as lifelong learning, social enterprise and entrepreneurship, planning and action research.

EMES International Research Network (EMES) is a research network of established university research centres and individual researchers whose goal has been so far to gradually build up an international corpus of theoretical and empirical knowledge, pluralistic in disciplines and methodologies, around our “SE” concepts: social enterprise, social entrepreneurship, social economy, solidarity economy and social innovation. EMES has conducted over 15 international comparative research projects and organized international bi-annual conferences and PhD summer schools (the next one will take place in June 2018 in Aix-Marseille, France). In addition, it collaborates with international organizations and governments at all levels to advance the understanding of social enterprise and support evidence-based policy-making in this field around the world. EMES exists since 1996 and in 2013 its membership opened to researchers and PhD students from around the world: there are currently over 350 individual members and 13 institutional members from over 50 countries.

Collège d'études mondiales (Paris), created in 2011, is an academic centre for the development of projects by international researchers in a firmly multidisciplinary environment. It promotes new ways of thinking and working: research conducted by the philosopher and the economist, the doctor and the political analyst, the literary expert and the anthropologist all provide mutual stimulation for understanding the changes at play in the contemporary world. The school's scientific activity is organised around three key areas: "New norms and institutions", "Rethinking social justice" and "Subjectivities: production and knowledge", designed to study these changes, be they individual or systemic. Its programme is composed of chairs and research initiatives such as plural democracy and economy.

Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy was established in 1988, dedicated to the memory of Karl Polanyi. Its mission is to preserve his intellectual legacy and to contribute to urgent policy debates on alternative and innovative development strategies, both locally and internationally. It is also the host of the Karl Polanyi Archive with a vast collection of material including unpublished papers, drafts of manuscripts, lecture notes, articles and correspondence.

Karl Polanyi Institute France provides a francophone space, in line with Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy, with a view to gathering civil society, scholars and public authorities.

Kooperationen is a Danish Co-operative Employer's Organisation, with a network of 92 member companies and 14.000 employees representing a wide range of business fields from banking and insurance sector to craftsmen and construction companies. Led by co-operative values and principles it is run solely for the benefit of their members. Established in 1922, Kooperationen provides professional legal advice and counselling within areas such as employment law, company law and construction law.

4. Seminar committee

The Seminar is co-chaired by Lars Hulgård (Roskilde University, Denmark and EMES) and Jean-Louis Laville (Collège d'études mondiales, France, Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy and EMES).

The members of the Seminar **scientific committee** include:

- John Andersen, Roskilde University, Denmark
- Swati Banerjee, Tata institute of Social Sciences, India
- Ángel Calle Collado, University of Cordoba, Spain
- Michele Cangiani, Università Ca' Foscari, Italy
- Jany Catrice Florence, Université de Lille
- Jose Luis Coraggio, Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento, Argentina
- Luciane dos Santos, Federal University of Bahia, Brazil and Coimbra
- Bernard Enjolras, Institute for Social Research, Norway
- Jennifer Eschweiler, Roskilde University
- Jordi Estivill, University of Barcelona, Spain
- Sílvia Ferreira, Coimbra University, Portugal
- Nancy Fraser, New School of Social Research, USA
- Malin Gawell, Salin Gaw University, Sweden
- Isabelle Guérin, Institut de recherche pour le développement, France
- Yayo Herrero López, FUHEM/UNED, Spain
- Pedro Hespanha, Coimbra, Portugal
- Isabelle Hillenkamp, Institut de recherche et de développement, France
- Luise Li Langergaard, Roskilde University, Denmark
- Linda Lundgaard Andersen, Roskilde University, Denmark
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- Clauss Thomasberger, University of Applied Science Berlin, Germany
- Davorka Vidovic, Faculty of Political Science, Croatia
- Adriane Vieira Ferrarini, Unisinos, Brazil
- Halvard Vike, University of Southeast Norway, Norway

The Seminar **organising committee** is composed of Kim Fomsgaard, Randi Kaas, and Jennifer Eschweiler, Roskilde University, and Rocío Nogales, EMES.

Abstract submission will open on November 29th, 2018.

For all other information, email us at

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or visit

<https://emes.net/events/emes-polanyi/3rd-emes-polanyi-international-seminar/>

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