



centre on
social movement
studies



European
University
Institute

Bringing capitalism back in. Resistance to corporate power and austerity policies

20 and 21 May 2014

Organized by Donatella della Porta, Philip Balsiger and Alice Mattoni

Credits 10

Sala del Capitolo, Badia Fiesolana

Please register with: adele.battistini@eui.eu

Abstract

The neoliberal age characterized by deregulation and economic globalization has led to growing power of multinational corporations and 'the markets' all over the world. The financial collapse and ensuing debt crisis, largely caused by the deregulation of the financial industry, has led to austerity policies to 'appease the markets'. Global companies keep shifting production and revenues across the globe to minimize costs and avoid regulation and taxes. But corporate power and austerity does not go uncontested. Firms are often directly targeted by social movement campaigns, and alternative forms of production and exchange thrive. Austerity policies, for their part, have provoked protests in recent years in Greece, Spain, or the UK. Corporations, markets, and the economy are thus sites of protest. In this workshop, we want to address the relationship between capitalism and protest and analyze different forms of resistance against companies and economic policies, thus bringing capitalism back into the study of social movements.

Guest speaker: Laurence Cox (University of Ireland Maynooth)

Laurence Cox is a founding editor of *Interface* and co-chair of the Council for European Studies' social movements network. At the National University of Ireland Maynooth he runs a PhD programme of participatory action research in social movement practice and co-directs the MA in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism. He is co-author of *We make our own history: Marxism and social movements in the twilight of neoliberalism* (Pluto, September 2014) and

co-editor of *Marxism and social movements* (Brill / Haymarket), *Understanding European movements* (Routledge) and *Silence would be treason: last writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa* (Daraja / CODESRIA / Books for Change) among other books. His research interests include theorising and researching social movements; the contemporary wave of alterglobalisation and anti-austerity movements; working-class community organising; knowledge and learning in social movements; counter-cultures; and western solidarity with Asian anti-colonial movements. He has been involved in social movements since the 1980s. More details on laurencecox.wordpress.com

Schedule and Presentations

Tuesday, 20 May

2pm-3:30pm

Opening keynote speech

"Making days into history:" capitalisms, social movements and theory", Laurence Cox (University of Ireland Maynooth)

3:30pm – 4pm coffee break

4pm-5:30pm

"Kicking neoliberalism out-and bringing capitalism back in? Lessons from the Latin American experience of the 2000s for the Real Democracy Movement of 2011-2013.", Leonidas Oikonomakis (EUI)

"Who are those taking the squares? Individual-level political and economic grievances in the 15-M and beyond", Martín Portos García (EUI)

8pm workshop dinner (venue tba)

Wednesday, 21 May

10am-12:30pm

"Bringing capitalism (and anti-capitalism) back in. Some reflections on anti-austerity protest.", Donatella della Porta (EUI)

"Trade unions in Greece: Protest and social movements in the context of austerity politics", Markos Vogiatzoglou (EUI)

12:30pm-2pm lunch break

2pm-3:30pm

"Managing protest: the political repertoire of corporations", Philip Balsiger (EUI)

"Resistance to corporate power in Eastern Europe", Chiara Milan (EUI)

3:30pm – 4pm coffee break

4pm-5:30pm

"How to build a queer anti-capitalist agenda: Queer festivals and the 'commons'", Konstantinos Eleftheriadis (EUI)

"'They say privatization, we say organization.' The student struggles against the austerity measures in England", Lorenzo Cini (EUI)

Compulsory readings

della Porta, Donatella (forthcoming 2015) Bringing Capitalism Back In. Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

L. Cox, "*Eppur si muove*: thinking 'the social movement' ", 125 - 146 in C. Barker et al. (eds.), *Marxism and social movements*. Leiden: Brill, 2013. (attached)

A. Gramsci, "Alcuni temi della questione meridionale" (1926 manuscript), available in multiple locations and languages

A. Nilsen, "Contesting the postcolonial development project: a Marxist perspective on popular resistance in the Narmada valley", 167 - 185 in C. Barker et al. (eds.), *Marxism and social movements*. Leiden: Brill, 2013. Available online at <http://shadowsoftenderfury.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/nilsen-contesting-the-postcolonial-development-project.pdf>

Requirements

In order to get credits (10) PhD researchers are required to read compulsory readings and act as discussants for one of the workshop presentations.