

Call for Papers

Workshop

Moral Critique in and around Markets: Organizing (for) Alternatives in Troubled Times

November 21-22, 2019 | Witten/Herdecke University

Organizers

Simone Schiller-Merkens (Witten/Herdecke University)

Philip Balsiger (University of Neuchâtel)

Keynote speakers

Tim Bartley (Washington University in St. Louis)

Marie-Laure Djelic (Sciences Po Paris)

Francesca Forno (University of Trento)

Ignasi Martí Lanuza (ESADE)

Globally, the past four decades have been characterized by neoliberal reforms and the expansion of markets and market logic to ever more spheres of social life, often accompanied by moral arguments of markets' public virtues (Fourcade & Healy, 2007). The financial crisis and ensuing economic depression of 2009 does not seem to have reversed this trend. Markets continue to be heralded as the most efficient way to address and redress global challenges such as global warming, inequality or poverty (e.g., Zak, 2011). At the same time, market expansion is under increasing scrutiny, and often held responsible for the same problems market enthusiasts pretend to solve (Brown, 2015; Lamont, 2018; Piketty, 2014; Sandel, 2012; Stiglitz, 2013). Scholars have increasingly studied the moral dimensions of the movements and counter-movements around market expansion and its moral critique and regulation, pointing at the contested moralities of markets (Schiller-Merkens & Balsiger, 2019).

One way how the moral critique of markets plays out is through the building up of alternatives – alternative forms of organizing, working, producing, exchanging and consuming goods, built on alternative moral economies. Such “real utopias” (Wright, 2010) have a long history – 19th century co-operativism is an example – and contemporary forms of it often have their origins in the new social movements of the 1960s and 1970s (de Moor & Balsiger, 2018; Balsiger, 2014). Yet it seems that they have become increasingly important since the turn of the century, and especially in the wake of the financial crisis (Zamponi & Bosi, 2018). These alternatives originate at the margins of the capitalist market – some explicitly outside of it and challenging it, others embracing market logics and economic principles but with an attempt to moralize it and to transform it for the greater good. The aim of this research workshop is to look more deeply into the kinds of alternative organizing models for and in the economy that are currently discussed in the social sciences, and to explore their implications for markets and organizations. The pressing problems of our times have led scholars in a variety of research fields to study and sometimes also to develop new ways of coordinating the economy and of organizing firms and other entities in the market arena. Scholars from various disciplines – such as organization studies, economic sociology, political economy, pluralist economics – have started to explore ways how to navigate in this complex world of moral struggles. While some call for social innovation and new organizational forms and modes of production that should allow reconciling social, environmental and economic aims (Barman, 2016; Tracey & Stott, 2017; van Wijk et al., 2018), others look at the various ways of governing corporate conduct (e.g., Bartley, 2007, 2018; Djelic & Quack, 2010; Scherer et al., 2016), and still others pursue a more encompassing perspective and ask for reconsidering the organizing principles of the whole economy (e.g., Felber, 2012; Jackson, 2017).

Many of these initiatives evolve in rather dispersed research circles without much connection among each other. Social movement scholars, for instance, have looked into prefigurative politics (Maeckelbergh, 2011; Yates, 2015), sustainable community movement organizations (Forno & Graziano, 2014), or ethical consumption movements (Balsiger, 2014; Bartley et al., 2015), economic sociologists into moralization and the rise of moral markets (Balsiger, 2016; Geiger et al., 2014; McInerney, 2014; Stehr, Henning, & Weiler, 2006; Suckert, 2018), and organization scholars into social entrepreneurship and hybrid organizing (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Mair & Martí, 2006; Mair, Mayer, & Lutz, 2015). There are many overlapping aspects among these scholarly subjects but they remain largely unexplored. However, the complex and uncertain nature of the global or “grand challenges” (Ferraro, Etzion, & Gehman, 2015) requires novel ideas and unconventional approaches (Eisenhardt, Graebner, & Sonenshein, 2016), and such radical innovations are best nurtured in multidisciplinary communities in which actors who share a common purpose and interest bring in their diverse intellectual background. Another aim of the workshop is therefore to further stimulate community-building and to inspire new collaborations among those who work on comparable issues of morality in our societies. The workshop can be seen as a continuation of our earlier workshop on moral struggles in and around markets that took place in 2016 at the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland. It resulted in an edited volume on “The contested moralities of markets” that will be published in 2019 in the *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* book series. While the earlier workshop highlighted a variety of moral struggles at different levels in the economy, in the upcoming workshop, we like to focus more on solutions to these struggles and on the various ways to address serious problems in our societies. It includes asking how actors of various types

(e.g., firms, NGOs and other civil society organizations, governments and state agencies, professional associations) collectively work towards contributing to broader societal aims, how social entrepreneurs organize both within and beyond their organizations to have a positive impact on society, when and how alternative forms of organizing “clash” with economic values in markets and how actors navigate conflicting values and demands, and what the implications of alternative organizing models for the economy are for different kinds of organizations in contemporary market societies. Contributions may come from a wide range of morally-related topics, examples of which are:

- Sustainable development, global partnerships for development between global south and north
- Social innovation, social entrepreneurship, hybrid organizations, alternative organizational forms
- Moral aspects (limits) in managing global supply chains, transnational governance, CSR in a globalized world, changing role of business in a global society
- Values, valuation and justification in the moralization of the economy, emergence of moral market categories, ways of navigating between alternative/moral values and economic/market values
- Activism and the change/formation of organizational fields (such as the re-emergence of the co-operative movement and rise of other alternative movements), power and politics in moralizing markets, political consumption and its consequences, outcome of cross-sector partnerships on societies and markets (intended and unintended)
- Limits to growth, de-growth, critique of capitalism, elements of a post-capitalist model of the economy, economy for the common goods, sharing economy, circular economy, caring capitalism, post-capitalist organizations, community economics

Practical details

The deadline for all abstract submissions (max 400 words) is **May 20, 2019**. Please send your submission to both of us: simone.schiller-merkens@uni-wh.de and philip.balsiger@unine.ch. You will be informed on the outcome by e-mail no later than June 20, 2019. Final papers should be sent by November 1, 2019.

The workshop will take place at Witten/Herdecke University, Germany, on November 21–22, 2019. More details on travel options and accommodation will be provided upon notification but please do not hesitate to contact Claudia Galys for any questions you might already have (claudia.galys@uni-wh.de).

References

- Balsiger, P. (2014). *The fight for ethical fashion: The origins and interactions of the Clean Clothes Campaign*. Farnham, Burlington VT: Ashgate.
- Balsiger, P. (2016). Moral struggles in markets: the fight against battery cages and the rise of cage-free eggs in Switzerland. *European Journal of Sociology*, 57, 419–450.
- Barman, E. (2016). *Caring capitalism: The meaning and measure of social value*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bartley, T. (2007). Institutional emergence in an era of globalization: The rise of transnational private regulation of labor and environmental conditions. *American Journal of Sociology*, 113(2), 297–351.
- Bartley, T. (2018). *Rules without rights: Land, labor, and private authority in the global economy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bartley, T., Koos, S., Hiram, S., Setrini, G., & Summers, N. (2015). *Looking behind the label: Global industries and the conscientious consumer*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Battilana, J., & Dorado, S. (2010). Building sustainable hybrid organizations: The case of commercial microfinance organizations. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53, 1419–1440.
- Brown, W. (2015). *Undoing the demos: Neoliberalisms' stealth revolution*. Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books.
- de Moor, J., & Balsiger, P. (2018). Political consumerism in Northwestern Europe: Leading by example. In M. Boström, M. Micheletti, & P. Oosterveer (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political consumerism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Djelic, M.-L., & Quack, S. (Eds.) (2010). *Transnational communities: Shaping global economic governance*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Eisenhardt, K. M., Graebner, M. E., Sonenshein, S. (2016). Grand challenges and inductive methods: Rigor without rigor mortis. *Academy of Management Journal*, 59, 1113–1123.
- Felber, C. (2012). *Change everything: Creating the economy for the common good*. London: Zen Books.
- Ferraro, F., Etzion, D., & Gehman, J. (2015). Tackling grand challenges pragmatically: Robust action revisited. *Organization Studies*, 36, 363–390.
- Fourcade, M., & Healy, K. (2007). Moral views of market society. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33, 285–311.
- Forno, F., & Graziano, P. R. (2014). Sustainable community movement organisations. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 14(2), 139–157.
- Geiger, S., Harrison, D., Kjellberg, H., & Mallard, A. (Eds.). (2014). *Concerned markets: Economic ordering for multiple values*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Jackson, T. (2017). *Prosperity without growth: Foundations for the economy of tomorrow*. London: Routledge.
- Lamont, M. (2018). Addressing recognition gaps: Destigmatization and the reduction of inequality. *American Sociological Review*, 83, 419–444.
- Maeckelbergh, M. (2011). Doing is believing: Prefiguration as strategic practice in the alterglobalization movement. *Social Movement Studies*, 10(1), 1–20.

- Mair, J., & Martí, I. (2006). Social entrepreneurship research: A source of explanation, prediction, and delight. *Journal of World Business*, 41(1), 36–44.
- McInerney, P. B. (2014). *From social movement to moral market: How the circuit riders sparked an IT revolution and created a technology market*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the twenty-first century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Scherer, A. G., Rasche, A., Palazzo, G., Spicer, A. (2016). Managing for political corporate social responsibility: New challenges and directions for PCSR 2.0. *Journal of Management Studies*, 53, 273–298.
- Schiller-Merkens, S., & Balsiger, P. (2019). Moral struggles in and around organizations: Introduction to the volume “The contested moralities of markets”. Forthcoming in *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*.
- Sandel, M. J. (2012). *What money can't buy: The moral limits of markets*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Stehr, N., Henning, C., & Weiler, B. (Eds.). (2006). *The moralization of the markets*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Stiglitz, J. (2013). *The price of inequality*. London: Penguin.
- Suckert, L. (2018). Unravelling ambivalence: A field-theoretical approach to moralised markets. *Current Sociology*, 66, 682–703.
- Tracey, P., & Stott, N. (2017). Social innovation: A window on alternative ways of organizing and innovating. *Innovation*, 19, 51–60.
- van Wijk, J., Zietsma, C., Dorado, S., de Bakker, F. G. A., Martí, I. (2018). Social innovation: Integrating micro, meso and macro level insights from institutional theory. *Business & Society*, 1–32.
- Wright, E. O. (2010). *Envisioning real utopias*. London: Verso.
- Yates, L. (2015). Rethinking prefiguration: Alternatives, micropolitics and goals in social movements. *Social Movement Studies*, 14(1), 1–21.
- Zak, P. J. (2011). Moral markets. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 77, 212–233.
- Zamponi, L., & Bosi, L. (2018). Politicizing solidarity in times of crisis: The politics of alternative action organizations in Greece, Italy, and Spain. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 62(6), 796–815.