

## Call for Papers

# A Great Transformation? Global Perspectives on Contemporary Capitalisms

International Conference  
Johannes Kepler University  
Linz/Austria  
10-13 January 2017

### Concept, questions, speakers, and issues of the conference

Ever since the global economic area opened up in the 1990s – and most recently, in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis – *Karl Polanyi's economic and cultural history of capitalism*, published as *The Great Transformation* in 1944, has been attracting renewed attention. Given his deft analysis of the liberal creed or how he refers to labor, land, and money as fictitious commodities, Polanyi's critique of capitalism has never disappeared from the discussion. However, the unleashing of the market – and more specifically, of financial markets – has resulted in his ideas being widely received among sociologists, political scientists, and economists from all over the world. Polanyi's analyses of the relationship between economy and society, and between economy/market and politics/state – along with his perspectives on civil society movements – all seem to be custom-made for capturing the crises, changes, and transformations of contemporary capitalisms. Meanwhile, Polanyi's ideas and models have been profusely revised, pursued, developed, and checked for appropriateness when analyzing developments in the Global North and South. Moreover, a wealth of answers has emerged to the question of how his particular analysis of society may have inspired sociology, political science, and economics.

The conference *A Great Transformation? Global Perspectives on Contemporary Capitalisms* seeks to continue this discussion, identify new salient points and study the following **questions**: How do developments in contemporary capitalisms in the Global North and South constitute a great transformation, i.e. an epochal change in which the relationship between politics/state and economy/market undergoes fundamental changes at the global, international, transnational, and national levels? Have there been parallel, contradictory or interwoven developments and what form

do these take? How are they shaped by social inequalities arising from gender, ethnicity and class, by power and dominance, and by conflict and resistance? How can all these developments be considered in light of Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation*? How do other analyses of and theories on capitalism rooted in sociology, political science, and economics contribute to social analysis and criticism? Where do they interlink with Polanyi's perspective and where do they take different paths? All these questions will be thoroughly discussed at this interdisciplinary international conference.

The conference will start with an opening speech by **Michael Burawoy**, University of California, Berkeley/USA, and conclude with his on-stage conversation with **Kari Polanyi Levitt**, McGill University, Montreal/Canada. Keynote speakers will be **José Luis Coraggio**, Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Buenos Aires/Argentina and **Beverly Silver**, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore/USA.

With this **call for papers**, we are inviting potential participants to submit proposals related to Karl Polanyi's work, under one of the following three headings:

### **Beginning with Polanyi**

Under this heading, we will use Polanyi's models and analyses as starting points for discussing the question of how to theoretically, epistemologically, and empirically utilize them when analyzing contemporary capitalisms. We welcome proposals that address one or more of the following issues:

- (De-)commodification and fictitious commodities
- Economy and society: the liberal creed
- Movements and counter-movements
- Marketization, exploitation and alienation
- Exchange, markets and justice

### **Meeting Polanyi**

Under this heading, we will discuss Polanyi's theory in conjunction with other approaches. As all these concepts are embedded in specific scientific, historical and regional contexts, we will examine their validity as theoretical perspectives and tools for analyzing contemporary capitalisms. We welcome proposals that address one or more of the following issues:

- Regulation theory meets Polanyi
- Marxian theory meets Polanyi
- Critical theory meets Polanyi
- Critical development theory and world systems analysis meet Polanyi
- Social movement theory meets Polanyi

### **After Polanyi**

Under this heading, we will take a look at social problems that call for a contemporary analysis of capitalism. We will show how these challenges can be accepted and how

Polanyi's work contributes to meeting said challenges. We welcome proposals that address one or more of the following issues:

- Commodification and de-commodification of ecological and social reproduction
- Fictitious commodities: marketization of knowledge and science
- Politics of crisis: the enduring strength of neoliberalism and the welfare debate
- Conceptions of capitalist crises and pathways towards transformation
- De-growth and democracy

### **Addressees and conference language**

With this call for papers, we are inviting *scholars from all parts of the world and all branches of sociology, political science, and economics* – including those working in such *transdisciplinary research areas as feminist or intersectionality studies* – to submit proposals under the three headings outlined above. The conference will be held in English.

### **Schedules for submitting abstracts and full papers**

We welcome abstracts limited to a maximum of 500 words (including the title, outline of the contents, at least three but no more than five keywords, author's name, affiliation, and full address). We are endeavoring to provide financial support to applicants whose universities, research institutes, etc. are unable to fund travel costs and who have no opportunity to apply for funds elsewhere. Applicants who wish to make use of this offer are asked to state this in their abstract.

Deadline for submitting abstracts: **30 April 2016**

Notification of acceptance: **30 June 2016**

Deadline for submitting full papers: **30 November 2016**

Please send your abstracts and full papers to [great.transformation@jku.at](mailto:great.transformation@jku.at)

### **Organizers and hosts of the conference**

DFG-Kollegforscher\_innengruppe „Landnahme, Beschleunigung, Aktivierung. Dynamik und (De-)Stabilisierung moderner Wachstumsgesellschaften“, Friedrich-Schiller-University, Jena/Germany (Klaus Dörre)

Institute for Comprehensive Analysis of the Economy, Johannes Kepler University, Linz/Austria (Jakob Kapeller)

Institute of Political Science, University of Vienna/Austria (Ulrich Brand, Birgit Sauer, Dieter Segert)

Institute of Sociology, Johannes Kepler University, Linz/Austria (Roland Atzmüller, Brigitte Aulenbacher, Fabienne Décieux, Karin Fischer; conference administration: Heidemarie Schütz)

Conference homepage: <http://www.jku.at/conferences/great-transformation>