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The Hidden Side of SSE

*Social Movements and the Appropriation and “Translation”
of SSE into Policy (Latin America)*

Ana Cecilia Dinerstein

Department of Social and Policy Sciences

Centre for Development Studies—Institute for Policy Research

University of Bath

United Kingdom

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UNRISD ▪ Palais des Nations ▪ 1211 Geneva 10 ▪ Switzerland
info@unrisd.org ▪ www.unrisd.org

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Introduction

We strongly believe not only that another world is possible, but also that it is increasingly necessary (Manifesto of the European Network of Social and Solidarity Economy, Barcelona, 2011)¹

In our dreams we have seen another world, an honest world, a world decidedly more fair than the one in which we now live ... this world was not something that came to us from our ancestors. It came from ahead, from the next step we were going to take (Sub commander Marcos, 1/3/94 edited by Ponce de Leon, 2001: 18).

There is growing interest within international organisations and governmental institutions in obtaining support from social movements and SSE organizations for new public policies and laws that encourage their engagement and participation from below, and facilitate their access to the new policy schemes (see UNRISD Call for Papers 2013, Fonteneau et al. 2010, 2011; UNRISD 2010). The significance of this consideration is in underscoring the growing importance of civil society actors (including social movements) in rethinking ‘development’ and in devising and effecting development policy, particularly in the period of global crisis.

This paper addresses another concern emanating from this disposition of international development policy with regards to social movements—namely the process of appropriation and *translation* of SSE practices into state policy. By *translation* I mean the processes, mechanisms and dynamics through which the state incorporates the cooperative and solidarity ethos of the SSE practiced by social movements through policy, by demarcating a terrain that, as Vázquez (2011: 36) suggests with reference to the epistemic violence of modernity, ‘renders invisible everything that does not fit in the “parameters of legibility” of [its] epistemic territory.’ *Translation* entails a distinction between ‘acceptable and unacceptable forms of institutional engagement’ (Claeys 2012: 859) made by the state, and the subjugation of the emancipatory dimension of SSE into the logic of power.

For the past two decades civil society organisations and social movements—particularly in the Global South—have been experimenting with non-profit forms of local and cooperative production, distribution, land occupation and use, driven by communal values, and organised through collective decision-making processes and direct participation of those involved in these endeavours. Many of these movements belong to national and transnational networks such as the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of the Social and Solidarity Economy (RIPESS), which are concerned with facilitating the development of the SSE as well as rendering it visible worldwide.

These pioneering developments have received attention from critical scholars who propose participatory and ‘people-centred development’ (Nieverdeen Pietersen 1998). Under the ‘Alternative Development’ (AD) paradigm, the SSE offers a critique of the liberal vision of development for it embraces the principles of collective property, distribution of wealth to meet needs of people rather than capital; freedom of association and autonomous decision-making (Dacheaux and Goujon 2012: 208 and

¹ <http://www.ripesseu.net/en/presentation/manifest.html>

206). The AD discourse encourages associative forms of production, sustainable development, the economic support for the marginalised through the appropriating of land and housing, women's empowerment, the revival of 'the local' (Santos and Rodriguez Garavito, 2006; Escobar 1992).

However, while AD introduces elements of solidarity and proposes changes in the type and scope of growth, it neither challenges the market economy (Coraggio 2010) nor 'the concept of economic growth *per se*' (Santos and Rodriguez Garavito 2006: xxxix-xl). This is problematic for many who believe that human realisation cannot be attained by means of improving the management of capitalism and the distribution of wealth (Gudynas 2012b; Esteva 2010). Many social movements repudiate the 'growth' development model and see themselves as articulating alternatives *to* development, with SSE being at the heart of these elaborations around the notion of *buen vivir* (living well).

SSE movements and networks diagnosed that capitalism is undergoing a multiple, interconnected and unparalleled crisis that combines an ecological, energy, food, environmental, poverty, hunger, crises, which are matched with the increase in the means of violence and social control by nation states and the free movement of global capital. For example, in a press release: 'Social Solidarity Economy at the 2013 WSF in Tunisia', the RIPESS member organizations at the WSF claim that 'the SSE is not an economy of repair but *the construction of a new worldview and applicable alternatives to neoliberal economic devastation.*'² Since the pressure for growth is embedded in capitalism (Smith 2011), movements argue that we are required to engage with 'alternative visions of democracy, economy and society' (Escobar, 1992: 22) and non-capitalist political practices (see Coraggio 2011). They disagree with the idea that 'capitalist efficiency and resource allocation is the best we can come up with' (Smith, 2011) with SSE contributing to this. As Smith highlights, 'this belief is incompatible with an ecological economy'. Gudynas calls it 'the dream of benevolent capitalism' (2012a). SSE movements do not 'accept the reality of capitalist relations and institutions that calls for a new 21st century social contract' (Utting 2012), but means a different pathway that, as Utting suggests, 'calls for very different growth, production and consumption patterns, and power relations.' Conceived in this way, SSE 'seeks to change the whole social and economic system and put forth a different paradigm of development that upholds solidarity economy principles' (Kawano 2013), it is about 're-socializing economic relations' (Gibson-Graham 2006: 79).

As a counter-hegemonic practice, SSE is inherently *political* and it is located at the centre of a broader debate about the viability and desirability of the capitalism. In Latin America where the crisis of capitalism is explained as a 'crisis of civilization', i.e. an impossibility of (re)production of dignified human life on the planet (Lander 2010), has become a political laboratory of SSE practices. As Biekart highlights (2005: 2) the violence of market-led policies (privatisation, breakdown of institutions, regressive income distribution, unemployment, poverty created a 'time-bomb that only needed to spark off'. Alternative socio-economic arrangements by a variety of civil society actors emerged strongly in response to unemployment, deprivation or

² <http://www.ripesseu.net/en/infos/news/news-details/article/press-release-social-solidarity-economy-at-the-2013-wsf-in-tunisia-1.html>

resourcelessness (Wilkes 2004) during the 1980s and 1990s when a wave of citizen's and movements' protests led by the landless, jobless, the 'poor', indigenous people began to put their 'emancipatory energy' (Santos 2001: 78) at the service of this 'social and political construction' (Coraggio 2010). Aníbal Quijano (2009) put it like this:

'It is probably the first time in the history of the colonial matrix of power that we are not only hopeful toward the future, we are also working toward that future, and we are beginning to build that future, we are at this very moment building it. This is not a simple image...neither is a utopia, in the classical sense of the world. This is happening in the planet and in that sense it is ... a phenomenon that manifests itself as a real tendency of a historical necessity'

In this paper, I suggest that the *SSE is a tool for 'organising hope'* (Dinerstein 2013) that is a practice that enable people to anticipate alternatives –future- practices, relationships, horizons, in the present. By *Hope* I don't mean the wish for a better future or dream with a utopian fantasy but, following German philosopher Ernst Bloch (1959/86), that the 'Real is process' and the 'world is unclosed'. To Bloch there exists in the present a concrete possibility of prefiguring what he calls 'the-not-yet-become.' Hence, Hope is not 'utopian' in the wishful sense of the word but wilful, i.e.: it guides concrete action (Levitas, 1990).

In recent years, the process of appropriation and *translation* of SSE into the logic of the state and international development has intensified. Moving from being directed to 'alleviate poverty 'to promoting 'development' (Coraggio 1999: 82; 2008), World Bank funded Community Driven Development (CDD) programmes support 'participatory decision-making, local capacity building, and community control of resources.'³ (Dinerstein, 2010) These policies transform SSE into a tool for neoliberal governance promoted by international development, which encourage decentralisation, micro-ventures, and community sustainability. But rather than enabling the free development of SSE, this kind of translation dispossessed SSE from its emancipatory potential as it befits institutional efforts to reframe social policies along the lines of market-oriented liberalism from the state and International Development Institutions.

Cornwall and Brock (2005: 4) highlight how new policy '*buzzwords*' such as 'participation', 'empowerment' and 'poverty reduction' are used for the reframing of World Bank policy discourse as 'feel-good terms'. The new vocabulary possesses a 'moral tone' (p.8) that 'speak[s] to the laudable aim of enabling poor people to have voice and choice...In the texts of mainstream development agencies, this triad of "good things" is used to purvey a storyline that situates them as guardians of rightness and champions of progress' (p. 15) While catchwords are associated to ownership, accountability, governance and partnership that correspond to the neoliberal governance, they exclude another association with 'dissident meanings' such as 'social justice', 'redistribution' and 'solidarity' (p. 18) are excluded. The policy rhetoric demarcates the limits of what 'participation' and 'empowerment' mean. Insofar as it excludes dissident meanings, this rhetoric is inevitably realised through political processes that include co-optation, coercion, and in many occasions direct

³ <http://go.worldbank.org/24K8IHVVS0>

state violence that is imposed to those who do not purchase such storyline. This leads to a struggle *over the meaning of SSE* as movements are compelled to ‘navigate the tensions’ between being integrated into the logics of power and development, and the possibility to move beyond it (Böhm et al. 2010). The struggle over the meaning of SSE unfolds through conflicts over the scope of the law, welfare provision, participatory processes and budgets, and policy that might enable or deter the free development of SSE.

Social movements and progressive governments in Latin America: the struggle over the meaning of SSE

The contentious politics between movements and the state that spread out during the neoliberal period when mobilised citizens and movements openly confronted neoliberal reforms and policy, did not disappear with the political shift to the centre-left during the first decade of 2000s, but attained a different form. Unlike neoliberal governments, centre-left administrations claim to be determined to take on board movements’ demands and expand the rights of indigenous and non-indigenous subaltern groups, facilitating self-determination, self-organisation and self-management (Seoane, Taddei and Algranati 2011). This political shift to the left by new governments, which many see as a revolutionary process in itself, is largely credited to the social mobilisations against neoliberalism (Prevost et al. 2012; Stahler-Sholk et al. 2008). Most of these governments brought about political innovation such as the creation of ‘plurinational’ states and the incorporation of the *buen vivir* indigenous cosmology into the state’s agenda (CAOI 2010). Overall, They are presently achieving economic growth, decline of income inequality, improvements in education, social and labour policy and healthcare systems.

Yet, the region is not free from the dictates of the financial markets (Muñoz Cabrera 2012). While seeking to promote new forms of participation and engagement at the grassroots via public policy, the policies have not always reflected the aspirations of the movements in pursuit of ‘good living’ (*buen vivir*). SSE inspired policies have often been promoted simultaneously with the commodification of natural resources, the intensification of extractivism, changes in energy and agrarian policies that are that are affecting rural live hoods and indigenous communal life, on behalf of transnational corporations.

In this section, by use examples of three well-known Latin American movements I discuss a hidden aspect of SSE, i.e. the *politics of* appropriation and translation of SSE into policy. I underline how, through the use of the law and policy, the state *demarcates the terrain* for SSE to develop, this demarcation being a necessary condition for ‘economic development and growth to be achieved, how SSE practices to subordinated to this logic, and how this is challenged by these movements and the implications of it.

Indigenous movements and the problem of autonomy

Indigenous autonomies present challenges to international development institutions and nation states, for indigenous autonomy is opposed to the notion of ‘development’ and belongs to the indigenous cosmology of *Buen Vivir* which draws on indigenous ancestral practices and experiences, particularly from those in the Amazon and

Andean regions (see CAOI, 2010). As well as containing practical orientations towards production, organization and distribution, *buen vivir* covers specific meanings attributed to time, progress, human realisation, and the relationship between sociability, sustainability and nature, that make communal practices as based on traditions, customs and cosmologies to which Eurocentric notion of ‘participation’ and ‘empowerment’ as well as ‘civil society’ are alien.

The *Zapatista movement* emerged in the Lacandona jungle (South East Mexico, Chiapas) on 1 January 1994 against the Mexican government’s participation in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which demanded the opening up indigenous lands to large agro-business. But it was more than that. They declared war to the Mexican government and argue that globalisation was a *war against humanity*. Unlike other armed movements’ they claimed that they did not want the power of the state and that they had armed themselves to be heard. With their faces covered ‘to make themselves visible’, they claimed ‘Enough is enough!’ and demanded democracy, liberty and justice. They became a symbol of dignity and resistance worldwide.

Since 2003, the Zapatistas practice of self-government or ‘autonomy *de facto*’ in many communities of Chiapas through autonomous self-governing municipalities called Good Government Councils (*Juntas del Buen Gobierno*, JBG).⁴ Each JBG delivers and administrate justice, mediates conflicts between autonomous councils and government councils, issues identity cards, discusses goals related to welfare provision (health, education, various projects) promotes and supervise projects and community programmes; denounces violations to human rights, guarantees bicultural education and health, organised cooperative, implement agrarian legislation.

Autonomy *de facto* is the outcome of a long-term *struggle over the meaning of autonomy* between the EZLN and the Mexican state and international institutions, for the latter have sought to appropriate and translate the Zapatistas resistance into a tool for neoliberal governance. In 1996, the Zapatistas and the Mexican government signed the San Andres Accords (SAA) by which the latter committed itself to recognise indigenous people’s right to exercise autonomy and the guarantee of self-government and collective production by the law. But the SAA were *not* put into practice but resisted by Zedillo government, who opted for a repressive policy instead. The massacre of Acteal in December 1997, where 45 people were assassinated (including children) contradicted the government’s willingness to negotiate and marked a breaking point in the use of repression by the state in Chiapas (Ceceña 2001).

After a year of intense mobilisation, the law was enacted. It accredited the right to self-government to indigenous communities on the bases of the territorial organisation, and political and administrative organisation of *free municipality*. The law specified what kind of indigenous authorities were legally recognised and how

⁴ By 2007 there were 38 Autonomous Rebel Zapatistas Councils (Municipalidades Autónomas Rebeldes Zapatistas, MAREZ). These self-organised and self-governed political communities cover almost 40% of the Chiapas state (30,000 km², involving 1,100 communities of 300 to 400 inhabitants each (Ouviaña, 2007). The MAREZ are organised in five Snails (*Caracoles*) each of which has a JBG. The *Caracoles* are also cultural ‘spaces’, gathering schools, assembly rooms, sport and rest zones, health centres, and cooperatives.

they should be elected. The legislation, proposed a form of local democracy (Burguete Cal y Mayor, 2004) that encouraged 'decentralisation', 'empowerment' and 'participation from below'. Deeply disappointed, the Zapatistas began a process of demilitarisation of the movement towards the strengthening of its civil component, and emerged after three years of silence with the JBG.

The government's response to autonomy *de facto* has been a counter-insurgent policy that intended to disempower the movement. Paramilitary organisations became NGOs and began to promote the formation of cooperatives and facilitating the access to the deed to the indigenous land after the 'illegal distribution' made by the Zapatista agrarian reform (Dinerstein, Ghiotto and Pascual, 2013). Between 2006 and 2008 new social programmes were launched in order to re-organise and channelled citizens' demands' (e.g. the Chiapas Solidarity Institute and the programme of Sustainable Rural Cities, both in 2007). To the Zapatistas, these policies, and particularly the latter plan matches the World Bank Programme Puebla-Panamá (PPP), which is a regional development strategy which involves the use of indigenous lands for exploitation of resources in the Southeast of Mexico.

Urban movements and the meaning of dignified work

One of the most significant dimensions of SSE is the development of alternative forms of cooperative work and self-management connected to communal needs and the democratisation of decision-making processes. The *Unemployed Workers Organizations* (UWOs, also called *Piqueteros*) in Argentina -born out of a series of protest ('roadblocks') carried out since 1996 in areas affected by mass unemployment produced by privatisation and decentralisation- constitute an example of such endeavours. While mobilising the unemployed and their communities and families to demand employment programmes, job creation and the end of criminalisation of poverty, the UWOs began to create work cooperatives and develop communal projects by means of appropriation of state resources (employment and social programs) and use them for collective purposes challenged the individualistic logic of workfare and state focus policy and reconceptualised 'work' in capitalist society.

During the late 1990s and beginning of 2000s, the Piqueteros offered a critique of capitalist work from 'outside the labour market' (Dinerstein, 2002) connecting work with the quality of dignity and a non-capitalist practice of solidarity and cooperation. While advocating different forms of understanding dignified work - ranging from 'decent work' (ILO), to non-exploitative anti-capitalist forms (Ghiotto and Pascual, 2010), all UWOs inspired communitarian, cooperative and solidarity collective practices in the neighbourhoods. Through intense mobilisation at the 'roadblocks' the UWOs achieved that state programmes fund their autonomous ventures. State resources become available as a result of mobilisation of the unemployed. (Dinerstein 2010)

With the crisis of 2001, the struggle over *the meaning of dignified work* intensified, reaching its apex in June 2002 when two young activists, Maximiliano Kosteki and Darío Santillán from the Unemployed Workers Network Aníbal Verón (*Coordinadora de Trabajadores Desocupados Anibal Veron*, CTDAV) were assassinated by the police while many others injured during the convoluted period post crisis. After the repression, which marked a turning point in Argentine politics,

narratives of dignified work as incompatible with capitalist exploitation and connected with the attainment of human dignity –as claimed by the CTDAV– disappeared from the public debate.

The introduction of new social programs that promoted local state intervention, bottom-up decision-making processes and the social economy (MDS, 2004) supported by a new National Institute of Cooperatives and Social Economy (*Instituto Nacional de Asociativismo y Economía Social*, INAES) began to provide technical and financial support for communitarian projects run by the UWOS through programmes such as the ‘National Plan for Local Development and Social Economy: Let’s Work!’ (*Plan Manos a la Obra*). The idea is to incorporate the communitarian and cooperative methods of the SSE led by the UWO to encourage self-sustainability, thus breaking marginalised groups’ dependency on *asistencialistas* policies (Hintze, 2006: 107; Kirchner 2012). But in order to get resources from the state, the UWOs are forced to become NGOs (through registration, inspection by appropriate ministries, and assessment of the worth of their proposed project), or to negotiate with existing NGOs to be included in their fold to receive state funds.

More recently, the plan ‘Argentina is Working’ (*Argentina Trabaja*, AT, or ‘Social Income with Work’ (*Ingreso Social con Trabajo*) (2009) not only assists existing cooperative projects that have been created by grassroots’ movements, but creates cooperatives from above (Kirchner 2012: 191). This is achieved by an active role for municipal and provincial governments, with the INAES or through the Federation of Cooperatives and Mutual Societies, which preselect members of newly formed cooperatives, and monitor their progress. This ‘co-cooperativism without cooperatives’ (Bertolini, 2011) was criticised for imposing the involvement in a specific form of association *in order to* participants to be considered as beneficiaries. To its critics, this goes against the cooperative spirit, which reconcile democratic workers’ association with self-management (Lo Vuolo, 2010: 14).⁵

Rural landless workers and the meaning of agrarian reform

The *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST)*, Brazil emerged in 1985 after a period of massive land occupations (1979-1984) and, since then, has struggled for land and agrarian reforms. To the MST, agrarian reform means the capacity of the Brazilian people to decide over the property and use of the land. The new agrarian reform proposed by the MST is based on an alternative socioeconomic model that includes education and cooperation. Their agrarian reform *de facto* is realised in encampments and regional settlements created after the occupation of the land, and where ‘revolutionary’ values concerning solidarity work, property, the distribution and exploitation of land, community life, education towards an equalitarian and fair society are attained in harmony with the environment. This includes several educational projects like the National School Florestán Fernández), and community projects with cooperative farms, housing cooperatives, schools for children and adults and clinics, promoted indigenous cultures and a healthy and sustainable environment

⁵ While it ‘guarantees the ...recovery of so-called ‘dignified work’, the promotion of collective and not merely individual endeavours, cooperation and solidarity among those affected ...in fact the programme forces beneficiaries to “self-organise’ in groups (*cuadrillas*) called ‘work cooperatives’ in order to undertake jobs in public works and services that are established by the state’. (Lo Vuolo, 2010: 5)

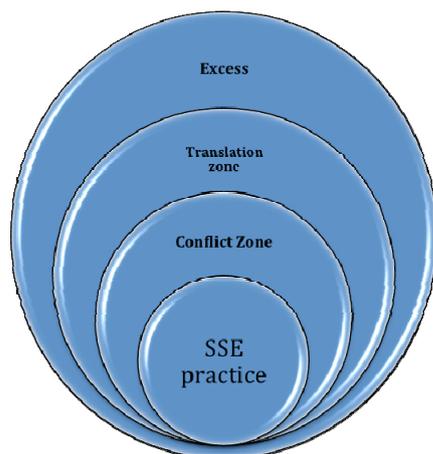
and gender equality. The settlements help to defend occupation but also produce material goods and values towards the creation of *agrovilas*.

Since its creation, the MST has been engaged in *a struggle over the agrarian reform* with the Brazilian governments. This entailed the use of state violence against the MST and rural workers, not only during Collor de Melho and Cardoso administrations, when the massacres of Corumbiara and Carajás took place in the mid 1990s, but also under Lula da Silva, an MST's ally, who could not extricate the strong alliance between powerful landowners, agribusiness and the Judicial power against the MST (Stedile 2013).

Yet, under President Da Silva the agrarian reform -which for the MST was never only about 'land distribution'- was partially achieved with the allocation of land to many MST settlers. Thus approved by international agencies, the 'agrarian reform' was then appropriated by the state and translated into an activity, which became functional to agribusiness for now rural workers and farmers' would depend on agri-business for purchasing technology, machinery, pesticides, seeds and fertilizers. But the MST dream is not over. Hence, after a period of reflection, the MST - founder member of *La Via Campesina*, joined rural workers' global struggle for food sovereignty. Food sovereignty goes well beyond 'land distribution' and remains pendant for it demands governments to respect, protect and implement people's right to food' (Rosset 2006) against agribusiness

SSE Research Zones

Latin American social movements have opened new spaces for the collective elaboration of alternative forms of work, cooperation, production, relationship with the commune, autonomy, use of the land, education, democratic practices. The state intended to delineate the 'parameters of legibility' of adequate and inadequate forms of autonomy, work and agrarian reform. While mobilising against and also engaging



in negotiation processes with governmental authorities at all levels, the movements have challenged state policies and legislation that intended to translate their collective practices into tools for neoliberal governance promoted by international development institutions. The *struggle over the meaning of SSE* asserted itself in the form of contentions politics over the law and policy. In all cases, extreme state violence was used against the movements and in some occasions such violence was a key factor in the process of paving the way for the process of translation of SSE into policy.

It is possible to distinguish three dimensions or SSE zones. First, the 'Creative Zone', is where alternative practices unfold at organisational level (the collective, leadership, time), socio-economic level (sociabilities, relations and values, economic possibilities, use of space), and politico-institutional level (political engagement, non-representational politics, direct democracy, autonomy) levels. Second, we find the 'Conflict Zone' where

disagreements, negotiations and struggles between movements and the state, corporate power and development discourses take place within specific configurations of power, class relations, and forms of capital accumulation, development and crises. Third, closely connected to the conflict zone, is the ‘translation zone’, where mechanisms of interpretation and rephrasing of SSE takes place in ways that might facilitate or deter the development of SSE.

Yet, the examples also illustrate the existence of a breach between the realities prefigured by SSE movements and the ways [SSE] inspired policy is organized (Dinerstein and Deneulin 2012). This gap evokes the impossibility to completely translate movements-led SSE practice into policy (programme and legislation) and poses the question of the function of the law and state policy in those cases when movements are striving for a collective life beyond capitalism.

Understanding the SSE ‘beyond zone’: from claim making to alternative-creating capacity

SSE movements venture beyond, with little certainty about their praxis, which is facilitated by ongoing collective self-reflection and self-learning (*aprendizaje*). The fact that the law or policy demarcate the terrain of ‘what exists’ and ‘what does not exist’ (legibility) does not mean that SSE practices that are moving beyond those parameters do not exist at all. Following Vázquez (2011: 36) the possibility of translation ‘begs the question of untranslatability: so what is that which remains untranslatable, outside the scope of translation?’ SSE practice is about shaping absences and as we have seen, it produces *excesses* (e.g. food sovereignty) that have no representation in the grammar of the state policy and therefore remains untranslatable.

My contention is that this *surplus* constitutes a *fourth zone*, the ‘beyond zone’ of SSE where collective dreams for different worlds are articulated through collective action, which transcends the parameters of legibility demarcated by the state. We have paid little attention to this fourth *invisibilised* dimension which is of fundamental importance for SSE movements. SSE movements of Latin America and the world are unmistakably expressing a desire to explore alternative realities. In the statement of the SSE movement at the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development of Rio+20, more than 370 social organisations gathered in RIPESS defined SSE as ‘a social movement that together with others is contributing to the consolidation of a genuine economic and political democracy’. They scorn the creation of institutions of governance that are not ‘structurally grounded in on-going consultation and participation of all sectors of society at local, regional and international levels’, and are

‘dominated by those whose financial contributions are the greatest, or managed by “experts” ... people’s sovereignty must be respected, as well as that of communities who are the only ones to have the legitimate right and the capacity to implement the solidarity development that can guarantee the preservation of the Commons.’⁶

⁶ This declaration written in 2012 by the Board of the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social and Solidarity Economy (RIPESS) was based on the discussions on Rio +20 of the 5th Latin

Likewise, in the declaration of the Convergence Assembly on Economic Alternatives at the 2013 WSF declare that

social solidarity economy in its various forms throughout the world represents the alternative to the global capitalist system ... the Assembly calls upon all civil society actors to network their actions at global level in order to enable people all over the world to assert their rights, and to replace the current system that is based on individual selfishness, over-consumption of resources, competition, male hegemony and war, by a peaceful, fraternal sober economy of cooperation and peace between all humankind.⁷

Towards prefigurative methods

In order to grasp the dimension of hope presented by the SSE, we need to rethink our methodological and our epistemological assumptions that 'naturalise' capitalism, that contradicts the spirit of these movements. It is important to acknowledge that there has been a significant change in social mobilisation where movements are moving away from their claim- making role to perceive themselves as creators of new worlds.

I propose an all-encompassing method of enquiry, Hope as Method (HM) that simultaneously problematizes 'factual reality', engages with the open-ended and process-like quality of reality and recognises the movements alternative-creating capacity. This method postulates that insofar as 'hope' guides contemporary social mobilization, as previously discussed, policy needs also to be *prefigurative*, that is, it must be directed to render visible what is already being proposed and experienced by SSE movements. Rather than encourage 'participation' and 'empowerment' of SSE actors, Hope as Method aims to *learn from* the movements' alternatives to development and to facilitate the translation of emancipatory practices into adequate frames that contribute to the 'construction of a common voice' and a 'collective intelligence' (RIPESS Europe 2012)⁸

Far from naïve, utopian or romantic, an engagement of the 'beyond zone' of SSE requires of an intellectual effort to transcend 'capitalist realism', which, according to Fisher, 'has been socially constructed as the only possible way by suppressing alternative realities' (2009: 18). He suggests that one way of doing this would be to invoke 'the Real(s) underlying the reality that capitalism presents to us' (2009: 18). We are compelled to render visible what has been actively produced as non-existent' and, as a result, 'reality is reduced to what exists' (Santos, 2007: 8).

Prefigurative policy does not classify or measure SSE practices with ossified concepts of a reality that naturalise capitalism: it enhances the development of SSE practices by

American and Caribbean Conference on Solidarity Economy and fair trade, and inputs from the delegates from the other continents. After the declaration follow the signatures from more than 370 organizations and networks from all over the world who expressed their support between June 16th and 25th: <http://rio20.net/en/propuestas/the-economy-we-need-declaration-of-the-social-and-solidarity-economy-movement-at-rio20>

⁷ <http://www.ripesseu.net/en/infos/news/news-details/article/declaration-of-the-convergence-assembly-on-economic-alternatives-in-the-wsf-2013.html>

⁸ <http://www.ripesseu.net/en/presentation.html>

learning how these are experienced as beyond capitalism. Ironically, as the examples show, the universe of 'surplus possibilities' (Gibson-Graham 2008) offered by movements-led SSE practices is usually made invisible by the same law or policy that claimed to enable them to develop and expand. Translation 'by erasure' (Vázquez 2011) inevitably *removes* the surplus possibility thus impoverishing SSE-inspired policy.

To immerse ourselves into the dimension of the not-yet-become is challenging for, as Lear suggests, radical hope 'anticipates a good for which those who have the hope as yet lack the appropriate concepts with which to understand it' (Lear 2006: 103). Faced with this problem, Gibson-Graham (2006: xxxi) advice that 'as a practice of theorising, we need one that that tolerates "not knowing" and allows for contingent connections and the hiddenness of unfolding; one that at the same time foregrounds specificity, divergence, incoherence, surplus possibility'. Any policy intervention that engages with the movements alternative-creating capacity can only constitute an open programme for an open and unclosed reality. Our key questions are what are the projects, practices, and horizons that new movements are engaged in and in what ways are they contributing to reinventing social emancipation? Does SSE open new horizons and practices, i.e. opened spaces for prefiguring other realities not yet materialized that contest the capitalist reality? Do they elicit expansive waves of ideas, feeling, actions that open the horizons of the mind widely? In the end, as Bloch suggests: 'It is a question of learning hope... The work of this emotion requires people who throw themselves actively into what is becoming to which they themselves belong...' (1959/86: 3)

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