

Re-visioning Social Sustainability: Challenging Hegemonies and Emerging Alternatives - Sessions I &II

Name of Session Convener(s): George Odysseus Tsobanoglou and Kiran Prasad

University/Organization: University of the Aegean, Mytilini, Lesvos, Greece/Sri Padmavati Mahila University, Tirupati, India

Email: g.tsobanoglou@soc.aegean.gr; kiranrn_prasad@hotmail.com

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Session I: Re-visioning Social Sustainability: Challenging Hegemonies

Chair: Prof. Kiran Prasad

1). Prof. ssa Gloria Pirzio, Sapienza University of Rome, Rome, Italy

E-mail: gloria.pirzio@uniroma1.it

Title: Local Politics and New model of Governance in Western countries

Abstract

In the last decades a deep change is involving the main Western paradigms; decentralisation, federalism, public private partnership (PPP) are emerging as new models of governance at national and local level. Several and interwoven are the reasons of this re-organisational process, and consist of a few items recurring in the legal and political debate.

In this context local politics become the center of a wider process of negotiation of meanings which redefines the boundaries between Public and Private, Market and State, Global and Local. In Italy for instance we assisted to the passage from the State enterprises system to a local one, the so called "Municipality capitalism" as a consequence of a strong campaign of public companies privatisation, without strong market liberalisation. In this way the role of the State was replaced by the local autonomies.

Local authority enterprises monopolize the public utilities sector and supply services to local authorities; they are characterised by a huge spoil system, sometimes a patronage one, which supported the construction of political consensus and the relationship between legality and legitimacy. In this new scenario, the border between market and politics is turning more and more indeterminate, creating the need for new scientific categories of analysis and interpretation.

The paper will focus on:

1. New models of governance at local level
2. Public/Private paradigm in the Western debate

Market and Politics in local autonomies: the case of “Municipality capitalism”

2). Prof. P.P. Balan, Director, Centre for Research in Rural & Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh-160019, India

Email id- balanpp25@gmail.com

**Title: Democratic Decentralisation and Poverty Reduction:
'Kudumbasree' Initiative in Kerala**

Abstract

Despite over five decades of rapid economic growth and poverty alleviation programmes, around 350 million persons in India are considered to be below the poverty line. The current scenario calls for a closer examination of the pitfalls in the centralized planning process with regard to poverty reduction. For surmounting the turbulence in the process of development, social protection is required for underprivileged and marginalized groups. At the same time, social protection cannot be divorced from economic and social policies affecting the rate and distribution of economic growth and human capital formation. Developing a good local governance system is one of the strategies of India for sustainable human development. Kerala legislated the Kerala Panchayati Raj Act 1994 (for local bodies in rural areas) and the Kerala Municipality Act 1994 (for the local bodies in urban areas), and transferred powers, functions and finance to these bodies to act as institutions of self-governance. The objective of this paper is to provide background information for reflecting on the ongoing scheme, *Kudumbasree* (welfare of the family) for the development of the poor and marginalized groups within the framework of decentralisation in Kerala.

3).Prof. George Tsobanoglou, University of the Aegean, Mytilini, Greece

E-mail; g.tsobanoglou@soc.aegean.gr

Title: On Governing the weak ties in Networked Economics - Greece in the EU and the issue of Local Institution Capacity Building

Abstract

Local Institutional Capacity Building remains a local prerogative during the development process and is determined by two sources. The first concerns the problem of institutional supply. Countries which have been dramatically moved

towards state regulated market mechanisms (China, Vietnam, Russia, Brazil, South Africa and India) have adapted to a global economy and have become major players. New “market institutions” have been formed in order to regulate labour reproduction and capital accumulation by a state territorial steering of exchange mechanisms. New mediation regimes for information based accounting practices (for inflation) and distribution networks have been necessary in order to develop a new “organizational” regime that has been based on new forms of exchange. Countries such as Greece, having experienced patronage politics, and long periods of dictatorial rule, may seem to lack the required “state institutions” and civil society organizations to coordinate socio-economic exchanges and enhance the value chain in the EU monetary system. The other issue concerns the already embedded institutions which may be an obstacle to the new ones. The way external and internal actors are articulated, in a usually asymmetrical politically relationship, may define the future of “redundant” institutions. Usually developing regimes define a legal plateau whereby the nominal and the effective are not only referring to law but to regulation and administration. Informal practices and the distance between the deontic and the factual constitute the very capacity to form policy, a key absence in such regimes. When this distance is considerate, a dual system is established with no common rules creating bifurcations, a common occurrence in such regimes.

This paper will focus on the Greek polity and its organizational status in an advanced European Union’s Monetary Union. Capacity building for labor forms will be a test case for the weak constitution of social market mechanisms in Europe (Greece) and the subsequent conclusions to be drawn for the weak capacity of the European Union’s Institutions to establish social institutions in its periphery.

4.) Dr Prachi Kaul, Indian Institute of Technology, Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute,
New Delhi, India

E-mail: Prachi.kaul@gmail.com

**Title: Sustainable Mechanism and Innovation for Education and Work:
Informal Institutions – A Case from Delhi, India**

Abstract

Alternative mechanism for sustainable development is seen as an objective throughout the world. Nevertheless, Asian countries so as India continues to strive to shift and

transit their development pattern to sustainable production and consumption which still remains as primary challenge and a daunting task. Present paper discusses educational enterprises ‘sustainable in nature’ and ‘educational consumption’ for livelihood and sustainability in developing urban spheres in Delhi, the national capital of India. Study based on primary data collected from 254 student and 36 institutes is a twofold effort; first to reflect on potential of Informal sector of education as an alternative to non-formal and formal provisions of education and second to analyze the outcome of education and skills imparted by these educational setups.

Skill for work in changing macro-economic environments is important issue in the community of education and work. The policy interest in the scope of skills development in form of technical, vocational education and training to provide increased options for work in employment or self-employment has grown but in very few countries but has sharpened worldwide with economic recession. The ambitions for using skills development for social mobility and economic transformation have been enormous in India and confirmed by present research.

The accessibility, relevance, governance and accountability remain as major concern of education in India. Whereas few reformative measures have been initiated, the results are still awaited to reflect. It is argued here that basic education and skill training is specifically associated with the informal sector of education and advocates that literacy and basic education provisions are important to improve the livelihoods and sustainable practices of people. More so in absence of formal- state endeavours, such establishments can be seen as alternative provision to access life skill education for lower economic rung of society.

5). Dr Valentina Grassi, University of Naples “Parthenope”, Naples, Italy

E-mail grassi.valentina@gmail.com ; valentina.grassi@uniparthenope.it

Title: What India can teach us: Vedic Culture and Social Sustainability

Abstract

Sustainability is a continuous process, which needs to combine the three fundamental and inseparable dimensions of “development”: Environmental, Economic and Social. *Social Sustainability* can be defined as the ability to guarantee conditions of human well-being (safety, health, education), equally distributed by class and gender. In a territorial system, Social Sustainability is the ability of individuals to act effectively together, according to the same conception of the project of life, encouraged by a consultation between the various institutional levels. We need to remember that the economy exists within a society and both exist in the environment.

In globalization era, we need to set up a project of culture based on a perspective of Sustainable Development that will benefit all the peoples of the world, present and

future, and that integrate the protection of a social balance, such as the fight against poverty, human rights, health, with conservation needs of natural resources and ecosystems finding mutual support.

To do this, many suggestions can be drawn in a *multicultural perspective*: for example, we can find interesting ideas in the *Vedic culture* that can be translated into collective social practices for Sustainability. The basis of Vedic culture is the Vedas: they are an ancient collection of sacred texts in Sanskrit Vedic of Aryan peoples who invaded around the twentieth century BC northern India, from which the Vedic religious culture was born. They are of primary importance in the different set of doctrines and religious beliefs that goes by the name of Hinduism.

In this paper, we analyze some of these items, putting them in correlation with the projects of Social Sustainability also in Western contexts. Among these, for example, the question of "five debts" that, in the Vedic tradition, a man contracts at the time of his birth: the debt to the divinities that pays for itself by means of *worship* and *sacrifice*; the debt to the ancient sages, that pays for itself by the *study*; the debt to the ancestors, that pays for itself by the *procreation*, and to their masters that pays for itself by the *donations*; debt to humanity that pays for itself by the duty of *hospitality*; the debt to all beings that pays for itself by *giving animals the remains of meals*.

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Session II: Re-visioning Social Sustainability: Emerging Alternatives

Chair: Prof. George Tsobanoglou

1) Prof. ssa Arianna Montanari, University of Roma “La Sapienza”, Roma, Italy

E-mail: Arianna.Montanari@uniroma1.it

Title: East-West Migrations Flows, New Models and Perspectives

Abstract

The paper examines possible new models able to promote and support the short-term legal migration of eastern young people with medium-to-high qualifications and contribute to the development of a culture of legal migration with respect to:

- stemming the brain drain phenomenon, whereby the depleted ranks of young qualified individuals inhibits economic growth potential;
- promoting domestic growth and development by *circular migration schemes* that allow for professional and higher education experiences abroad;
- redressing illegal migration, which often leads to exploitation, marginalisation, loss of identity and creates revenue streams for organised crime.

At the same time the paper will analyse the opportunities for migrant workers to improve their professional skills by way of temporary employment within the western countries and to subsequently support their reinstatement within the domestic labour market. As well as pursuing an understanding of migration phenomena, the paper has also sought to test new approaches to circular migration on a sample of Moldovan University graduates by involving them in work experience and by subsequently assisting their return. These labour exchange facilities partook in training programmes designed to promote labour mobility.

2). Jiro Ooi (Tohoku University, Japan)

E-mail: jiroooi@sal.tohoku.ac.jp

Title: Urbanization of Southeast Asian Countries from the Perspective of Migration and Land Use on New Towns and Villages

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to refer to the emerging mixed life of urban and rural in suburban areas of Southeast Asia, with an analysis of the land use and statistics. The rapid development of Southeast Asian cities derived from the new international division of labor, particularly since the late 1970s. In this process of urbanization, many analysts have tried to identify the "Southeast Asian City" as a specific category. Focusing on Indonesia, I refer to one of the discussions which notes that parts of urban districts have been migrating to villages from urban areas (Gregory E. Guldin 2001). In western countries, the phenomenon of urbanization is such that many laborers migrate to cities from villages so that many farmers may quit agriculture and start working in factories. On the other hand, in some Southeast Asian country such as Thailand, The Philippines and Indonesia, the rate of decline of the number of farmers is not so high (Hattori and Funatsu 2002). One of the reasons for this is that industrial estates, new towns and villages are specifically located close to each other in suburban areas. It is my objective to understand the sustainability of these areas and communities.

3) Prof. Kiran Prasad, Sri Padmavati Mahila University, India

E-Mail: kiranrn.prasad@gmail.com

Title: Paradigm Shift in Development: Communicating Sustainable Environment for Communities

Abstract

The competition for rapid economic growth, mass production, and a rich lifestyle has led to a race among nations of the world for fast economic growth and prosperity. There is a serious introspection where development ends and destruction begins in the context of the natural environment. It is being accepted grudgingly that poverty and environmental issues are interrelated. The resource degradation in the past increases today's poverty, while today's poverty makes it difficult to care for the future. In this context, environment and environmental audit have assumed great

importance as the future of humankind hinges on the conservation and regenerative policy measures that can be adopted by nations.

Women have played a key role in environmental conservation in the developing world. But their activism was viewed as local action and confined to the fringes of mainstream development. The MDGs that regard empowering women and environmental sustainability as the key factors for development began to recognize the international role of women in protecting and sustaining the ecology. These goals demand a renewed look at indigenous models of living in which women play an important role in environmental conservation. Women have played a significant role in effecting a paradigm shift in political ecology in which sustainable environment will be the touchstone of development. Often excluded from the big mainstream media, women are using alternate media in green communication. This paper will focus on women's interventions in environmental communication through the mainstream and alternate media and also women's activism to mainstream environment communication in sustainable development in the context of the emerging political ecology in India.

4) Dr. Manoj Kumar Teotia, Centre for Research in Rural & Industrial Development (CRRID), Chandigarh-160019, India

E-mail: mkteotia@gmail.com

Title: Towards Improving the Human Nature Interactions in Urban India for Sustainable Urban Development: A Case Study of Participatory Environmental Revitalization in a Segregated Colony of Chandigarh

Abstract

The human nature interaction has deteriorated rapidly in urban India with unplanned and rapid urbanization. The growth of population in segregated settlements called slums, environmental degradation, denial of human rights in terms of accessibility of housing, basic amenities and livelihood etc are some of the crucial challenges of many of the urban human settlements. The urban development practices adopted by the policy makers further seem to have affected the harmony between urban human society and the nature. The unsustainable practices and initiatives in environmental management coupled with the poor role of institutions have affected the already deteriorating urban ecology. Chandigarh, the first planned Northwest Indian town is not exception to this

emerging general urban scenario. With the rapid growth of urban population, Chandigarh also experienced emergence of large number of slums and segregated 'slum like-rehabilitated colonies' including Ramdarbar which grew rapidly. With the rapid influx of poor migrants the human nature interaction deteriorated continuously in Ramdarbar for about two decades and it became one of the most segregated settlements of the city with highly degraded environment.

Some local initiatives in urban India seem to have shown the way to improve the human nature interaction, an important pre requisite for social and environmental sustainability. Chandigarh also experienced some good initiatives in Ramdarbar which changed the face of the highly deprived colony. The present study of Ramdarbar experiment is an effort to underline the role of participatory environmental revitalization initiatives in improving human nature interaction in a segregated urban settlement. The Paper has analyzed the dynamics of participation of local community in revitalizing urban environment. The participatory initiatives by the local people/Neighborhood Revitalization Committee supported by the area councilor has changed the face of colony from a very congested, encroached and polluted habitation to open, clean and green settlement. The environmental and social fabric of the colony has improved considerably after voluntary removal of encroachments, development of 90 parks, plantation drives, neighborhood sanitation program and many other initiatives, which can be replicated in other rehabilitated colonies of Chandigarh and other cities for improving human nature interaction in urban settlements to counter the challenges of urbanization, environmental degradation and climate change and achieve social and environmental sustainability in urban areas.