

General Seminar

Has Social Democracy run out of Steam?

Tuesday 4 February 2020

12.30-2.30 pm

Sciences Po, Room Goguel
27 rue Saint-Guillaume, 75007 Paris

The paper examines the political crisis of social democratic parties in Western Europe in light of its impact on the social democratic emancipatory project, and asks whether the first calls the second into question. It first begins by defining social democracy as an emancipatory project, and identifies three major historical phases which correspond to three distinct conceptions of the project. Section two examines recent literature in comparative welfare state economics, political sociology, and studies on populism and authoritarianism, to show how the socio-economic transformations of the last five decades have enlarged and fragmented the constituency of social democratic parties, and contends that this situation has produced powerful tensions between the normative and the mundane dimensions of the social democratic project. Three major dilemmas – economic, cultural, and political – leading to three deep conflicts internal to the social democratic constituency are identified and discussed. Combining these empirical findings with the three rival interpretations of the social democratic project introduced in section one, section three develops three possible scenarios for the evolution of the social democratic project in the near future. Section four assesses the likelihood and political meaning of each of the three scenarios for the pursuit of the social democratic project.



Speaker

Roberto Frega Centre Marc Bloch de Berlin

The research activities of prof. Roberto Frega develop around two major axes. On the one hand, they deal with the pragmatic tradition in philosophy, both from a historical and contemporary point of view. In particular, they seek to explore the contributions of pragmatism to policy understanding from a highly interdisciplinary perspective. On the other hand, they deal with contemporary transformations of democracy, as well as theories of public space. Recent publications : “Against analogy: why analogical arguments in support of workplace democracy must fail”, *Democratic Theory*, 7(1), 2020, “Democracy between experimentalism and populism”, *Contemporary Pragmatism*, 2019, “Solidarity as social involvement”, *Moral Philosophy and Politics*, 2019, “The social ontology of democracy”, *Journal of Social Ontology*, 4(2):157–185, 2019.

Discussion

Emiliano Grossman, Sciences Po, CEE

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Compulsory registration on the link above - Contact: katia.rio@sciencespo.fr