

# Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Alternative Economic Models and Responses to Decline in Contemporary Society

**Veranstalter** Polish Sociological Association

**Veranstaltungsort** Universität Warschau

**Termin** 21.05.2018 - 22.05.2018 ganztags

## Workshop of the Polish Sociological Association & University of Warsaw & Polish Academy of Sciences

Albert O. Hirschman's treatise on responses to decline in various contexts and domains, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty* (1970), has been almost instantly welcomed as his most sociologically relevant contribution. This work opened a sociological box that can be researched without exhaustion.

The issue whether the social actors will go for exit, for voice or for loyalty when faced with downturn or decline in a particular context, or how their choices will impact on the attractiveness of other available options always leaves room for surprises and scientific discoveries. Thus, exit-voice-and-loyalty is in fact a sociological riddle, and as all good sociological riddles (such as the seminal strength of weak ties) it does not wear out. On the contrary, its value increases in time. The sociologist cannot just simply solve the problem for the last time, neither can she/he leave the problem unanswered. New empirical material related to crises, revolutions, risk, failures, downturns - in other words, social change - puts the puzzle in a completely new picture and indicates new solutions for resolving it. Hirschman himself, subsequent to the exit-voice dynamics of the 1989 upheaval in East Germany was compelled to reformulate his original thesis that exit deactivates voice and to record the scenario when private exit stimulates public voice eventually.

The start-up intuition of this Workshop in new economic sociology is that, as far as

the empirical stimuli and challenges for sociological imagination are concerned, the contemporary humanitarian, political and economic context is similar to 1989, when the end of history thesis was launched. Although very demanding, because it provokes the sociologists and new economic sociologists to assess their system of values and to make a statement on issues that go beyond theory, the actual circumstances of crises, recovery attempts and alternative strategies of coping in which the academic work is carried out is very valuable for theory developing. This background not only indicates that the issue of exit-voice-loyalty is further actual. But it also reveals resources and types of reactions to downturn and decline that are more recent.

In this respect, various phenomena that are currently undertaken in new economic sociology, such as alternative economic models, sharing economy, increased political activism of diaspora, flow of refugees and migrants, can be framed as contemporary manifestations of the original exit-voice-loyalty puzzle. The alternative economic models, such as common ownership and Brexit, and the sharing economy could be framed as contemporary new forms of exit that borrow elements of voice. The increased political activism of diaspora seems to repeat the scenario of public voice caused by the possibility of exit that was witnessed by Hirschman and sociologists from Central Europe in 1989. Whereas the flow of refugees and migrants is a phenomenon of en masse exit that could be researched also in relation with the types of voice, both pro- and against this exit, that it provoked.

The Workshop will deal with such topics as:

- Exit-voice-loyalty: Hirschman and beyond
- Exit-voice-loyalty - social structure and power differential
- Responses to decline and recovery mechanisms in economy and society
- Grassroots movements as alternatives to large distributive systems
- Migration: exit and voice reconsidered
- Alternative, sharing and shadow economies as exit strategies
- Fuzzy boundaries of (new) forms of exit (lessons from Brexit, etc.)
- Organizational, institutional and social aspects of voice
- Contradictions and unintended consequences of loyalty

The Organizing Committee hopes the Workshop will contribute to the conceptual and theoretical enrichment of the studies on exit-voice-loyalty in new economic sociology and sociology, it will create an apt platform for revisiting well established assumptions and paradigms, and help opening new research sites for empirical investigation.

### **Important dates**

Registration (transfer of workshop fee) is due by 1 March 2018. The regular fee is 130 Euro. The fee for members of Polish Sociological Association in good standing

is 110 Euro. The conference fee covers lunch breaks, conference dinner in the evening of the first day of the conference.

## About NES Workshops

The Polish Sociological Association's recently constituted Economic Sociology section has launched a call for arguments and debates related to the place of the study of economic life within the broader sociological discipline. This topic is designed to be discussed over a few meetings, to be held annually, under the generic title Bringing the New Economic Sociology Back Into the Sociological Analysis. As the title shows, this workshop series started from the assumption that new economic sociology, in its focus to 'correct' the manner in which economics approaches economic life, runs the risk of becoming decoupled from the sociological discourse. Thus, the workshop series was launched as a call, an alarm signal to be more accurate, for new economic sociologists to try to use the findings of new economic sociology in order to address the main assumptions and contradictions not only in economics, but in sociology as well.

See also:

- 1st NES Workshop: New Economic Sociology and Sociology: Where Do They Meet? Where Do They Diverge? Warsaw, 22-23 May 2017
- A.Mica, M.Olcoń-Kubicka, K.M.Wyrzykowska, Workshop Review: New Economic Sociology and Sociology: Where Do They Meet? Where Do They Diverge? Warsaw, May 22-23, 2017, Journal of Economic Sociology. Vol. 18. No 4. September 2017.

## Organizing Institutions

- Polish Sociological Association - Section of Economic Sociology & Warsaw Department
- Polish Academy of Sciences - Institute of Philosophy and Sociology
- University of Warsaw - Faculty of Applied Social Sciences and Resocialization
- University of Warsaw - The Robert B. Zajonc Institute for Social Studies

## Guest speakers

- Barbara Czarniawska (University of Gothenburg)
- José Ossandón (Copenhagen Business School)

## Contact

WWW <http://economy-and-society.uw.edu.pl/>

e-mail [a.mica\(at\)uw.edu\(dot\)pl](mailto:a.mica@uw.edu.pl) and [molcon-kubicka\(at\)ifispan.waw\(dot\)pl](mailto:molcon-kubicka@ifispan.waw.pl)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PTS.SSE/>

Further information here.

---