

# World Political Party

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# The world crises of 2020

- Coronavirus: a perfect illustration of *world risk society*
  - pathogens can mutate rapidly and travel in 24 hours across the world in jet planes
- The coronavirus has played a role in the global financial crisis of 2020, but is not the primary cause of the crisis.
- Hyman Minsky's 'it' — the *collapse of the financial and economic system* — has seemed rather likely for a long time
  - my own anticipation: "We are likely to see the biggest crash ever, accompanied by a deep global depression, by 2020 or so"
- Crisis, its most general sense, connotes a turning point in a process — in the fortunes of a society — and the change can even be so momentous as to change the very nature of the being or society in question.
- Crisis is both a threat and an opportunity to learn
  - often in discussions of crisis, what is at issue is not prediction but the related practice of critique, which focuses on the causes of the crisis
- Crises are inherently occasions for power struggles: the same crisis can provide the pretext for realizing a myriad of different possibilities.

# The left perspective: holoreflexivity

- The conditions of everyday activities everywhere are directly or indirectly affected by how the world economy works — or does not work.
- Since the French Revolution, the concept of solidarity has been tied to change-oriented political projects: *in solidum* (“as a solid whole”) for changes.
- Reflexivity denotes the capacity to reflect upon the conditions of one’s being, agency and actions, also in view of shaping those conditions.
- The Greek term *holo* means “whole”.
- Holoreflexivity refers to capacity to reflect on the mechanisms, structures, flows and processes of the dynamic whole of the planetary system.
- Globalisation → the number of risks, problems and contradictions multiplies → so does possible rational responses to them, and these rational responses constitute also reasons for holoreflexivity and solidarity

# 2020s crisis as an opportunity for cosmopolitan left

- We are facing crises of the capitalist world economy; but these crises also constitute crises of nationalist consciousness and persuasive arguments for holoreflexivity.
- Far from being exhausted as a project, a grand task awaits the left.
- Social freedom can be increased and various constraints and ills – more generally unwanted and unneeded sources of determination – can be removed and replaced by more desirable sources of (self-)determination.
- Existing global political economy contradictions and other global problems can be resolved by means of rational collective actions and by building more adequate common institutions
  - global transformations are also a condition for autonomy in various "local" contexts
- A learning process towards qualitatively higher levels of reflexivity can help develop regional and global transformative agency.

# World risk society

- The concept of “world risk society” helps situate our task.
- The current epoch, in this conceptualization, is in part the second phase of modernization, in which actors and movements begin to respond to the problems generated by the consequences of the first phase.
- The primary feature of this new phase is the emergence of a common world with no outside and no exit.
  - societal risks demand that we acknowledge the real dangers and threats we confront, including financial crises, pathogens, global warming and nuclear weapons
- At the same time, these risks contain a collective condition and power that creates new ethical, political, and technological opportunities for shaping futures to sustain us — and new modernities to dream by.
- A key thing that indicates that there is room for further ethical and political learning: right-wing nationalist populism usually fails to attract younger generations, even when they seem to lack hope and belief in the possibility of a better future.

# Toward the idea of world political party

- In addition to the perceptions of shared risks on our small planet, and the acute sense of injustices and asymmetries of power, what is important is that there is also a positive and rational direction.
- This is a left vision that can inspire optimism and ambition about our future possibilities.
- To truly inspire hope, this vision must involve political programmes specifying aims and concrete utopias (both subject to critical debates).
- A series of feasible and compatible political economy reforms can be put together and forged into a strategy of green, democratic and socialist transformations
  - many of the immediately needed reforms are global Keynesian in nature
- Collective actions are likely to involve new forms of political agency such as world political parties (WPP).
- The idea of transformative global agency must make a wide rational appeal across different social classes: “this is what is reasonable for *us* to do!”.

# Skepticism about political parties

- Skepticism about the feasibility of a world political party is understandable, also in light of the discontent with political parties in many national contexts.
- Across the world, mainstream parties have become “post-democratic” as private money rules in politics and power is increasingly concentrated in a narrow elite.
- Often, the anti-elite backlash has been nationalist, xenophobic, and authoritarian
  - many countries are sliding towards full-scale authoritarianism
- A viable WPP must be able to respond to the moral and political criticism of the mainstream national parties, while cultivating a democratic ethos within global civil society and exercising effective political agency.
- Such broad-based political capability presupposes the emergence of public consciousness rooted in shared elements of a wider and deeper worldview.
- This evolution, in turn, fosters the willingness to engage in collective processes to build trust and commitment, i.e. solidarity.

# The process of creating a WPP

- The *raison d'être* of the world political party lies in advancing new institutional forms for organizing the planetary public realm
  - first creating system of democratically regulating, controlling, and taxing global capital (multinational corporations, global finance, wealthy individuals etc)
- To achieve collective agency on the global level, disparate individuals must learn to see themselves (and their daily lives) as fundamentally connected to one another through common global structures, processes, and challenges
  - the role of metaphors and stories: a promising way to counter parochial ideologies is to situate the contemporary problematique within a macro-view of cosmological, biological, and social evolution
  - however, there must also be explanations of concrete events, developments and crises as well as concrete eutopias, i.e. desirable institutional and other possibilities
- The creation of the first WPP will be a process, and it is likely that future historians will look back to many phenomena as precursors
  - from the first socialist international to DiEM25