

Thread: *Living conviviality*

Under the lens of a narrative step: *Visions and strategies for transformation*

Topics: *Processes of inner transition and cultural change; Culture, identity and languages of valuation; Spirituality, reconnection and relationality*

Sleep and stillness in a mobile economy

The contemporary economy is built on the value of mobility, achievement, control and efficiency. It leans on the active subject: the one being wide awake and alert. This ideal of the 'economic man' profits the growth-necessitated economic thought of our society. But what has been forgotten is that an economic man "is possible only as a subject which sleeps, which has slept, and which will sleep again" (Harrison 2009, 989). It is a subject which, in the existence of mobility, is also still and dormant; a subject which sleeps one third of its life. Furthermore, a sleeping subject is one that carries along a certain kind of virtue, an ethical and moral agency (Valtonen & Veijola 2011). By focusing on this inevitable, but mostly forgotten, part of a subject it enables us to explore the ongoing economic debate from a novel perspective.

This paper takes part in the thread "*Living conviviality*" by exploring "*How can the logic of growth be critically reflected from a cultural and ethical perspective?*" It is also taking part in figuring out "*How can we decolonize our minds and bodies from the addiction to growth?*". As part of an ongoing PhD dissertation this paper contributes to the wider understanding of 'being' in organizational and economic theories which seek to undermine the priority of action, auto-affection and intention (Harrison 2009). It draws from the notion of "stillness" as an intrinsic part of the mobile world (Bissell & Fuller 2011) and adds this insight to critical management studies (see Alvesson 2011) and critical economic studies relating to the debate between capitalist economy and alternative economical mindsets (see e.g. Latouche 2009, Schumacher 1973). Furthermore this paper leans on the socio-cultural studies on sleep, inspired by e.g. Williams (2009, 2011), Harrison (2009), Valtonen & Veijola (2011) and Hancock (2008). It continues to tackle the problematic dualisms between mind/body (Leder 1990) and sleeping/waking by using practice approach in a role of epistemology (Corradi et al. 2010, 273) through which practices are seen as embodied activity that takes place in material context and consists of both bodily and practical understanding (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki et al., 2001).

In its initial stage this paper uses the concepts of the sleeping body and stillness to critically re-read the principals and fulcrums of the growth-necessitated economic thought. It aims to make visible the primacy of the mobile and waking man in economic debates by analyzing texts and visual images (from magazines, books, articles, video clips), based on capitalist premise, from a preceding lens. The furthered methodology to be used in the study and the actual practice of re-reading economic texts and visual image is to be considered.

Contributions are made to the discussion of an economy beyond growth by opening up a novel way to critically evaluate the current economic principals. The study is curious in finding out what the identification of the intrinsic value of 'being' might bring along to the current economical debate. It questions the ideological conception of human beings as utility-maximizing 'consumers' whose desire has been defined in terms of goods (Hamilton 2003, 8). This array has led to a conclusion that to make people happier is to provide more goods, which necessitates *growth* as an objective (ibid.). But the omnipotence of the estimable materiality which has been assumed to make people happy has only led to a never ending strive for more and more – a strive in which the active and mobile subject plays the leading role. The question of growth, then, pertains to a wider discussion on the purpose of life and the constructed self-evidence of '*wanting for more*' instead of '*being happy with what I have now*'. As the former alternative is based on the significance of 'achieving' the latter carries the worthiness of 'being'.

In conclusion this paper opens up a way to draft an alternative society with a different mindset that gives significance to the intrinsic value of being and stillness alongside doing and mobility. Instead of leaning on the human evolution ideal with a steadfast and firmly fixed standing man ready to face the world with his eyes

wide open, laying out the foundations for human's pre-eminence in the animal kingdom and for the growth of culture and civilization (Ingold 2004), this study sees the other side of the coin giving stage to the recumbent body signaling calmness, stillness and the significance of being. The study aims to ask could this widened, albeit not new or revolutionary but widely forgotten, understanding of the nature of human being contribute to the imaginative construction of an economy beyond growth. It resembles a journey of reconnection – of the dominant and the depressed.

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