

## **Call for papers: Movements in Post/Socialisms**

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The November 2015 issue of the open-access, online, copyleft academic/activist journal *Interface: a Journal for and about Social Movements* (<http://www.interfacejournal.net/>) invites contributions on the theme of *Movements in Post/Socialisms* as well as general submissions.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the establishment of, and experimentation within, socialist states across the globe. These efforts were variously lauded, critiqued, condemned and their 'socialist' nature disputed. This call for papers asks about the movements that have come in the wake of the collapse and transformation of these diverse regimes.

A quarter of century ago, a massive wave of political protest shook state socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and Asia. In many countries these events paved the way for far-reaching societal transformation, embedding Western-style capitalist economies and representative democracy. In some locations the existing regimes succeeded in taming the efforts around economic and political liberalisation, in other locations they did not. Social movements were central in these processes and followed different paths, including: they led the transformative events and became part of new elites/regimes/states; they pulled back to the realm of civil society after they initiated regime change; they resisted the efforts for regime change; and they were repressed and demobilised when the regime succeeded in maintaining the status quo.

Not only did movements participate in and resist 'eventful protests' in 1989, but they were also influenced by these events in the following decades. Again, different trajectories were observed in different locations. Eastern Europe became dominated by anti-utopian ideologies, which effectively paralysed any attempt for transgressive critiques of the newly established political economic order. Furthermore, the spread of 'development aid' for 'underdeveloped' post-communist civil societies — provided by United States, European Union and private foundations — contributed to the NGO-isation of civil society organisations and the import and emulation of new forms and agendas of activism. This 'new' or 'proper' civil society activism started to gain political relevance at the expense of grass-root, radical and other dissident movements.

On the other hand, the rapid economic and political transition of a number of Eastern countries provoked mobilisation — from the episodic global justice and anti-war movements, to mass social solidarity mobilisations that had lasting effects on elites' strategies for economic and political transformation.

For Asian socialism, the ruling ‘communist’ regimes in Vietnam and China have presided over a transition to capitalist economies while also resisting social movements for political democratisation. Yet the capitalist transition has thrown up social and political contradictions, such as social inequality, abuse of political power, labour exploitation, land dispossession and environmental degradation — all of which have seen the rise of diverse activism and movements. Fearful of autonomous organising, these regimes have kept a tight grip over civil society and independent organisation. Consequently, social movements have to operate under repressive conditions and adopt clandestine and informal organising methods and strategies. Nonetheless, in Vietnam and China, for example, we have seen some of the highest global concentration of autonomous labour organising and strikes in recent years.

Apart from regions where the 1989 events directly took place, their effects spread well beyond. The fall of the Eastern bloc both directly and indirectly affected the political landscape of Western Europe, with old left movements beginning to orient themselves along different ideological principles. Consequences can also be seen in Latin America, with sites of state socialism, such as Cuba, faced with the transformation of the former Eastern bloc as well as internal movements to transform the national political economy — including the repression of those movements. In Venezuela, the new century has seen Hugo Chávez implement a process of socialist reform in the wake of mass social and political movements that brought him to power, a route he called the ‘Bolivarian process’. Related but distinct processes took place in other countries — Ecuador, Argentina and Bolivia. Many have called this the socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, following and diverging from the socialism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Eastern Bloc and Asia. However, others have criticised such regimes as authoritarian or ‘neo-extractivist’.

For this special themed section of *Interface* 7/1 we are interested in articles by researchers and activists on the movements and events of 1989, their impacts and trajectories and other questions of post/socialisms. We are seeking standard refereed articles as well as material in other formats, such as: action notes on organising methods; activist biographies; book reviews; conversational roundtables; analyses of movement events; and more. Submissions should be written in such a way as to be of interest or use also to readers outside Eastern Europe or Asia. Contributions might address such topics as:

- Post/anti/new socialist movements
- New trade unions and labour movements in Asia
- Activism in post/socialist settings
- Memories and visions of socialism/communism in contemporary collective action
- Importing and exporting social movements and activism
- Effects of the fall of state socialisms in Eastern Europe and Asia on other locations

- What is socialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- The persistence of social movements during the regime change from state socialism to capitalism
- Movements as regime-builders / movements as regime-breakers
- Comparing Cold War social movements between East and West
- Other questions relevant to the special issue theme

As in every issue, we are also very happy to receive contributions that reflect on other questions for social movement research and practice that fit within the journal's mission statement (<http://www.interfacejournal.net/who-we-are/mission-statement/>).

Submissions should contribute to the journal's mission as a tool to help our movements learn from each other's struggles, by developing analyses from specific movement processes and experiences that can be translated into a form useful for other movements.

In this context, we welcome contributions by movement participants and academics who are developing movement-relevant theory and research. Our goal is to include material that can be used in a range of ways by movements — in terms of its content, its language, its purpose and its form. We thus seek work in a range of different formats, such as conventional (refereed) articles, review essays, facilitated discussions and interviews, action notes, teaching notes, key documents and analysis, book reviews — and beyond. Both activist and academic peers review research contributions, and other material is sympathetically edited by peers. The editorial process generally is geared towards assisting authors to find ways of expressing their understanding, so that we all can be heard across geographical, social and political distances.

We can accept material in Afrikaans, Arabic, Catalan, Czech, Danish, English, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Maltese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish and Zulu. Please see our editorial contacts page (<http://www.interfacejournal.net/submissions/editorial-contact/>) for details of who to submit to.

### **Deadline and contact details**

The deadline for initial submissions to this issue, to be published November 1, 2015, is May 1, 2015. For details of how to submit to *Interface*, please see the "Guidelines for contributors" on our website. All manuscripts, whether on the special theme or other topics, should be sent to the appropriate regional editor, listed on our contacts page. Submission templates are available online via the guidelines page and should be used to ensure correct formatting.