

KLAUS WEBER

Punishment and Exclusion rather than Aid and Integration? Possibilities, Limitations and Prospects of Social Work in the Context of Re-Socialisation

The author discusses first the historical aspects of what is viewed as Re-Socialisation. Re-Socialisation, in the sense of changes in the social life of »deprived« or »endangered« people, has always been a contradictory venture. In the better case, it was perceived as integration, in the worse, as punishment and atonement. Today, the neo-liberal upheavals produce new scenarios of exclusion, and this – the author explains – makes it imperative to develop new ways of social work. So called »simple solutions«, often linked with the demand for harsher punishment, will be counterproductive. Urgently needed are new strategies of social prevention and a critical improvement of such well-tried methods such as the culprit-victim-settlement.

DIETMAR WITTICH

Xenophobia in Germany. An Empirical-Sociological Approach

Without a doubt, there is Xenophobia in Germany, and a large amount of socio-analytical research has studied it. This author adds to this research the empirical results based on data from 1996 and 2000. He arrives at the conclusion, that approx. 18 percent of the German population maintains xenophobic attitudes. Another 17 percent admits not being hostile toward foreigners but are against their presence in Germany. This together makes a considerable amount of xenophobia, creating a very complicated situation for finding the means for the normal integration of foreigners into the society, on the one hand and draws attention, on the other, to the serious latent tensions existing within the German society – tensions, that could easily be exploited for nationalist politics.

Max Koch

The Northern Ireland Peace Process Against the Background of the Theory of Social Closure

Since the end of the nineteen-sixties, more than 3500 people have been killed in the conflict in Northern Ireland. In the mid-nineties, a mediation began which culminated in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. But new difficulties arose, the agreement's implementation does not proceed as was intended. To seek the reasons for this failure, the author looks into the social background of the conflict and particularly applying the theory of social closure – a theory closely linked with the studies undertaken by Frank Parkin and Raymond Murphy in the Seventies and Eighties. Based on this theory, the author analyses the interdependence of strategies of exclusion and usurpation used by both conflict parties and shows that there is enough room for pragmatic policies which could lead – despite some setbacks – to a stabilization of the peace process and help marginalize those forces opting for renewed violence.

ULRICH BUSCH

Alternative Monetary Theories and Leftist Money Fetishism

It is no secret, that leftist criticism of capitalism, is directed not only against private property, the hegemony of large concerns and the state, but focuses equally on money, its forms and institutions. The motives given for the latter are often unacceptable from an academic point of view. They are rooted not so much in an analytical-theoretical comprehension of money, but rather more in a practical rejection and an emotional-instinctive disapproval. The insistence of capitalism critics on money is obviously the expression of a negative money fetishism. In order to give a well-founded criticism and offer an alternative, it would be necessary to examine the neo-classical mainstream, but also the alternative monetary theories presented by Karl Marx, John Maynard Keynes, Joseph A. Schumpeter, Gunnar Heinsohn/Otto Steiger et al. on the other.

JÜRGEN LEIBIGER

Reduction in Working Hours and the Prospects of Leisure Time

Since the unsuccessful East German metal workers' strikes for a reduction in work hours in 2003, this question has gained new levels of interest in public attention. This defeat of the Trade Unions, has encouraged conservative political parties as well as economic functionaries to initiate a campaign for a higher work hour week, for an extension of work years in the employee life span, for the liquidation of holidays and other steps tying employees to the work-bench. The left argues that this is exactly the wrong way to overcome the crisis and find a solution to mass unemployment. The author discusses in detail the relations between work-time and leisure time, analyses such changes as flexibilization and individualization in work conditions, focuses on the central role of what he calls »individual time sovereignty« and draws the conclusion, that there are many things speaking in favor of new efforts to reach a reduction – and not a prolongation – in work hours.

PETER ULLRICH

The Genoa Mobilization and Opportunity for Learning in the Relationship Between the Left and Social Movements

The so-called anti-globalisation movement is often said to lack a collective identity. The study of the protest against the G-8 Summit in Genoa, in July 2001, shows that broad-based mobilisation alliances are capable of bringing together a heterogeneous potential of demonstrators and organise a strong and effective protest. For that purpose they use specific strategies. One being accepting differences and even stressing these differences as constitutive for the movement. Since the resulting identity is weak, this offers the left an important window of opportunity for political intervention.