

Fostering the Waste-Responsible Citizen: Bio-Politics and Post-Political Planning

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Moving beyond conflict in planning: towards a critical
consensus politics?

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The presentation

- 1. The case “pay-as-you-throw”
- 2. “The waste-responsible citizen” as a biopolitical and post-political analytical figure
- 3. Beyond the divide - a paradigmatic approach

1. The case “pay-as-you-throw”

- The city of Göteborg introduces the pay-as-you-throw – program in 2010
- “We are introducing a weight-based charge gradually in Göteborg because we want to encourage you to sort your waste. The more you sort, the less you are charged. And it is also better for the environment, because more material can be recycled. Introducing a pay-as-you-throw program is a way for Göteborg to mitigate the environmental impact of waste: to reduce the amount of unsorted waste sent to incineration, to increase the collection and quality of food waste to produce biogas, and to increase the recovery of materials via recycling”

1. The case “pay-as-you-throw”

- In the data analysis three different ways how the citizens had rethought relationships stood out:
 - 1. their relationship with their waste,
 - 2. the relationship between the “economy” and the “environment” and
 - 3. their relationship with the city leadership

2. “Position work”

- Planning and biopolitics
- Planning and postpolitics
- Biopolitics and postpolitics in a planning context with a focus on subjectification (examination/confession) – The waste responsible citizen

2. “The waste-responsible citizen”

- We started to discuss what we do with our Nespresso [coffee] capsules, because they are very heavy. And we came to the conclusion that we should throw them there [pointing at the container for metal recycling]: Nespresso says on its website that it's OK to recycle capsules as metal”

2. “The waste-responsible citizen”

- Our waste-collection fee is weight-based. We receive an invoice for waste collection, together with the invoice for water and sewer two or four times per year... I do not remember... [With the new invoice] you can see the weight along with the cost”

2. “The waste-responsible citizen”

- “We [referring to him and his wife] have become more aware that waste weighs a great deal and that one has to set a price per gram on waste now. It has become clearer, more patent. And the [difference in] price [between recycling better or not] is irrelevant”

2. “The waste-responsible citizen”

- We have to make it easier for residents, waste [infrastructure] has to be drawn closer in order to [improve] recycling and so on... This is the rationale in the whole of Sweden, to get waste package recycling closer to the households”

2. “The waste-responsible citizen”

- The pay-as-you-throw – program functioned as a technology of the self that in its turn transformed into practices that through its performativity realised – the waste responsible citizen subject position.
- The invoice worked as a material examination device that in black and white rated how the subject had managed to be responsible in his or her waste practices
- *Polis – Oikos - Credo*

3. Beyond the divide - a paradigmatic approach

- How to go beyond the communicative – agonistic divide?
- *Co-optation* (Bond, 2011), *Addition* (Barnett and Bridge, 2013 adds pragmatism)
- How about disrupt and dissolve?
- To Agamben the camp is an example . The example is truly a paradigm in the etymological sense, *para-deiknymy* : it is what is 'shown beside'

3. Beyond the divide - a paradigmatic approach

- The paradigm is thus not compatible with inductive or deductive logic or reasoning, but with ana-logical logic; the logic of the example (the paradigm concept thus problematizes the hermeneutic circle of the part and the whole as well). Since analogy is opposed to the dichotomous principle of Western logic (either/or, inside or outside), it points out a third option that in the process simultaneously dis-identifies the parts of and dissolves the dichotomy, A and B, for instance.

3. Beyond the divide - a paradigmatic approach

- “a paradigm entails a movement that goes from singularity to singularity and, without ever leaving singularity, transforms every singular case into *an exemplar* of a general rule that can never be stated a priori” (Agamben 2009, p. 22, original emphasis).
- Intelligibility is not given *a priori* and is not pre-phenomenological. Nor is it *a posteriori*. Rather, it is that which stands beside (*para*) the phenomenon. It is in this sense that the dialectical can be described or understood as a movement from the singular to the singular

3. Beyond the divide - a paradigmatic approach

- The paradigm in Agamben's philosophical account is thus not so much about radical breaks, definitive changes or shifts, in that the new replaces the old in a sequential manner. Rather an epistemological and perhaps pedagogical procedure, whose purpose is to make a broader problematic intelligible. The paradigm is, epistemologically speaking, more akin to the case, in the case study approach.

How to proceed?

- Chisel-out the “waste responsible citizen” better (theoretically, empirically, analytically)
- Clarify the paradigmatic approach (philosophically, methodologically)
- Two papers or one? Context?

- **Thank your for the attention!**