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Postsocialist Dialectics or Postindustrial Critique? On Discomfort in a Former Socialist Model City in East Germany

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Abstract

Over the last 30 years, the inhabitants of Hoyerswerda, the German Democratic Republic's second socialist model city, have struggled through deindustrialisation, unemployment, outmigration and urban decay. With the help of Karl Polanyi's concept of 'countermovement', this essay scrutinises their various critiques of contemporary forms of capitalism. I investigate how these critiques help them to navigate their hometown's prospects in the postindustrial era in order to rethink more generally the temporal implications of the social sciences' conceptualisations of postsocialist critique. I approach my interlocutors' expressions of discomfort amidst current political and economic crises as complex negotiations of the postindustrial present that are not determined by their socialist past.

AT THE CORE OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF POSTSOCIALISM IS HOPE: the optimistic expectation of analysts that despite its forceful transition to neoliberalism, the postsocialist realm would produce alternatives to, or profound critiques of, contemporary forms of capitalism. Anthropologists of postsocialism have long thought that the unique historical experience of those who lived during the state-socialist era would allow them to develop a different perspective on a political economy that for them would not come as a given.¹ Their experience of alterity, I, for one, presumed, would necessarily result in what Karl Polanyi calls—and what this special issue explores—a 'countermovement' to the actually existing capitalist free market system. As German scholar Stefan Bollinger (2004) showed for the German context, just after the fall of the Wall, these hopes were shared beyond the academy, by many East and West Germans alike.

¹ See, for example, Rudd (2000), Dunn (2004), Jancius (2006), Murawski (2018), Kurtović (2019).

During the shock-therapy era of the initial institutional transition, this hope was shaken by the keen willingness of many postsocialist countries and elites to embrace not a tamed welfare-statist version of capitalism, but its most radical neoliberal form (Verdery 1996; Bridger & Pine 1998; Burawoy & Verdery 1999; Hann 2002). It was finally disappointed by Eastern Europe's widespread rise of neonationalist populisms in the 2010s. Retrospectively, it seems that earlier expectations of 'new alternatives' and 'third ways' in the former postsocialist world were bound to fail. There is no antithesis to capitalism in the realm that, over 30 years ago, had been exactly that for more than four decades.

This essay explores actually existing 'postsocialisms' (Rogers 2010) and the critical agency deployed by those living in them (see Greenberg 2011) through the concept of the 'postindustrial'. It argues that three decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the idea of a specific postsocialist dialectic (from socialism to capitalism to new postcapitalist futures), involving a meaningful countermovement to the effects of a globalised and neoliberal form of finance capitalism, falls short (cf. Gentile 2020). One reason for that is, to paraphrase Bruno Latour (2004), that the category of postsocialism—in its current use (Ringel forthcoming)²—has run out of steam (no postindustrial pun intended). In other disciplines, too, the socialist past increasingly fails to provide a credible resource for the critical assessment of the postsocialist present.³ Too many other experiences and factors have shaped, and continue to shape, our interlocutors' critical capacities. Their discomfort with the present, I propose, is not 'postsocialist' anymore. Why not study contemporary forms of 'critique' with the help of a different category, one less easily ideologically disregarded and more political economic in its outlook? This category is the 'postindustrial' (Cowie & Heathcott 2003; Vacarro *et al.* 2016).

The postindustrial era, I claim, poses a variety of new and not so new (Bell 1973; Drucker 1994; Bluestone & Bennett 1984) existential problems to contemporary political economies, which—without fail—continue to result in decline, demise and a variety of capitalist and other crises. The tasks ahead are fundamental, not least for those living in the postsocialist realm: we all have to develop an entirely new—a postindustrial—way of life and reorganise our economic, political and social relations. As analysts of these processes in the postsocialist world, I argue, we should look for countermovements that tackle these problems with the future rather than explain them as the presumed (continuously failing) effects of the socialist past in the postindustrial present. As a side-effect, the category 'postindustrial' also allows a more focused comparison with other, and even more prominent, current contenders for the title of 'countermovements' [Rephrase as 'current

² See also also Nafus (2006), Gilbert (2006), Gilbert *et al.* (2008), Thelen (2011), Bach and Murawski (2020).

³ See, for example, Chelcea and Druță's (2016) spot-on concept of 'zombie socialism', Müller's (2018) idea of the 'Global East', and Gentile's (2019) work in 'post-Wall' urban studies.

contenders for the title of ‘countermovement’?]. Recent illiberal and populist developments in the UK and the US are fuelled by the same challenges of the postindustrial era.

I shall discuss these conceptual issues with regards to East Germany—presumed to be the economically most successful (or least unsuccessful) amongst the postsocialist countries. [Editor: I suggest that you rephrase the highlighted text as ‘East Germany—presumed to be the economically most successful (or least unsuccessful) amongst the postsocialist countries’, or delete the sentence altogether]. I explore some of its recent phenomena of illiberalism with the help of ethnographic material from the former German Democratic Republic’s second socialist model city: the Saxon city of Hoyerswerda, once built for the GDR’s mining and energy workers and in 2009 Germany’s fastest shrinking city. I conducted 16 months of fieldwork in this prime postsocialist industrial settlement during the height of the 2008 financial crisis and I have returned to Hoyerswerda regularly ever since.⁴ [Editor: I suggest that you add a footnote here along the lines of ‘Unless otherwise indicated below, the fieldwork data used in this essay is based on informal conversations between the author and the city’s residents, as well as his own personal observations and experiences during his visits to Hoyerwerda’] The city’s postsocialist history reflects many developments in East Germany and Eastern Europe during the last 30 years, from drastic economic decline to recent rightwing electoral success. Working on the level of a city allows a more acute attention to empirical detail and the contradictions of everyday life, avoiding methodological nationalism, which, in the context of reunified Germany, has its own pitfalls. Still, national media debates reverberate in the lives of my Hoyerswerda interlocutors. The impact of capitalism, however, might be differently negotiated at the level of the city. But at both levels, national and local, the problems that have emerged with the incorporation of the former GDR and its planned economy into the global capitalist economy incite a similar response: a certain form of discomfort or discontent.

Although the term discomfort is reminiscent of Sigmund Freud’s title of his 1930 *Das Unbehagen an der Kultur*, translated into English as *Civilisation and its Discontents*, I do not deploy a Freudian framework as I do not presume a cultural unconscious that finds expression in contemporary forms of illiberalism. Nonetheless, the term *Unbehagen* describes the feeling that something is not quite right in a given situation. I use it here to explore how the citizens of Hoyerswerda notice, often in non-representational ways, what defines life in the postindustrial era: that capitalism might not be working after all. This discomfort is not a prerogative of illiberal critique. Many of my interlocutors acknowledged that there is a lack of ideas and visions for the postindustrial present and future without becoming illiberal.

⁴ Unless otherwise indicated below, the more recent data in this essay is based on informal conversations with the city’s residents, as well as my own personal observations and experiences during short post-fieldwork visits to Hoyerwerda.

My argument falls into three parts. I will first introduce my field site with some insights into its industrial-socialist and postindustrial-capitalist past. This section also provides some initial examples of local critiques of capitalism from public discourses from 2008–2009 and 2019. I compare them in order to explore how local critique has been reconfigured over the last decade, which saw the rise of illiberalism. Second, I will discuss Karl Polanyi's concept of 'countermovement', the main focus of this special issue, with regards to its temporal features. The concept invites a reconsideration of political trends and shifts in knowledge production through time. The question is how Polanyi's methodological and analytical approach, arguably foreshadowing with its long-term perspective Foucault's genealogical work on histories of the present,⁵ relates to anthropology's own, more presentist methods and analytics (see Rabinow 2003). Third, I will deploy insights from the anthropology of East Germany to embed the analysis of presumably postsocialist forms of critique in the postindustrial era. This will allow a different understanding of current political developments in the region, including prominent electoral successes by the rightwing *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) party, while refining the use of Polanyi's work with regards to his concept's temporal implications. Throughout the essay, I am interested in my interlocutors' capacities to develop and sustain—beyond the early postsocialist lack of familiarity—a critical stance towards contemporary forms of capitalism. The reassessment of this capacity will provide a different approach to, or temporal context for, forms of illiberalism in East Germany.⁶

Hoyerswerda, socialism and capitalism

Hoyerswerda's post-reunification history underlines above all that capitalism has failed this once proud socialist model city. If ever there was a place for a countermovement to emerge, it should be here. Perhaps there were a few timid and rudimentary attempts since German reunification, but they have not gained momentum. As an ideology, capitalism in the city is alive and well, despite its many crises. Let me describe some of these past crises and the reactions to them, in order to give a rather eclectic history of local discomfort.

Hoyerswerda's integration into the global capitalist political economy has substantially challenged the existence and survival of the city. As the settlement (*Wohnstadt*) for the workers of the nearby lignite mines and industrial complex, the former insignificant town of Hoyerswerda, its current Old City (*Altstadt*), was quickly expanded by a New City (*Neustadt*), constructed from scratch from the mid-1950s until the downfall of the GDR. The population of the city rose tenfold to more than 70,000 inhabitants in only a few decades. The new inhabitants of this vanguard socialist urban-planning project lived in a city without chimneys (long-distance heating was provided by the industrial complex) and without fences (*Neustadt* was to house all workers

⁵ For example, Foucault (1977).

⁶ See Scheiring, this issue.

irrespective of their social position in its collectively owned apartment houses). They called home an urban environment built solely with prefabricated concrete units from the city's own housing state combine (*staatliches Wohnbaukombinat*). Before its post-reunification demise, Neustadt consisted of altogether ten living complexes (*Wohnkomplexe*), the last of which, WK 10, was only finished in 1990.

Hoyerswerda's existence during the state-socialist era was shaped by its function as the *Wohn-* or *Schlafstadt*, that is, the living or dormitory city, of the surrounding coal-mining district's miners and energy workers. As its current inhabitants often emphasised, there were two main reasons for moving to Hoyerswerda: well-paid jobs in the mines and the industrial complex, and the brand-new apartments with modern bathrooms and 'warm water from the tap' (*heißes Wasser aus der Leitung*). For the sake of this essay's argument, the first point underlines that the sole reason for Hoyerswerda's expansion was the city's crucial role in the GDR's planned economy and the integration of the GDR into the (semi-)global socialist political economy of what later emerged as the Warsaw Pact.

After World War II, the GDR paid its reparations to the Soviet Union mostly in the form of industrial machinery. With the foundation of two different German states in 1949, the young republic had to plan its own economic and industrial development, including sectors that had traditionally been located in what had become West Germany, such as the coal mining and steel industries. The launch of the GDR's iron works, for example, led to the foundation of the GDR's first socialist model city, *Stalinstadt*, later renamed *Eisenhüttenstadt*. Hoyerswerda was built for the workers of the lignite state combine *Schwarze Pumpe*, one of the GDR's biggest industrial complexes, which ended up producing not just electrical power but also most of the GDR's city gas. With pride, the city saw itself as the beating heart of the GDR: pumping energy through the veins of the young socialist republic.

The rhythms of industrial work and organisation structured people's professional and private lives in Hoyerswerda. Three times a day, dozens of buses transported workers to and from the city for the three shifts at the industrial complex, which provided them with holiday facilities and cultural clubs. Although a 20-minute bus ride away, *Pumpe*, as Hoyerswerdians still refer to the complex, was constantly present in the city. The very choice for Hoyerswerda as the site for the settlement was determined by the complex's industrial activities: the usual wind direction would not blow the plant's fumes to its new city.

When Hoyerswerda's residents remember their life in the context of the GDR's planned economy, they speak of the constant growth of the city, whose planned but never realised expansion with an eleventh living district would have pushed its population over 100,000 inhabitants. They also mention the urban atmosphere of the continuously growing city, with its many construction sites and young people. They still take pride in the fact that their work at the combine was world-leading, particular in the carbon-chemical sector; that some of

their products and ideas were exported to other socialist countries, such as the Soviet Union and Vietnam (Schwenkel 2014); and that their role as the country's energy workers was acknowledged even in Ost-Berlin. Workers were taken regularly to the capital's main theatres, where they were greeted from the stage before the start of the performance. Hoyerswerda was in the vanguard of the nation's economic progress towards a communist future. It provided residents with work, comparatively luxurious living conditions, and some extra benefits and consumer items otherwise limited to the capital, as well as a wider moral and ideological purpose. They were making the future in Hoyerswerda—indeed, a modernist as much as a communist version of it, shaped by the imaginaries of industrial production and progress.

For East Germany, the end of the GDR meant the end of industrial life, not just the end of socialism. What some East German commentators (Hannemann 2003; Kil 2004) have described as the former GDR's wholesale 'de-economisation' (*Deökonomisierung*), a process even more extensive than de-industrialisation, hit settlements like Hoyerswerda most drastically. Instead of simply privatising state-owned industries, whole sectors of industrial production and economic activity were closed down in their entirety throughout the former GDR. In the region around Hoyerswerda, the modernisation of *Pumpe* and its mines reduced on-site jobs from more than 30,000 to approximately 3,000. Throughout the 1990s, the city struggled with unemployment rates of up to 30%. What followed were unprecedented levels of outmigration—on average, approximately five people left Hoyerswerda each day between 1990 and 2009 (see Ringel 2018).

When I started fieldwork in the city in 2008, the city's population had decreased by more than half to just over 30,000 people. Since mostly the young and mobile left, the city turned into one of Germany's oldest cities, doubling the age average from the 1960s when it was, demographically speaking, East Germany's youngest city, to an average over 50. The decline in population also resulted in the large-scale demolition of Hoyerswerda's cityscape, foremost in *Neustadt*. More than a third of the city had already been demolished in 2008. The sight and sounds of dredgers and bulldozers dominated the first decade of the current millennium. By 2013, the youngest district, WK 10, was the first WK to be 'area-coveringly backbuilt' (*flächendeckend zurückgebaut*)—a bureaucratic euphemism describing the comprehensive demolition of a whole district.

Polanyi's main countermovement to the market economy—socialism—which for 40 years offered protection from the forces of a global capitalist economy, left Hoyerswerda's inhabitants poorly equipped when the market system was finally unleashed. Locally, no further significant countermovement has formed since then—only a variety of sometimes drastic expressions of discomfort that, particularly in the 1990s, made national and international news. These initial critiques of the new capitalist era seem to anticipate current illiberal political developments. However, their temporal proximity to the end of socialism, I claim, puts them in a different light than their successors almost three decades later.

The first and most daunting of these events occurred in September 1991 and was of a neo-nationalist character (see Pollack 2005). Compared with other postsocialist countries at that time, this neo-nationalist character was more complicated in East Germany, not just because of Germany's own issues with its nationalist past. Because of reunification, it was not as easy for East Germans to claim a national identity as it was for their fellow postsocialists elsewhere in Eastern Europe (Bornemann 1990; Boyer 2010). Whereas many postsocialist countries celebrated 'liberation' from state socialism as marking the 'rebirth' of their nation, many East Germans soon experienced their 'liberation' [Rephrase as 'it'?] as a new takeover or *Annexion* by capitalist West Germany. This is something that is still and, it seems, increasingly cited as a factor in media and other analyses of East German discomfort.⁷ Nonetheless, shortly after reunification, a form of neo-nationalism—indeed, neo-Nazism—was violently expressed in East Germany, most forcefully in Hoyerswerda, in reunified Germany's first large-scale xenophobic attacks (see Pollack 2005, p. 15).

Over the course of three September days in 1991, crowds of residents engaged in acts of violence and intimidation, harassing everybody they considered not to be German, chasing them through the streets of Hoyerswerda and bellowing 'Foreigners Out!' (*Ausländer Raus!*) and 'Germany for Germans!' (*Deutschland den Deutschen!*). They targeted former contract workers (*Vertragsarbeiter*) from other socialist countries, such as Vietnam and Mozambique, and recently arrived asylum seekers. Many onlookers applauded. This passive support could have been explained with reference to current economic issues, such as the legitimate fear of unemployment (Pollack 2005, p. 29). The applauders presumably shared the belief that the little work that was left in the region was to be distributed to German nationals first. They might have even perceived the asylum seekers, although not having a right to work, as a long-term threat. However, this support was soon understood as a more general expression of a xenophobic, racist East German character, culture or mentality (Pollack 2005, p. 28). The state, which had overseen the region's economic decline with the help of the *Treuhand Anstalt* (reunified Germany's Privatisation Agency), retreated for a second time. After a few days of unrest, police removed the victims of these attacks from the city to an undisclosed location rather than arresting the perpetrators.

As German sociologist Detlef Pollack (2005), who grew up in Hoyerswerda, underlined, some West German media commentators and politicians explained these assaults as a direct legacy of state socialism's authoritarianism, which, they implied, had continued the non-democratic legacies of the Nazi era (see also Boyer 2010). This culturalist vein, as I show later, is still prominent in explaining the latest successes of the AfD's illiberalism in East Germany more than 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Pollack (2005, pp. 28–

⁷ See, for example, Richard Schröder's (2019) insightful discussion in the *Deutschland Archiv* of the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung.

30) also contrasts these explanations with a more contemporary analysis which emphasises the drastic political and economic upheavals and general insecurity of the immediate postsocialist transformation. He points out that West German neo-Nazis specifically targeted vulnerable East German communities such as Hoyerswerda (Pollack 2005, p. 30). Arguably, the latter, more presentist view would be consistent with a Polanyi's approach: reunified Germany's political economy produced so much insecurity, unemployment and decline in the East that its citizens demanded changes to the system. However, neo-nationalist strategies of hate and exclusion had nothing to offer in terms of a fundamental critique of capitalism then, nor have they anything to offer now. What remains is the discomfort expressed by past and present forms of neo-national illiberalism—a discomfort that more liberal critics might share but convey differently.

Only three years later, in 1994, there was a more productive outcome of disillusionment with capitalism arising from the early transition years. Hoyerswerda was the first city in reunified Germany to elect as its mayor a member of the Party of Democratic Socialism (*Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus*—PDS), the successor to the GDR's former ruling Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei*—SED). In a largely conservative region, the city had for many years, and particularly during GDR times, been known as a 'red city'—*das rote Hoyerswerda*—planted in the middle of an otherwise culturally conservative agricultural region. In the context of the ongoing political and economic transformation of the whole country, the election of a leftist mayor can be interpreted as potentially indicative of a countermovement. It challenged the otherwise unquestioned transition towards a capitalist economic system that was continuously taking its toll in Hoyerswerda. In Polanyi's terms, local neo-socialist policies could have softened the by then apparent negative impacts of capitalism.

The election of a leftist politician soon after reunification, who succeeded a West German import from the conservative Christian Democratic Party (*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands*—CDU), can be seen as a critique of both the West German elite and the current political economy. In some sense, this critique was successful: Horst-Dieter Brähmig was re-elected in 2001 and retired as mayor in 2006. After this, however, a politician from the CDU won the mayoral elections twice, only stepping down in 2020. During this conservative mayor's time in office, he was backed by a strong CDU council fraction that had slowly outperformed their rivals from *Die Linke* (The Left Party, the PDS's successor party) throughout the 2000s. However, in the 2019 local elections, the CDU fraction lost its dominance to the AfD, which secured the largest share of the votes. The AfD was widely expected to succeed in the 2020 mayoral elections (which were unexpectedly won by the candidate from the Social Democratic Party), since they had already secured the city's direct mandate (similar to an MP) from the region in the 2017 federal elections. Historically, such successes by radical right parties are unusual in the *Land* of Saxony, to which Hoyerswerda belongs. Saxony has been run by

conservative politicians since reunification, even though before World War II, it had been the German Reich's most industrialised *Land* and a hub of social democracy.

Early ethnographic accounts of the transition of the GDR economy (Rudd 2000; Büchler & Büchler 2002; Jancius 2006, Müller 2007)⁸ have deployed a political economy approach but withheld judgement on why there were no countermovements emerging in the East. Instead, and without reference to Polanyi's idea, they documented all kinds of small-scale challenges and criticisms by East German workers and farmers of 'the new system' (*das neue System*)—capitalism—which, however, never translated into significant political upheaval or movements. Anthropologists focusing on other aspects with a more culturalist approach also detected various forms of discomfort. Berdahl (1999, 2009), Boyer (2006, 2010), Esbenshade (1995) and Bach (2002, 2017), for example, have looked at consumption practices soon described as *Ostalgie*, the specifically East (*Ost*) German version of nostalgia.

In these practices, too, East Germans developed a certain form of critique of the capitalist present, by deploying socialist symbols and memories of the GDR, but their aim was not to restore the GDR. Rather, they simply wanted a say on East Germany's present and future, and the future of the whole country (Boyer 2006). *Ostalgie* was a reaction to the ways in which East Germans felt they were excluded from their own transition. In all professional areas, such as politics, industry, law and higher education, West German elites had assumed power and filled most prominent roles. *Ostalgie* enabled a uniquely East German voice to challenge the widespread sense of being 'second-class citizens' (*Bürger zweiter Klasse*). Arguably, however, it was not challenging capitalism politically as such, but rather demanding to be a more integrated part of it. Despite its socialist clothing and undeniable criticism, *Ostalgie* arguably did not constitute a proper Polanyian countermovement.

When I started my fieldwork in Hoyerswerda in January 2008, the city had already moved on from these nostalgic re-appropriations of the postsocialist present (see Ringel 2018). For most of my interlocutors, the past was not much of a problem, at least not the socialist past. My interlocutors still struggled with the events of 1991 and the bad reputation that, retrospectively, seemed to have put the city on the path to demise. By 2008, economic development had ground to an almost complete halt. International investment and skilled workers went elsewhere. Hoyerswerda seemed doomed to continue its demographic shrinkage and urban decline. Before my arrival there had been some hopes that a huge solar panel factory would create new postindustrial prospects for the city, but they were finally disappointed. The idea of a gigantic amusement park dedicated to Germany's most popular author of novels set in the American 'Wild West', Karl May, the *Karl-May-Land*, in the eerie remains of the former open pit mines, met the same fate. Instead, these abandoned mines were being

⁸ See also Bartha (2013).

transformed into Europe's biggest network of artificial lakes. In touristic brochures, Hoyerswerda presented itself as the 'Heart of the Lausitzer Lake District' (*Herz des Lausitzer Seenlandes*). The small-scale and seasonal tourist economy, however, as both city officials and Hoyerswerda's citizens knew, would never restore the city to its former industrial glory, or guarantee prosperity and economic stability in the future.

The city's inhabitants therefore worried about their collective and personal futures. Long after the 'unmaking' (Humphrey 2002) of socialism, the city was struggling to find its place in the postindustrial era. Capitalism, too, had changed greatly since reunification. Both market economy and global finance capitalism were failing places like Hoyerswerda. Apart from a few seemingly Marxist remarks by my interlocutors,⁹ there was no question of forming an actual countermovement against the system. As the anthropological record shows (for example, Hann 2002; Dunn 2004), many other postsocialists, too, had—more or less grudgingly—come to terms with capitalism. As I said at the beginning of this essay, I was looking for signs of a fundamental critique of capitalism, given the dramatic economic and demographic decline Hoyerswerda experienced, but there were hardly any. This does not mean that they did not exist at all (see Kruglova 2017). Having sketched the city's early negotiations of their capitalist present, I will explore a few of them in the next section. I will focus on those critiques that explicitly address the city's present through the lens of the postindustrial.

Postindustrial critique

In my ethnography of the city (Ringel 2018, pp. 87–8), I noted the comment of a young anarchist in his history lessons. After having discussed the difference between socialism and capitalism, Benni, an A-level student at one of the city's prestigious grammar schools, asked: 'If the principle of democracy is so fundamentally important for everything political ... why, then, is our economy not more democratised? Why is the economy not more subject to the same democratic principles?' For a countermovement, this would, indeed, be an appropriate question, but it was left unanswered.

Inspired by numerous East German intellectuals (Engler 1999, 2002, 2005; Kil 2004, 2007) Jens-Uwe Röhl, commonly known as Röhli and the CEO of the city's most active sociocultural club, the *KulturFabrik*, tackled a similar problem. In response, he proposed a way out of the city's inexorable process of economic and demographic decline. On several occasions between 2008 and 2010 and in front of different usually captive audiences, he passionately argued for his idea of a basic income project, which he termed 'Hoytopia' (see Ringel 2010). Röhli wanted to transform one of the former living complexes, scheduled for demolition, into a vanguard experiment. Newly attracted inhabitants would collectively explore the possibilities of living as a community

⁹ For example, one interlocutor underlined that the citizens of Hoyerswerda should have known all along about the many crises of capitalism from their GDR 'Citizen's Lessons' at school, Staatsbürgerkunde-Unterricht (Ringel 2018, p. 49).

not on the basis of wage labour, but on the basis of an unconditional ‘citizen’s pay’ (*Bürgergeld*). This visionary project, I believe, would have trained its participants in a radical form of postindustrial life.

Basic income projects have recently gained momentum worldwide and they, too, fulfil Polanyian criteria. In Hoyerswerda, despite Röhli’s enduring efforts, no such project was ever realised. Instead, the city’s decline seemed to continue. In spring 2009 the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning officially declared Hoyerswerda to be Germany’s fastest shrinking city (see Ringel 2018: 16) [Please provide a reference as a source]. Its prospects have remained bleak ever since. Although population decline has come to a halt and, as a local journalist was eager to point out to me in 2016, was even temporarily reversed—for the first time since reunification—in the wake of the so-called European refugee crisis, many of my interlocutors in 2019 still expected a ‘second wave’ (*zweite Welle*) of shrinkage. This second wave would begin when the many old people, so the saying went already during my fieldwork in 2008–2009, ‘would start dying’ (*anfangen zu sterben*). Despite these continuous demographic problems and dire economic prospects, there was no viable alternative to capitalism that had any local purchase.

Rather, the postsocialist past of Hoyerswerda continued to be marked by ongoing postindustrial crises. Hence, my Hoyerswerda friends typically smiled at the idea of a global financial crisis in 2008–2009. Dorit Baumeister, an architect and vocal critique of the city’s decline, nonchalantly remarked to me in 2009, ‘Everybody talks about crisis these days. Crisis? We’ve had a crisis here for the last 20 years!’¹⁰ She had been active in Hoyerswerda ever since returning to her hometown from a short stint in the West in the late 1990s. She was involved in many high-profile sociocultural and art projects in the city. While these projects expressed discomfort with the city’s postsocialist fate, they were also looking ahead to a different kind of postindustrial future.

Röhli’s *Hoytopia* idea of a citizen’s wage was part of one of them. But in her contributions to the many different projects, Dorit was more pragmatic than Röhli: she wanted to create a more alternative, progressive version of the city’s original character as a settlement, *Wohnstadt*, for the coal industry. Her plan was therefore to transform Hoyerswerda into a city worth living in for those employed in the few remaining economic centres in the region. Her approach, however, was also postindustrial: the city had to find new meaning beyond the values and parameters of the industrial era. To paraphrase an argument, she often propagated during my fieldwork in Hoyerswerda: Officials should not cling to growth and progress, but think outside the box. As she remarked several times, it is in cities like Hoyerswerda where citizens have to define anew what it means to live a good life in the postindustrial era and to be a citizen of a medium-sized city, and what to expect from the future. Dorit’s ‘Future Laboratory’ (*Zukunftswerkstatt*) in 2007 or her contribution to the *KulturFabrik*’s ‘Time

¹⁰ Personal conversation with the author, January 2009.

Out' (*Auszeit*) in 2012 explored the postindustrial future, arguably in response to the then omnipresent discomfort with the city's seemingly bleak future.¹¹ However, at least after 2014 with the early electoral successes of the AfD, other kinds of discomforts have become entangled in narratives about the city's decline.

Ten years later, in 2019, Dorit made a similar comment on the notion of crisis, but in a context that had changed dramatically. She told me about several journalists who had contacted her—as she often appeared on national media because of her involvement in the sociocultural projects. They had asked her to explain why the East Germans were so prone to the allure of the rightwing, populist AfD party. Hoyerswerda had just recently elected an AfD politician, a well-respected local police officer, to the national parliament (the *Bundestag*), and the AfD had also won local elections in spring 2019 by a high margin (26.4%, followed by the conservative CDU with 20.6% and left-wing party *Die Linke* with 17.2%). The previous city council elections in 2014 had seen no AfD politicians; one member of the rightwing National Democratic Party had been elected then but said little in council. However, for the 2019 election a couple of prominent local politicians from the CDU and the local liberal party *Freie Wähler* had joined the emerging local AfD party.

Before the 2019 elections, members of other parties, such as some friends from the Social Democratic Party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*—SPD) and *Die Linke* had rolled their eyes when I asked them about the AfD. One interlocutor said he was following them *in cognito* on social media. He could not believe the outrageous lies and deceptive claims he found there, and the outright racist comments they posted. He and others could not make sense of the party's local appeal. Most of my Hoyerswerda friends often underlined that the AfD surely had no solutions to local problems. In fact, the AfD's anti-migration stance made no sense in a shrinking city with—by that time—low unemployment, which had suffered through years of outmigration and housed only small numbers of refugees or migrants. Furthermore, the region around Hoyerswerda is home to one of Germany's few national minorities, the Slavic-speaking Sorbs—not an obvious support base for a nationalist party. So why was the AfD so successful in the city?

Dorit's simple response to the journalists' inquiries about Hoyerswerda's AfD problem mirrored economic explanations of events in 1991: the city and the region had gone through decades of postindustrial decline, so the anger, pain and disappointment of those who had suffered through this decline was understandable. Their socialist-industrial lives had been devalued and their postsocialist-postindustrial life had never taken off. She said she usually combined these observations to journalists with remarks on the huge structural adjustment scheme (*Strukturstärkungsgesetz*) entailed by Germany's recently decided coal phase-out (*Kohleausstieg*). This multi-billion-euro programme is intended to facilitate the emergence of new and future-

¹¹ For further details on the *Zukunftswerkstatt* of the 2007 Third City projects, see here: <https://www.kufa-hoyerswerda.de/die-dritte-stadt.html>. For more information on the 2012 *Auszeit* project, click here: <https://www.kufa-hoyerswerda.de/auszeit-nachdenken-uber-h.html>.

proof economic activities, enabling the local population to adapt to the latest phase of dramatic change: the expected loss of most of the few remaining industrial jobs in the region.

The launch of the scheme was presumably deliberately timed to coincide with the three 2019 regional elections in the East German *Länder* of Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia. Like others in the city, Dorit in a personal conversation described the timing as a political attempt to avert even more drastic AfD electoral successes [Please provide a reference as a source]. With that in mind, she remarked (rightly, in my eyes), that the whole scheme was about 30 years too late. De-industrialisation had already happened. Dorit thereby embedded the city's ongoing crises in this broader political-economic context of the postindustrial era. For her, any critique of the capitalist system stems from these hard economic factors, not postsocialist cultural trends.

But again, a single critical remark hardly adds up to a countermovement. By 2019, the discourse on the initial transition, now in the context of the celebrations of the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, had totally changed, too. Whereas in 2009, for the twentieth anniversary, hardly anyone seriously debated reunification's failures, ten years later national media were suddenly full of critical accounts. Some drew on recent landmark studies.¹² Following the recent opening of its archives, these studies explored the history of the *Treuhand-Anstalt*, the organisation in charge of the privatisation (or liquidation) of the previously state-owned (*volkseigen*) East German state combines, businesses and factories. Many of my East German friends and family members suddenly expressed the feeling that it was high time that former political elites, those responsible for the plunder of the 1990s, be held to account, at least retrospectively. Critique of the transition to capitalism, to my surprise, had become fashionable, slightly belated, of course, but still powerfully questioning the usual success stories of German reunification.

During my fieldwork in 2008–2009, I was acutely made aware of the impossibility of addressing the mistakes that were made in the early years of reunification. After an interview with Dr Günther Seifert, a former CEO of the industrial complex, I recounted his analysis of the liquidation of *Pumpe* in my weekly column from 30.04.2009 in the local newspaper *Hoyerswerdaer Tageblatt*, entitled 'Zurück in die Zukunft', [Please can you give the title of the column and the full date of publication]. His critique was that those who determined the complex's future underestimated its worth and potential. Even in 1990, he claimed, *Pumpe* was still running very profitably; in particular, its carbo-chemical products were competitive on a global scale. The West German elite in charge of the transition should have invested in the industrial complex rather than breaking it up and closing down most of its parts. Indeed, Dr Seifert insinuated, these elites had their own interests and motivations. As many locals recounted to me: in the immediate post-reunification years, only West German coal was available locally.

¹² Such as Ther (2019), who was also inspired by Polanyi's work; (Pötzl 2019); Böick (2018).

Having read my column, a former West German undersecretary of state got in touch with me and asked for a meeting. We met in a local café and I was accused of painting a false picture of the situation in the early 1990s. The complex had been technologically outdated and was not competitive on the global market at all, I was assured. There was no alternative but to modernise it. When I reiterated the CEO's arguments, the otherwise mild-mannered man repeatedly lost his temper, eventually asking me what I would have done in his situation. In response, I laid out how incommensurate these two different economic systems had been and suggested that the new elites had failed to translate the actual economic facts across these differences: West Germans could not read the complex's industrial potential and East Germans were not able to communicate their potentially promising ideas for a continuation of the industrial present.¹³

Retrospectively, I wish I had asked him whether the future of Hoyerswerda, as *Pumpe's* settlement, had ever entered into the calculations of the costs of its privatisation before drastic economic decisions were made that prompted the city's postindustrial era. As Dorit had underlined in her responses to the journalists, those in power in the early 1990s should have foreseen the postindustrial decline that would affect places such as Hoyerswerda and done something to remedy it. The *Strukturstärkungsgesetz's* funds, as she had pointed out to them time and again, were too little, too late.

Dorit's critique of the political organisation of the GDR's economic transition was accurate. West German elites simply accepted the fact that, for a city like Hoyerswerda, the shock-therapy privatisation of the industrial complex for which the dormitory estates were built would have an impact on every inhabitant of the city. Is the anger that results from this critique of past decisions at the core of the recent surge of rightwing electoral successes among East Germans—in form of a delayed response, enmeshed with more recent critical events such as the 'refugee crisis'? Do the AfD electoral successes, which vaguely capitalise on all of this anger, constitute a retrospective countermovement, fuelled by the myriad small disappointments and injustices experienced through almost 30 years of reunification? Before answering this question, let me lay out some temporal implications of Polanyi's concept, which might help us to analyse this idea of a delayed response.

The time of countermovements

My eclectic history of Hoyerswerda's discomfort with—and postindustrial critique of—capitalism shows that, at least in this shrinking city, no coherent movement to counter the translocal forces and logic that led to its decline has taken shape. The inhabitants of Hoyerswerda might have been expected to voice their disillusionment with capitalism more strongly, yet they did not. Have contemporary forms of triumphalist capitalism silenced any possible critique of—or Polanyian reaction to—the dominance of market capitalism? The rightwing populism of

¹³ Personal conversation with the author, Hoyerswerda Neustadt, April 2009.

the AfD clearly capitalises on postsocialist sentiments of decline, but, as I argue below, this party is not anti-capitalist or pro-welfare-statist. Rather, it orients itself against what its members perceive to be a failing state, not against this political system's capitalist economics.

Polanyi explored long-term historical changes in economic systems and their political and institutional contexts in order to explain the present. Similar to Michel Foucault, writing many decades later, he provides a history of the present by exploring the 'origins' of the time and space he is concerned with (mid-twentieth century Europe). For both scholars, it is crucial that a history of the present is not necessarily deterministic in its argumentation. Foucault's histories of the present end in the late nineteenth century and he prefers to explore 'conditions of possibility' rather than explicate causal relations. Polanyi, too, reminds me more of Weberian (think of the concept of 'elective affinities' from Weber's *Protestant Ethic*) or Marxian (in fact, Hegelian) models of history, developing the idea of a dialectical relation between the forces for and against the market system. But the relevance for what he describes as a countermovement, as he underlines, is the threat to society at large.

For him, a countermovement is 'more than the usual defensive behavior of a society faced with change'; it is 'a reaction against a dislocation which attacked the fabric of society, and which would have destroyed the very organization of production that the market had called into being' (Polanyi 2001, p. 130). In Hoyerswerda, it was the very fabric of the city that was endangered by capitalism: its economic, social, cultural and actual material existence. However, in 2019, this threat was already three decades old. Should we explain the more current critique of 'the system' as a delayed, perhaps cumulative, effect of past crises? This would mirror Polanyi's long-term analysis of the emergence of a labour countermovement to capitalism in Britain. However, for a presentist anthropologist like me (see Ringel 2016), the evaluation of my interlocutor's agency then becomes problematic. I would have to deploy a deterministic framework in my analysis of the present. But is my interlocutors' critical agency, in a similar vein to Polanyi's long-term history of the present, still determined by their socialist past?

Existential threats were prominent in the AfD's 2019 political slogans, which highlighted immigration and critiqued the democratic state, but not its capitalist economy. The threats they entertained were prospective, not retrospective. Even when the party's previous fear-mongering predictions of the nation's imminent demise proved unfounded (Germany's economy remained strong, despite or perhaps even because of the arrival of more than a million asylum seekers in 2015), the party's ever-more dystopian visions continued to bring electoral success. However, the AfD's xenophobic main arguments in the regional election focused on political control rather than concrete economic change, although in some cases it is hard to distinguish the two properly, for example, with regards to the AfD's anti-EU stance. From this angle, East German voters' preferences cannot be

classed as a countermovement against capitalist economics. Citizens such as Dorit do indeed demand more substantial help from the state to curtail the effects of economic liberalism, but this reflects discomfort rather than a movement or ‘organising principle’, with its own ‘institutional aims[, F.R.] ... the support of definite social forces and ... its own distinctive methods’ (Polanyi 2001, p. 221). Rather than trace the historical origins of postsocialist rightwing populism back to the socialist era, I shall argue in the final section that the causes lie in the contemporary postindustrial era, which, in the postsocialist context, coincided with the end of socialism but should not be subsumed under it.

Polanyi was very much a presentist, inspired by the horrific events of his time. By presentism I understand the idea that any ‘reality that transcends the present must itself be exhibited in it’ (Adam 1990, p. 38; see also Ringel 2016). The present is the temporal dimension best suited to investigation through anthropological fieldwork. Polanyi famously commented on his own method: ‘Ours is not a historical work; what we are searching for is not a convincing sequence of outstanding events, but an explanation of their trend in terms of human institutions’ (Polanyi 2001, p. 4). As he explains further: ‘We shall feel free to dwell on scenes of the past with the sole object of throwing light on matters of the present; we shall make detailed analyses of critical periods and almost completely disregard the connecting stretches of time’ (Polanyi 2001, p. 4).

What kind of ethnographic object, then, is a ‘trend’ as much as a ‘movement’ for an anthropologist deploying Polanyi’s concepts? How can we convincingly embed individual agency into a long-standing historical process, whose parameters we presume we understand? One answer is to take historical inspiration in the form of a causal narrative. However, presentism rejects such causal narratives. Hence, I prefer to follow Polanyi’s presentism and search for both dominant trends and movements in the ‘now’, no matter how long they have existed or whether they will continue to exist in the future. The inspiration to be gained from seizing them as a critique of capitalist modernity compensates for the lack of conventional historical context. My presentist approach is not only ahistorical but emphatically not culturalist.¹⁴ Like in Röhli’s and Dorti’s presentist critique, I claim that the inhabitants of Hoyerswerda are angry with market capitalism not because of their socialist past but because of their postindustrial present. In other words, their critique is neither determined by their socialist past nor directed towards it. Rather, their critique is continuously produced and reproduced, negotiated and contextualised anew in any new present, whose main feature is that it continues to be postindustrial. The critique, in a similar vein, is therefore directed towards a postindustrial future (Ringel 2018), which has not yet become imaginable not just in places like Hoyerswerda.

¹⁴ Cf. Brandtstädter (2007).

Discomfort in East Germany

As pointed out above, the anthropology of East Germany has often focused on the many different ways in which East Germans have voiced a critique of the present and made claims on the future. As recounted by other anthropologists of East Germany, even when their East German interlocutors discussed their socialist past, the main concerns were about matters of the present and the future (Ten Dyke 2001; Gallinat 2009, 2016).¹⁵ In that sense, links to the past, as much as links to the future, do not simply exist. They are being made and remade time and again. Such temporal narratives often develop their own momentum in the present, and help to create and sustain what Polanyi describes as a ‘trend’. The AfD, unfortunately, is a master of such temporal exercises. Its slogans capitalise equally on notions of the past and future. Instead of valid solutions for the present, they succeed in providing convincing temporal narratives.

For example, consider the return of the wolf to the region around Hoyerswerda. As in the cases of the *Treuhand* and the *Strukturstärkungsgesetz* from above, I found that local discourses about wolves had fundamentally changed by the time I visited Hoyerswerda in 2019. In 2009, the return of the wolf after a long absence had been met with curiosity and some amusement, but little fear. Back in 2009, I joined a ‘wolf tour’ by a young entrepreneur, who had successfully started offering them for tourists and locals alike. For many Hoyerswerdians then, the wolf seemed emblematic of concerns about the city’s postindustrial decline. Whereas the lignite industry and associated city had subjected and exploited nature, now nature—or so the local story went—was reclaiming what had been taken away from it. The return of the wolf seemed to prove that the industrial era was over. In several KulturFabrik projects, the wolf was depicted as nature’s advance guard, as it prepared to swallow the city and the wider region.

Ten years later, in the lead up to the regional elections, I found that the AfD had managed to discursively detach the wolf from the context of economic transformation and link it instead to two main topics: immigration and the failing state. Without much subtlety in its campaign material, the party depicted the wolf as an unwanted immigrant from the East and a threat to the local, native population. If the state could not prevent the wolf’s arrival, it should show no mercy and eliminate the wolves in order to protect its people.¹⁶ Over the course of a decade, the wolf’s significance shifted from a symbol of postindustrial decline to a dystopian threat to the German people. There was no longstanding trend or anti-wolf movement. The AfD simply mobilised a natural phenomenon for its own present political purposes. The socialist past, this time, was completely irrelevant. The wolf, at least, has already spread further into former West Germany, disregarding the previous

¹⁵ For other post socialist examples, see Kaneff (2004), Haukanes and Trnka (2013).

¹⁶ For two media analyses of the AfD’s anti-wolf election campaign material, see Höhne (2019) and Haselrieder and Bartz (2019).

inner borders. The party's anti-immigrant argument will probably work there too, regardless of West Germany's different, non-socialist past.

The invocation of the socialist past for present purposes is evident in the AfD's interpretation of the countermovement against state-socialism (Hann, this volume), the GDR's peaceful revolution. In East German *Länder* elections in 2019, AfD election posters featured many slogans that evoked the spirit of the peaceful 1989 revolution, the most prominent one arguing for a 'Turn 2.0' (*Wende 2.0*), another revolution, this time led by the AfD. Others called to mind the famous slogans of the East German revolution demanding more democratic rights: 'We Are the People' (*Wir sind das Volk*) and 'Take Back Your Country!' (*Hol Dir Dein Land Zurück!*). However, the AfD invocations of historic slogans were still future-oriented, insinuating that West German politicians had in fact taken away control that needed to be taken back. Also prominent were 'Complete the Revolution!' (*Vollenende die Wende!*), 'Then As Now: Freedom Instead of Socialism!' (*Damals wie heute: Freiheit statt Sozialismus*, implying that the current state is as authoritarian as the state-socialist one) and, finally, 'The East Rises!' (*Der Osten steht auf!*).

The success of such slogans had little to do with any longstanding desire of the AfD to fulfil the aims of the 1989 revolution. Rather, the sentiments fuelling these contradictory slogans have to be embedded in the present. Some of my friends in Hoyerswerda pointed out that most of the top AfD politicians running in these elections hail from West Germany (for example, the then current heads of the AfD in Thuringia and Brandenburg, Bernd Höcke and Andreas Kalbitz) and are thus poorly qualified to reference the East German past. None of these slogans proposed any concrete policies. As Brigitte, a very active retiree from Hoyerswerda and one of my hosts in the city, told me, when she talks to friends and acquaintances who considered voting for the AfD, none of them really wanted 'those idiots in power' (*diese Dummköpfe an der Macht*) because there was general agreement that they offered no solutions to the problems at hand. For these friends, she thought, a vote for the AfD was a more unspecified protest vote. They had no notion of being part of an actual movement by potentially voting this way. Discomfort or *Unbehagen* lends itself well to such protest.

On my last visit to Hoyerswerda, after the regional elections in autumn 2019, the city had not changed much on the surface. People did not seem shocked by the election results and their hometown's problems were still the same. The new city council had not met yet and people were curious to see how the AfD politicians would behave. The decision of whether the CDU mayor would run again had not been made yet, but people were already making guesses as to who would succeed him.

On a rainy autumn day, I made my way to the AfD party office in the Old City. Several friends had pointed out that the AfD had rented the office from the widow of the former leftist mayor. In a small city like Hoyerswerda, they jokingly remarked, even this seems possible. But many also felt uncomfortable about the

AfD. The woman in the office was unwelcoming and suspicious when I collected my sample of old election flyers. Other interlocutors told me funny stories about how the city dealt with its AfD politicians. As a friend in the *KulturFabrik* told me in passing, one local entrepreneur, for example, was often mistaken for his brother, a politician who had defected from the CDU to the AfD and who would now run for mayor. He once even dragged his brother along to a meeting in the *KulturFabrik* to one of his accusers to point out that he was the brother, not the AfD politician of the same last name.

However, as there is no determining cultural or historical force behind the electoral successes of the AfD in Hoyerswerda, they are not guaranteed either. It is possible that people will find other ways to express their discomfort, or at least that is what I hope for. The problems of the postindustrial era, however, still demand changes and an actual countermovement with long-term ideas and policies that rein in capitalism or even come up with a new form of political economy. None of this is within the scope of contemporary East German forms of illiberalism.

It is accordingly not the success of AfD slogans and policies that we have to explain. They are neither behind nor do they propel a countermovement. Rather, what deserves analysis and scrutiny is the already existing vague discomfort that the AfD keeps alive, promotes and further exploits. Where does all this anger come from? Interestingly, it cannot simply be poverty and precarity. The economic statistics for East Germany, as a local journalist pointed out to me with much verve in a personal conversation just after the 2019 elections, have been quite positive for years in the city and East Germany more generally, and most of the AfD voters he knows are actually comparatively well off (older people with good retirement payments) [Please provide a reference as a source]. If there are no current existential threats, as there were during early reunification, what else can give rise to this anger? I argue that the source of this discomfort lies in the profound and still unresolved postindustrial crisis that is much more than just economic. This crisis forces us to address fundamental questions regarding human life and the total reorganisation of our societies in the future, but they are often disregarded or wilfully ignored. Even though postindustrial crises coincide with the postsocialist era in the Visegrád 4 and East Germany, they are, if less dramatically, the same as the ones in non-postsocialist West Germany, the postindustrial US under Trump and a Brexit-riven UK.

Conclusion

In his 'Introduction' to the latest edition of *The Great Transformation*, Fred Block pointed to the danger when the societal problems at the heart of the double movement remain unresolved. He describes this situation as a 'dangerous political-economic stalemate' and underlines that Polanyi, in his analysis of the rise of fascism in Europe, 'acknowledges that when neither movement was able to impose its solution to the crisis, tensions

increased until fascism gained the strength to seize power and break with both laissez-faire and democracy' (Polanyi 2001, pp. xxviii).

The postindustrial era has created its own version of a failing form of capitalism, with no clear solution yet in sight how to solve its problems. This failure contributes to a potentially widespread loss of faith in the efficacy of the utopian vision of free market capitalism. The discomfort of Hoyerswerda's citizens with the effects capitalism currently has on their hometown might be similar to the discomfort of the many East Germans who voted for the AfD in the 2019 regional elections (approximately one-quarter of the electorate in the respective three East German *Länder*). Both expressions of discomfort can be seen to address these failures. After all, most East Germans have experienced this failure for over 30 years. Their discomfort cannot solely be linked to their socialist past. It is not the result of a dialectical relation between socialism and capitalism that maintained Cold War tensions in the post-Cold War era's own countermovements. Rather, this discomfort stems from problems that have to be seen in their own times and in their own right, kept alive in every new crisis the postindustrial era produces. Similarly, the agency of citizens of the former postsocialist world is not predetermined by their socialist experiences, but is formed by—and responds to—the current era.

Rightwing populist successes in Eastern Europe must be re-embedded in their contemporary context. I have argued that the discomfort at their core has nothing to do with lingering socialist sensibilities, cultivated as a critical perspective on capitalism. Rather, it is a response to the ongoing crises of the many once-industrialised parts of the world, which struggle to find a way out of their structural impasses. Such a presentist reconfiguration of critique allows comparisons that go beyond the V4, Eastern Europe and the former socialist world. In many ways, Trump's United States and 'Brexit Britain' manifest similar symptoms and diverse discomforts. As a concept, 'postindustrial' is less ideologically loaded than the term 'postsocialist', especially with regard to its temporal implications. It is materialist and offers a fresh political economy take on the present, along the lines of what Jeremy Morris (2017) has recently argued for. However, we might need a whole new analytical tool-kit to understand the pervasive discomfort of the postindustrial North. This new vocabulary might help to overcome current inabilities to determine what the actual problems are and how to overcome them. It could facilitate focused work on the postindustrial future, a critique of the current political economy inspired by the enormity not of the transformations undergone in Central and Eastern Europe 30 years ago, but the enormity of the transformations that lie ahead.

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