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Between preservation and transformation, reinventing our world

BETWEEN CRISES AND TRANSITIONS: FOR A COMPLEX APPROACH TO SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Deadline for submission of detailed abstracts: June 17th, 2024
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Since the beginning of the 21st century, world populations have been afflicted by a large number of health, geopolitical, economic, social, climatic and technological crises, including digital ones[1]. These multifaceted crises follow one another and hybridize, with very real and dramatic consequences. They have become more visible than ever before, especially due to the hyper-narrative acceleration of the media (Rosa 2012), and they rewrite our contemporary representations and worldviews, while having an impact on social behavior (Rosa 2010). Their multiplicity is embedded in a statistical reality and concrete experiences, but it also reflects the need to apprehend complexity and uncertainty in order to understand them (Morin 1976). This particular context can sometimes be singularly anxiety-provoking or call into question a number of functionings, as our societies are required to adapt to a significant number of transformations, and to social and societal challenges. New digital technologies blur our social foundations and our relationship with reality (Pepperell & Punt 2000), innovation and disruption create a race towards discontinuity and rupture (Stiegler 2016), and our societies are very often summoned to transform themselves. Transformation can become an injunction, depriving is of our critical sense (Weichselgartner et. al. 2016), and compelling individuals to be more mobile, agile and flexible (Barrère & Martuccelli 2005).

In this context, there is a need to explore what these societal transformations mean, what they do to our societies and individuals, and what they reveal about our times and our contemporary representations (Castles 2001), whether in the professional, personal or institutional spheres. Indeed, with a latent injunction to change, transformations are taking place at all levels. New socio-economic and cultural laboratories are being created, such as third places (Dagonneau 2022); cities and urban areas are re-designed (Besson 2017), relationships with the environment and biodiversity are questioned (Descola 2005), the boundary between social intervention and research is shifting (Duvivier & Rybinski 2022), and even the Covid-19 health crisis has given rise to a range of new initiatives, due to the many pitfalls it has helped to highlight (Garcia Moura et. al. 2020). All these phenomena argue resolutely in favor of an approach that takes heed of the notion of complexity (Donnadieu & Karsky 2002), collective experimentation (Senabre Hidalgo et. al. 2022), design (Vial 2010), but also the flow of information in our hypermediatized society (Jeanneret 2014).

In addition, all the issues above show how societal transformations permeate our private and professional lives. These include intergenerational dynamics (Saba 2017), the injunction to happiness (Senik 2014), new approaches to measuring the health of States (Whitaker 2018), debates around sobriety (Baudouin 2019), the re-emergence of the concept of recognition in all walks of life (Fender et. al. 2011, Juvenez 2019), social innovation (Klein et. Al. 2016), the impact of the internet on the redistribution of power and empowerment (Monod & Rowe 1999, Hilbert 2020), emancipation at work (Clot 2010, Dejours 2013), the rise of new professional practices (Wagener & Macé 2023), social relations (Reis Irigaray et. al. 2019), the place of values (Hansen & Leuty 2012), the renewed role of social and family networks (Duvivier 2010), or wellbeing in the workplace (Piermatteo et. al. 2021). Social transformations can also be observed in companies seeking to implement innovation and decision-making processes that involve various stakeholders. These innovations generate new modes of regulation, transforming (1) models of governance (holacracy, sociocracy, mission-driven companies, etc.),

(2) new models of organization (free enterprise, start-ups, etc.), and (3) management (hybrid work, development of soft skills, etc.). In addition, companies are called upon to evolve by reviewing their social practices to better integrate their employees (disabled people, young people, seniors, women and men…) and foster greater diversity.

In order to provide answers to these numerous questions, this symposium adopts a resolutely interdisciplinary approach, without excluding any discipline a priori. Thus, we aim to bring together research in management sciences, sociology, social work, information and communication sciences, psychology, language sciences, economics, philosophy and law. We wish to confront multiple viewpoints, approaches, theoretical frameworks and epistemological and methodological representations.

Between measurable realities, projected fantasies and the representations that permeate the everyday world of professional life, social relations and private life, this symposium offers a critical and analytical approach, while maintaining a strong link with the field. How are these transformations impacting social policies and practices? What impact do they have on work and employment? How do they play out on the scale of communities, environments and lifestyles? Against a backdrop of growing inequality and poverty, how should we view these transformations from a social justice perspective? This scientific event considers multiple perspectives, enabling us to address these questions either by research focus or by perspective.

Research focus 1: The impact of societal transformations on work and employment, and particularly on the structure of organizations and management, on human resources and corporate social responsibility, as well as the opportunities and challenges of business transfers and takeovers on a local and national scale (Lamarque et. al. 2023), that foster innovative ecosystems (Pitchford 2021).

Research focus 2: Social justice and its transformations, between recognition and dignity (Honneth 2013, Fleury 2023), mechanisms fostering inequality (Canto-Sperber 2021), and vulnerable groups (Garrau 2018) in the wake of societal transformations.

Research focus 3: Creativity and innovation in the face of societal transformations, at the level of social practices and policies, of local community initiatives, or even at the level of higher education, between pedagogical innovations, internationalization, sobriety, openness to the world and social ties (Appiah-Kubi & Annan 2020, Avonture et. al. 2024).

To complete these sub-themes, we will remain attentive to perspectives and analyses that allow us to summon up a variety of epistemological and methodological approaches, from an interdisciplinary point of view, embodied through the following perspectives:
- **A:** analysis of discourses, narratives, and narrative trajectories, to provide access to representations, imaginaries, and social structures.
- **B:** highlighting practices, grassroots initiatives, projects and creative approaches, through both qualitative and quantitative studies.
- **C:** study of complexities, by confronting societal, environmental, digital, international, intercultural and other transitions.

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[1] Covid-19, with 6.9 million people dead (https://covid19.who.int/); war in Ukraine, with 500,000 dead or wounded according to U.S. authorities (Libération: August 18, 2023), and renewed violence in Israel and the Palestinian territories; acceleration of global warming phenomena and the overstepping of planetary limits, and their consequences on the health of populations and their mortality rate; considerable development of new applications that disrupt relations between individuals and generate a financial weight of several tens of billions of euros (numeum.fr)

These research focuses and perspectives are not mutually exclusive and need to be articulated, in order to approach issues in a resolutely systemic (Morin 1990, Wagener 2019a) and forward-looking (Adam & Groves 2011) way, and to highlight avenues for research projects to be carried out, or research-intervention projects to be implemented with specific partners. In other words, the symposium will provide an opportunity to take stock of the current situation on a number of issues, and to stimulate new projects and approaches.

IMPORTANT DATES
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SUBMISSION and REGISTRATION PROCEDURES
Please refer to the following link:
https://ecoposs2024societe.sciencesconf.org/

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