

המחלקה לסוציולוגיה ואנתרופולוגיה

# הסמינר המחלקתי

יום רביעי 28/04/2021 בין השעות 12:15-13:45

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/372611112>

Meeting ID: 112 611 372

**Alexander Koensler**

*The Promises of Utopia:  
A Political Ethnography of Food  
Sovereignty Activism in Italy*



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## Abstact:

What and how we eat has once again become prominent in debates on the fight for global justice. Proponents of “alter-globalism” consider experiments with food sovereignty a “prefigurative practice” that anticipates a broader eco-cultural change. Critics, however, remain sceptical about its capacity to enhance social change. In social movement studies, the practical implications of prefigurative politics have rarely been investigated empirically. Based on an ethnographic analysis, I wish to illustrate the multifaceted dynamics of an experiment with Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) in a neo-rural, micro-economic network. An ethnographic perspective can grasp the shifting terrain of the political mobilization, frictions, and unintended consequences of the food sovereignty politics. My presentation demonstrates the importance of understanding the complexities of prefiguration not in a simple linear, coherent process. The case study also offers a critique of re-emerging neo-rural populism.



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## Bio:

Alexander is a Senior Researcher in Social Anthropology at University of Perugia, Italy (PhD University of Siena 2009). He taught at Queen's University Belfast, University of Münster (Germany) and held a postdoc at the Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Israel). His work centers on the link between social innovation and grassroots activism, and more generally on the social production of political claims and the reconfiguration of interpretative categories in contexts of conflicts. In this lecture he will speak about activism for food sovereignty in Italy.

