

ČTVRTEČNÍ SOCIOLOGICKÉ SEMINÁŘE

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ONLINE

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Strategic and Prefigurative Politics Merged: A Pragmatic Approach to Social Movements

The paper explores the analytical benefits of the pragmatic sociology of critique for the study of autonomous movements. Based on a case study of public disputes concerning the Klinika social center in Prague, it merges conceptual notions of social movement studies and the analysis of prefigurative politics. These approaches differ in the data involved in analysis, researcher position, the relationship between critique and hegemonic institutional order, and the publicity of the political actions. However, if understood from the pragmatic perspective of engagements, the two approaches feature different ontic levels of politics – strategic and prefigurative. The paper claims that pragmatic sociology has much analytical capacity to include a wider range of data, emic and etic perspectives, and ontically different types of politics. It also interprets institutional order as having agency and brings to light a plurality of urban meanings embedded in different levels of reality. However, the pragmatic approach is limited by its neglect of the spatial and temporal conditioning of public disputes.

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