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Call for papers

Social value, inequality and responsibility

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As Lautermann (2013) has pointed out, the term “social” has no unique and definite counterpart in social reality: In, for example, “social marketing” or “social value,” it refers to supraindividual aspects of analysis – aspects that are of interest for the communities or societies to which individual or organizational actors belong and for which their actions matter. These actions and their consequences for communities or societies can be assessed with respect to their value for the parties involved in that procedure. This has been done, in particular, in terms of the externalities literature. This leads us to the normative dimension that the term “social” seems to have as well. Often, the word “social” is used to relate normative aspects of actions or analysis to entities or research objects such as market economies, entrepreneurs, or marketing. In line with this characterization, a “social market economy” is one thought to cushion the hardness of untamed capitalism; social entrepreneurs are founders of non-profit organizations motivated by a “social mission”; “social business” strive for profits by the solution of social problems (Driver 2012); or social-marketing policies are thought to align individual decision-making procedures with societal or policy objectives.

Further, the word “social” is used in a categorical sense to indicate substantial differences between the social with, for example, the economic and the ecological. In line with these three categories, “sustainability” has been characterized as a field of research located at their intersection (Thomson 2013). These categories find expression in the distinction (or dichotomy?) between economic value creation and social value creation as well. The marketing-systems approach makes economic value creation a definitional attribute of marketing systems. Compared with that, the creation of social value is contingent; it is something that happens “in many situations” but not by definition (Layton 2016, 2). But what actually happens in these situations? What is created by whom, for whom and by what procedures? Is there a descriptive content to that the marketing-systems approach refers in this regard and provides vocabulary for its analysis? Layton (2016, 3) gives the following hints: “I believe we need a deep understanding of the way human communities interact in cocreating economic and social value through exchange, and of the causal dynamics producing evolutionary change in the resulting exchange networks.” That economic and social value creation are not the same, does not mean that they exclude each other. Thus, economic and social value creation can result from the same processes but need not. That they need not is an important insight that leads to problems of its own. On the one hand, it objects the invisible-hand metaphor according to which the actors do not need to take explicitly into consideration the potential social value of their actions. On the other hand, it seems to add to the view that the economic and the social dimensions of actions differ. It is for this reason that actors need to take into consideration the social consequences of their actions.

In this track, we invite researchers

- to reflect on the meaning of the term „social“ in expressions such as “social value,” “social marketing,” or “social entrepreneurship” and the reasons for conceiving of the economic and the social as being dichotomic;
- to substantiate or criticize sectoral thinking as expressed in, for the example, the distinction between a business sector and a social sector; or
- to explore the commonalities and differences of economic and social value creation in descriptive and normative respect.

Papers and extended abstracts (about 1,500 words) submitted to this track are invited that address these and related questions. Please submit your proposal until January, 17, 2017.

## References

- Driver, Michaela (2012), “An Interview with Michael Porter: Social Entrepreneurship and the Transformation of Capitalism,” *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 11(3), 421-431.
- Lautermann, Christian (2013), “The Ambiguities of (Social) Value Creation: Towards an Extended Understanding of Entrepreneurial Value Creation for Society,” *Social Enterprise Journal* 9 (2), 184-202.
- Layton, Roger A. (2016), “There could be more to marketing than you might have thought! An invited paper, by Professor Roger Layton,” *Australian Marketing Journal* 24 (1), 2-7.
- Thomsen, Christa (2013), “Sustainability (World Commission on Environment and Development Definition),” *Encyclopedia of Corporate Social Responsibility*, Samuel O. Idowu, Nicholas Capaldi, Liangrong Zu and Ananda Das Gupta (Eds.): Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer, 2358-2368.