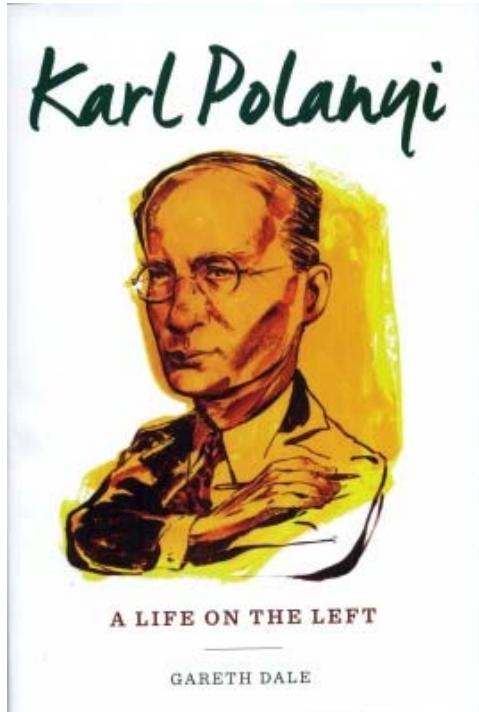


## **WHAT'S NEW**

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### **Karl Polanyi. A Life on the Left**



### [Karl Polanyi. A Life on the Left](#)

By **Gareth Dale**

Columbia University Press, 2016

In this long awaited biography, **Gareth Dale** focuses on the central European origins of Polanyi's life and intellectual formation. Excellently researched in several libraries, including the archive of the Karl Polanyi Institute at Concordia University, the text is enriched by extracts from letters, written by Karl to his mother, brother Michael, and to many friends and colleagues. The book is beautifully produced and well written. We celebrate this first biography; it now invites others to explore more fully the later years of his life in the United States and Canada.

### **Tributes to Karl Polanyi by economists!!**

With the exception of a handful of economists, including Dani Rodrik and Joseph Stiglitz, the economics profession has been slow to recognize Karl Polanyi as an important economist. In 2014, the concluding pages of Barry Eichengreen's *Hall of Mirrors* drew the attention of policy-makers to the critical importance of Keynes and Polanyi. (p.378).

The following recent communications attest to the embrace of Polanyi by important voices of the economics profession:

["Which Thinkers Will Define Our Future?"](#) by **J. Bradford Delong**, **Project Syndicate**, **June 28, 2016**.

The author Delong concludes that: "...the caste-like privilege of white males is doomed. The challenge now before us is how best to realize newly available opportunities for human betterment, for the benefit of all. I can think of few more useful guides to that challenge than Keynes, Polanyi, and Tocqueville."

[“The Top Ten Economics Books of the Last 100 Years,”](#) *Real-World Economics Review*, issue no.75, June 9 2016.

A poll of over 3,000 economists conducted by the RWER assigned first place to Keynes’ “General Theory” and second place to Polanyi’s “Great Transformation”. The RWER is an open-access online publication, and the list of ten was determined by its readers.

In a forthcoming Elgar publication, “**An Introduction to Macroeconomics: a Heterodox Approach to Economic Analysis**”, the contribution on financialization by **Gerald A. Epstein** is accompanied by a portrait and short bio of Karl Polanyi.

## In Memorial

### Dr. Ursula Franklin

Professor Emerita, Department of Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials Science, and  
Senior Fellow, Massey College, University of Toronto

We are deeply saddened to learn the death of Ursula Franklin at her home in Toronto, on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016. Professor Franklin, a renowned scientist, author, educator, feminist, Quaker and peace activist, made an outstanding contribution to our understanding of the human dimension of science and technology, and to the advancement of peaceful coexistence between people, between nations and cultures, and between human society and the biosphere. Recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees, Dr. Franklin was appointed to the Order of Ontario in 1990, named a Companion of the Order of Canada in 1992, and invested as Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1993.

Professor Franklin first met Karl Polanyi and his wife, Ilona Duczynska in the late 1950s, when the Polanyis were engaged in the creation of *Co-Existence, a Journal for the Comparative Study of Economics, Sociology and Politics in a Changing World*, an international scholarly journal to further study pressing issues of the times – East-West relations, peace issues, and colonial emancipation movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, among others. Dr. Franklin was a peace activist, who shared with the Polanyis a commitment to “co-existence,” defined within a framework that included social justice and respect for the habitat / biosphere. After Polanyi’s death in 1964, Professor Franklin remained a very close friend of Ilona, until her death in 1978.

In the last decade of his life, Karl Polanyi reflected upon the impact of the rapidly advancing technological civilization on human values. Dr. Franklin shared that concern and wrote extensively on how technology changes social relations and redefines the concepts of power and accountability, while advocating for an ethical framework for directing new technological developments.

Professor Franklin visited the Polanyi Institute on several occasions to conduct archival research, give public lectures, and participate at international Polanyi conferences. In the chapter on “Coexistence and Technology: Society between Bitsphere and Biosphere (Polanyi Lectures, Concordia University, Montreal, 1994 and 1995),” of her book, *Ursula Franklin Speaks. Thoughts and Afterthoughts* (2014), she writes,

“Over and above the academic ties that bind me to the Polanyi Institute I have an enormous debt of gratitude to Karl and Ilona Polanyi, a debt I will never be able to discharge adequately. It is in their memory and informed by their thinking and concerns that I invite you to consider the issues that created the unique international journal *Co-existence* in light of today’s problems and in the context of the work of the Polanyis...”

Dr. Franklin enthusiastically welcomed the establishment of the Karl Polanyi Institute at Concordia University in 1988 and remained a constant source of support and counsel over the years. She was a dear friend of the Institute and will be greatly missed.

## Archival Donation: The Rotstein Papers

**Abraham Rotstein** (1929-2015) was the last surviving student of Karl Polanyi. In his after-dinner address at the Karl Polanyi International Conference at Concordia University in November 2014, Professor Rotstein told the audience that his encounter with Polanyi as a graduate student at Columbia University was a life-changing experience. Abe Rotstein collaborated with Polanyi on numerous projects, including the completion of *Dahomey and the Slave Trade* (1966) among others. As a Professor of Economics at the University of Toronto, Professor Rotstein introduced generations of students to Polanyi's work and to his vision of a viable and sustainable economy deeply embedded in human values.



Professor Rotstein's family has generously donated a selection of his papers to the Institute. The material includes notes, drafts of manuscripts, annotated articles, correspondence with Polanyi and other participants of the Columbia University's Research Project on the "Origins of Economic Institutions," papers by others, and some memorabilia. The main series of the Rotstein fonds are the Weekend Notes - transcripts of conversations Abe Rotstein held with Polanyi over the course of 28 weekends, from 1956 to 1959, and a book project on a sequel to *The Great Transformation*, "The Great Transformation and America," which later became "Freedom and Technology." **The Abraham Rotstein Collection** will be catalogued, and be available (originals and digital) in the spring of 2017.

## New Spanish Edition of The Great Transformation



A new Spanish edition of *The Great Transformation*, translated by Graciela Chailloux, was published by Editorial Oriente (Habana, Cuba) under the title **La gran transformación. Los orígenes políticos y económicos de nuestro tiempo**. This edition includes a special contribution by the late Cuban economist, Silvio Baró Herrera on "El hombre, la época y su pensamiento vigente / "The man, his time, and his prevailing thought." The cover of the book is inspired by a painting by the late Cuban painter, Marcelo Pogolotti.

## The Karl Polanyi Institute Merit Research Award 2016

The Institute has awarded the Karl Polanyi Institute Merit Research Award 2016 to **Mr. Kristopher Millett** to undertake a research project on "**Insights into the Reception of the Work of Karl Polanyi.**" This involves the production of an annotated bibliography of *substantive* works relating to, or influenced by, the work of Karl Polanyi, based on a web search, corresponding to the period 2004-2015. The results will be published by the Institute in the forthcoming *Karl Polanyi Working Papers Series*.



*Kris Millett is a PhD student in the Social and Cultural Analysis program at Concordia. He has an MA in Canadian and Indigenous Studies from Trent University, and a BA in Political Science and English from Carleton University. Kris began taking an interest in the work of Karl Polanyi during his MA coursework, particularly during collaborations with students at the University of Toronto in the 'commoning' movement, an alternative paradigm to market-oriented resource management. He is currently editing an anthology on the lived realities of financialization in Canada, which incorporates concepts developed by Polanyi.*

*Kris has also spent over 10 years as a senior research analyst primarily in Ottawa and Iqaluit, conducting archival research for several First Nation comprehensive land claims cases, including work on the Indian Residential School Resolution Canada.*

## **Independent Research Fellow 2016**

The Institute hosted **Caroline Shenaz Hossein** (Business and Society, Department of Social Science, York University, Toronto) as **Independent Research Fellow** for a one month period (May-June), to conduct research for a project on “The Black Social Economy: The ‘Banker Ladies’ and Money Pools in Canada.” The project addresses issues relating to the financial exclusion of racially marginalised groups, and the role collectives play in the social and economic lives of these groups. Professor Hossein is interested in Polanyi’s conceptual framework for nonmarket economies. She is the author a recently released volume [Politicized Microfinance: Money, Power, and Violence in the Black Americas](#) (University of Toronto Press, 2016).



## **Societies in Transition. Social and Solidarity Economy, the Commons, Public Action and Livelihood**

The **Second International EMES-Polanyi Seminar on “Societies in Transition. Social and Solidarity Economy, the Commons, Public Action and Livelihood”** was held at the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, Paris, May 19-20, 2016. The seminar addressed contemporary processes of democratization of the economy including social and solidarity economy, the commons, and new public action oriented towards livelihood objectives. Participants identified convergences in these related but distinct fields, connected to both economic and political spheres.

[Read the Afterthoughts from the Seminar.](#)

## **Freedom in a Complex Society: Karl Polanyi’s Vision of a Socialist Transformation**

The New York Office of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and the Institute for Critical Social Analysis of the Foundation in Berlin hosted a Workshop on [“Freedom in a Complex Society: Karl Polanyi’s Vision of a Socialist Transformation”](#) at The New School (New York), November 20-21, 2015. The workshop sought to generate a more coherent understanding of Polanyi’s vision of a new “great transformation” that may create the conditions for “Freedom in a Complex Society.” This includes his concept of a “complex society,” the very problem of “freedom,” the central arenas of transformation, the role of democracy, the inter-linkage between the de-commodification of “fictitious commodities” and the role of markets, the state, and other forms of regulation in a complex society.



[Read the Conference Report prepared by the organizers of the event.](#)  
[Watch the lecture given by Professor Kari Polanyi Levitt.](#)

## Institute Governance Structure

Following extensive discussions, the governance structure of the Karl Polanyi Institute has been modified to now include an **Executive Committee** and an **Advisory Council**. The Advisory Council is mandated to: (i) collaborate in the organization and promotion of initiatives that raise the profile of the Institute; (ii) contribute to the vetting and editing of submissions to the *Karl Polanyi Working Paper Series*, and (iii) participate in the decision-making process with regards to locations and themes of international Polanyi conferences.

**MARGIE MENDELL**, Concordia University, Canada  
Director and Ex Officio Member, Executive Committee

**KARI POLANYI LEVITT**, McGill University, Canada  
Honorary President

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<b>PAULA VALDERRAMA</b>	Freie Universität, Germany

## LITERARY CORNER

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In this section we include recent publications, media reports, videos, and podcasts on/or inspired by Karl Polanyi.

### Books and Articles

Neil, William R. (2016). "Karl Polanyi and the coming U.S. election," *Real-World Economics Review*, Issue No. 75, June 26, pp. 49-66.

Iber, Patrick and Mike Konczal (2016). "Karl Polanyi for President," *Dissent*, May 23.

Roy, Michael J. and Michelle T. Hackett. (2016). "Polanyi's 'substantive approach' to the economy in action? Conceptualising social enterprise as a public health 'intervention'." *Review of Social Economy*.

Jamie Peck (2016). "Polanyian Pathways: A review of *The Power of Market Fundamentalism: Karl Polanyi's Critique* by Fred Block and Margaret R. Somers and *For a New West: Essays, 1919–1958 by Karl Polanyi*;" Edited by Giorgio Resta and Mariavittoria Catanzariti. *Economic Geography*, 92:2, 226-233.

Kyle Bailey (2016). "Book Review. *From the Great Transformation to the Great Financialization: On Karl Polanyi and Other Essays*, edited by Kari Polanyi Levitt (Zed Books, London, 2013, 292p)." *Journal of International Development*, 28, pp. 156–158.

Samuel O. Oloruntoba (2016). *Regionalism and Integration in Africa. EU-ACP Economic Partnership Agreements and Euro-Nigeria Relations*. Palgrave Macmillan US, New York, 2015, 240p.

Judith Szapor (2015). "Private archives and public lives; the migrations of Alexander Weissberg and the Polanyi archives," Jordan, James, Lisa Leff, Joachim Schlör, eds., *Jewish Migration and the Archive*, Routledge, pp. 93-109.

Michele Cangiani and Claus Thomasberger (2015). *Karl Polanyi. Una società umana un'umanità sociale. Scritti 1918-1963*. Jaca Books, Milano, 378p.

Richard Sandbrook (2014). *Reinventing the Left in the Global South: The Politics of the Possible*. Cambridge University Press, New York, 309p.

Wolfgang Streeck. (2014). *Buying Time: The Delayed Crisis of Democratic Capitalism*. Verso Books, 240p.

### Print Media

"Polanyi contre Uber." Jonathan Durand Folco, *Le Devoir*, February 2016.

### Videos

#### [Karl Polanyi Institute YouTube Channel](#)

The Return of Karl Polanyi to Vienna. Produced by Peter Janacek, 2015.

Plenary sessions from the 13<sup>th</sup> International Karl Polanyi Conference, Montreal, November 2014.



[Karl Polanyi, le facteur humain](#). Episode 6 of a six-part documentary series, [Capitalism](#), by Ilan Ziv that looks at both the history of ideas and the social forces that have shaped the capitalist world.

[K. Polanyi et K. Marx - L'imaginaire du capital](#). Jérôme Maucourant, Paris, 2009.

### **Podcast**

[Markets and Society: The Life and Thought of Karl Polanyi](#). This five-part podcast was first broadcast on the CBC Radio - *Ideas* program in 2005. The program's producer, David Cayley has now made the podcast available on his web site.

©Karl Polanyi Institute of Political Economy  
Concordia University  
[polanyi.institute@concordia.ca](mailto:polanyi.institute@concordia.ca)  
514- 848-8707