

Introducing *History in the Making*: A RESRG Working Group

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History in the Making is a RESRG working group that seeks to place current social, political, and economic developments (and crises) in both global and historical context.

Working within a historical materialist framework, our aim is not simply to shine a more nuanced light on current events, but also to analyze the complex historical and material factors behind a number of global trends and developments that have appeared only very recently on the radar of most Canadians (especially those whose interests and experiences have been traditionally tied to the status quo in our country). Addressing these issues collaboratively, our hope is to foster a critical discussion of the deeper causes and complicated issues behind some of the key problems and challenges that we face today, not just as Canadians, but as citizens of a world in the midst of monumental, even epochal, change.

Of particular interest for us is to explore the ways in which recent social, political, and ideological developments can be understood within an emergent historical context (one that is itself determined by the complex interplay between technological innovation, ecological change, demographic shifts, and productive relations – particularly as this relates to the intersection of race, gender, and class). In what ways, in other words, are current attempts to redefine and reorganize society linked to the existing configurations of global capital, and to the material and ecological conditions created by this globalized system? What

do we need to know about the “bigger picture” in order to generate a more nuanced view of the world we live in? What historical and objective factors do we need to take into consideration in our efforts to inform public policy, and to chart a meaningful, effective, and ultimately compassionate way forward?

Acknowledging our own privileged positions as scholars and as Canadians, we recognize that many of the issues we are addressing – issues like austerity, climate change, the gap between rich and poor, precariousness, and so on – are by no means new, and that many nations worldwide, and many communities here at home, have long felt the full effects of global capitalism and the exploitative relationships it (re)produces. In our work we stress the importance of seeking out and listening to the voices of people and groups who have long been disenfranchised and silenced by this system, and recognize that the poor, the colonized, and the marginalized have much to teach us. Given the severity of the problems now facing so-called “developed” countries (especially in Europe, North America, and Australasia), we sincerely hope that people will finally start listening to these voices, and to the insight and advice they offer.

In summer 2016, our group will begin by looking at the resurgence of the radical right in Europe and the United States, as well as at the issue of global migration and displacement, in particular as this is understood through the lens of the recent “refugee crisis” that has garnered much

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attention since spring and summer 2015 when migrants began crossing the Mediterranean into Europe in large numbers. Centered around weekly discussions and the publication of short essays on the RESRG website

(<http://www.resrg.ca>), our goal is to refine both the mission and analytical framework of this project, and beyond this to provoke critical discussion around issues of local, national, and global import.