

Everyday Agency and New Forms of Governance

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I will discuss various shifts and transformations concerning the relationship between everyday life and politics of the social. In the industrial capitalism everyday life was supposed to be a sphere being opposed to work and free time; it was the ‘small life’ conducted by women as opposed to the important life in the economy and politics conducted by men. The very set of the opposition was a logic of power, as many feminist and other scholars have shown. Today, this territorial model of life has begun to blur. In the new 7/24 society, homes which used to be the site of the everyday life have turned into working places. At the same time, the logic of everyday life is leaking out from its conventional sphere. The figure of the housewife, once the nexus of everyday life, has become the paradigm and ideal worker of the new labour market: she is capable of doing many things at the same time, he is flexible and social, she takes care of complex logistic chains, and he doesn’t lose his temper even if the customers present impossible demands or cry from the evening to the morning. These changes go along with the changes in the forms of governance: the old ways of the politics of the social based on the clear division between the everyday life and work (which is still echoing the ‘work-family balance’ discourse) do not obviously fit any longer. I will suggest a way to look at the changes and discontinuities by drawing a map, which takes ‘small’ agency as its starting point. The concept of small agency refers to the approach that asks: How are the (global) changes in the labour market and in the politics of the social made livable? I will use examples from my previous study on *The Everyday Life of Adults* and from my current study on *Precarisation in North-Karelia*.