

## **Shifting the gaze in climate change and welfare state debates in Norway: A proposal for a relational global view**

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Norway is an excellent case for studying the complexity, ambiguities and competing interests attached to climate change and global sustainability: it is at the forefront in the use of “clean energy,” yet has long been one of the world’s largest oil exporters. Norway’s dominant social imaginaries have been challenged considering the ongoing climate change crisis. One explicitly connected to discussions of climate change is the debate between growth (vekst) and preservation (vern). The debate has to date been organized according to long-standing and competing, yet parallel, fault lines in Norwegian politics (Tjernshaugen et al., 2011). “Growth” has been associated with a national economy built on taxes and proceeds from oil, which in exchange enables an egalitarian ethos (Gullestad, 2002). “Preservation” has been associated with a wholesome and clean climate, nature, waters, and way of life, within or surrounding Norway. While competing, these fault lines have existed squarely within the confines of the Norwegian nation-state, (mostly) avoiding mention of the global connections that have long existed between these two dimensions. This presentation calls for an updated methodology for researching climate change (and the Norwegian welfare state) that takes more active account of the connections that have always and continue to exist between the development of national welfare states here (in Europe, and Norway) and the long-standing practice of extractive efforts that have harmed nature elsewhere (indigenous lands within state borders, and outside Europe).

The presentation is theoretically exploratory and draws links between the past and present expansion of extractive market capitalism and the development of European welfare states, including in Norway (Berg-Nordlie, 2022; Bhambra, 2022; Kjerland & Bertelsen, 2014; Naum & Nordin, 2013). It ends with focus on the implications of a gaze on growth and preservation that has been limited to national borders, and suggests projects within and outside academia that might help to shift focus to the global connections that exist.

(References available on request)