# GLOBAL FORUM ON URBAN & REGIONAL RESILIENCE

**Spring 2018 Seminar Series**

## *Tuesday, February 27th | 3:30 PM*

**** RECEPTION TO FOLLOW ****

# When Economists Discuss Social Justice

## *The Case of the Current Swiss Initiative 'Sovereign Money'*


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From the first half of the 20th century, economists have considered the role of the State in the regulation of money and the promotion of social justice. Far from being confined to the field of economics, the debates reflect social concerns of redistribution. In the 1930s and 1940s, poverty and economic inequalities resulting from capitalism and industrialisation represented a threat for social cohesion, this was framed as "the social question". Social welfare was designed as an answer. In the last 30 years, some social scientific debates reflect a return to this social question. Experts in social justice and social policies point to the limits of the current model of social welfare in the context of the erosion of the "wage society" (Castel 1995), the emergence of a "risk society" (Beck 1992), and increasing inequalities due to the neoliberal economy. Issues of how money is redistributed, as well as the role of the State, have come back to the forefront. For their part, some economists are calling for a renewed discussion on the role that the State should play in the regulation of money today, particularly in the context of the financialized economy. They claim that this relates to issues of social justice. However, their articulation between monetary regulation and social justice varies in discourse, as well as their position about the social question today. Based on a case study of the Swiss initiative "Sovereign Money," this paper takes a sociological look at the discourses that economists who support this project are making about the regulation of money. In particular, it questions how they articulate it with the idea of social justice, and to what extent they are formulating a new social question.

***LOCATION: Global Forum Conference Room, Suite 312, Kent Square***

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