

Synergia Summer Institute – Monte Ginezzo, Tuscany

Transition to Co-operative Commonwealth: Pathways to a new political economy

September 4 – 23, 2016

Overview

Around the world today, there is a universal sense that we are living through a unique moment in history. Rarely before has the need for systemic change been more obvious or more urgent.

The economic and social crisis that continues to unfold across the globe requires a new vision of political economy that can offer a truly progressive alternative to the neoliberal paradigm that is undermining the civil and democratic foundations of our societies and the economic and social well being of individuals and their communities.

For change makers the world over, the challenges to be faced are global – yet the solutions must be effective locally. The interface of global knowledge with local practice has thus become the nexus for transformative social change in our time.



Synergia is an international network of individuals and organizations that unites academics, social activists, practitioners and policy makers in a common effort to articulate, advocate, and implement models of economic and social practice that transition societies to a new model of political economy that is sustainable, democratic, socially just, and based on the principles of co-operation and the common good.

Synergia Summer Institute

Located on Monte Ginezzo outside the Etruscan hill town of Cortona in Tuscany, the **Synergia Summer Institute for Commonwealth Transition** offers an intensive program of exploration, instruction, dialogue, and practical training on transition models for the realization of an ethical economy. The Synergia Summer Institute applies the knowledge and practice of co-operation, economic democracy, and the commons to address the central issues of sustainability and social wellbeing at local, regional and global levels.

The overarching focus of the Synergia program is to answer the question: *What is the ethical economy and how does it work?* The course will provide a critical overview of the contours of this new political economy and the mechanisms required for its realization.

Pedagogically, the Synergia program seeks to maximize collaboration among participants, to promote horizontal relationships of dialogue, debate, knowledge sharing and learning, and to offer the broadest possible access and sharing of knowledge and resources. Above all, the course is designed to facilitate the application of ideas and learning to practical use.

A key feature of the course is the blending of lectures and workshops with site visits to leading co-operatives and commons activities in Tuscany and Emilia Romagna – home to one of the most sophisticated co-operative economies in the world.

Concretely, the course unites the global with the local through the diffusion of ideas, models, and practices that advance game-changing solutions in the following areas:

- Co-operative Capital & Social Finance; Alternative Currencies
- Co-op & commons-based housing & land tenure; Community Land Trusts

- Renewable energy; Community owned energy systems
- Local & sustainable food systems; Community Supported Agriculture
- User-controlled health and social care; Social & Community Service Co-ops
- Co-operative & Commons-based Governance
- Platform Co-operatives, Digital Commons, & Peer-to-Peer production systems
- Convergence & the New Political Economy – Principles, Propositions, and Practices

A key purpose of the course is to provide a global context for these issues and to link models, practices, expertise, and action horizontally across these fields. The creation of new networks, relationships, and action alliances among change makers and program participants is also a primary objective of this program.

In the spirit of co-operation, participants will be asked to share in the day-to-day activities of the summer institute by contributing to cleaning, cooking, gardening, and other tasks related the operation of the program and the development of the site.

Timeframe, Hours & Instruction

The Synergia Summer Institute is 3 weeks in duration. It will take place from **September 4 – 23, 2016** at Monte Ginezzo in Tuscany. The total number of course hours is 100, thus making the course eligible for university course credit. The course instruction is in English.

Location

The centre is located on Monte Ginezzo, and situated on a 300 hectare protected forest and bird sanctuary overlooking the Val di Chiana and Lake Trasimeno. It is approximately 17 km outside the Etruscan hill town of Cortona and is easily reachable by car. The Camucia-Cortona train station is on the main rail route connecting Rome to Florence. Cortona is 2.5 hours from Rome and 45 minutes from Florence.

Accommodation

Monte Ginezzo provides shared accommodation to all program participants, with guests sharing comfortable rooms with one or two other guests. No more than three guests to a room. Space is also available for camping.

Food

Monte Ginezzo provides traditional home-cooked meals as part of the registration cost.



Recreation

Monte Ginezzo offers guests access to a swimming pool, numerous hiking and biking trails, horse back riding, and trail bikes for rent on site. Also available are guided tours to Cortona and other destination points in the region including world famous wine tours and archeological sites. There are also culinary courses available on weekends.

Nearby Ginezzo there are a number of excellent restaurants only a few moments away by car. Cortona is approximately 15 minutes by car and offers visitors a rich variety of eateries, cafés, wine bars, and shopping.

During the summer months, Cortona also hosts numerous musical and cultural events.



Getting Around

Visitors to Monte Ginezzo will arrive at Camucia-Cortona train station, which has regular service from both Rome and Florence throughout the day. For train schedules: <http://www.trenitalia.com/tcom-en>

Car rentals are available in Camucia at: <https://www.sixt.com/car-rental/italy/cortona>

Travel Agency: Tuscan Magic <http://www.tuscanmagic.net/>

Program Cost

Early registration for the Synergia Summer Institute is 2,600 Euros, which includes accommodation, in-country travel, and meals for the full 3 weeks (excepting weekends). Registration after July 30 is 2,700 euros.

Instructors

The Synergia Summer Institute is very privileged to offer some of the very finest minds and practitioners in their respective fields of study and practice. Acknowledged internationally as leaders in their fields our confirmed instructors include:

Michel Bauwens, Founder, P2P Foundation; Co Author, Network Society and Future Scenarios for a Collaborative Economy

Pat Conaty, Fellow, New Economics Foundation; Research Associate, Cooperatives UK; Co Author, The Resilience Imperative

Renate Goergen, President, Le Mat Europe; Board Member, European Social Franchise Network (ESFN)

Christian Iaione, Associate Professor of public law, Guglielmo Marconi University of Rome; Fellow of the Urban Law Center at Fordham University; Director, LabGov – Laboratory for the Governance of the Commons

Mike Lewis, Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Community Renewal; Co Author, The Resilience Imperative

Julie MacArthur, Assistant Professor, Environmental Politics & Public Policy, University of Auckland; Author of Empowering Electricity: Sustainability Co-operatives and Power Sector Reform in Canada

Robin Murray, Fellow, Cooperatives UK; London School of Economics

Jason Nardi, Co-ordinator, RIPPES Europe

John Restakis, Executive Director, Community Evolution Foundation; Adjunct Professor, Simon Fraser University; Author, Humanizing the Economy – Co-operatives in the Age of Capital

Marco Tulli, Emiliano Cecchino, Davide Bonsignore, Off Grid Academy

Registration

People may register by contacting John Restakis at synergiainstitute@gmail.com Payment will be accepted via Paypal.

Note: A minimum of 15 registrants must be confirmed by August 5 for the course to proceed. Should this number not be registered at that time, the registration fee will be refunded to the applicants.

Additional Information

For additional information on the Synergia Institute please visit our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/synergiainstitute/?fref=ts>

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Monte Ginezzo – Cortona, Tuscany

September 4 - 23, 2016

7:30 Breakfast 2:00 Afternoon Session 8:30 Dialogue Sessions
9:00 Morning Session 5:00 Adjourn
12:00 Lunch 7:00 Dinner

September 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1	2	3 Arrival & Check In	4 Arrival & Check In Monte Ginezzo Tour & Orientation
5 The Problematic TBA The Problematic TBA	6 Social/Solidarity Economy - John Restakis Land - Mike Lewis	7 Land - Mike Lewis Land - Mike Lewis	8 Energy Julie Macarthur Site Visit	9 Energy Julie Macarthur Energy - Fabbrica del Sole -	10 Site Visit or Free time	11 Free time
12 Food - Robin Murray Food - Robin Murray	13 Food - Robin Murray Social Finance - Pat Conaty	14 Social Finance - Pat Conaty Site visit	15 Social Finance - Pat Conaty Commons - Christiane laone	16 Commons - Michel Bauwens Commons - Michel Bauwens	17 Site Visit or Free Time	18 Free Time
19 Social Care - John Restakis - Renate Goergen Social Care - John Restakis - Renate Goergen	20 Social Care - John Restakis - Renate Goergen Site Visit	21 The Partner State - John Restakis The Partner State - John Restakis	22 Convergence - Robin Murray - Jason Nardi Convergence - Robin Murray - Jason Nardi	23 Synthesis TBA Synthesis TBA	24 Check Out	25 Check Out