

## Centre-periphery conflicts and alienation in a resource-based economy

Jostein Vik, Eirik Magnus Fuglestad & Emil Øversveen

To cite this article: Jostein Vik, Eirik Magnus Fuglestad & Emil Øversveen (2022): Centre-periphery conflicts and alienation in a resource-based economy, Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography, DOI: [10.1080/00291951.2022.2111270](https://doi.org/10.1080/00291951.2022.2111270)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00291951.2022.2111270>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 28 Aug 2022.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

## Centre-periphery conflicts and alienation in a resource-based economy

Jostein Vik<sup>1</sup>, Eirik Magnus Fuglestad<sup>2</sup> & Emil Øversveen<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology and Political Science, NTNU, Trondheim, Norway

<sup>2</sup>Ruralis – Institute for Rural and Regional Research, Trondheim, Norway

### ABSTRACT

Since the early 2010s, increased centre-periphery tensions have arisen across the Western Hemisphere and have had a significant influence on domestic policies. Analysts have explained this as an effect of economic inequalities and rural marginalisation. In this article it is argued that rural upheavals and centre-periphery conflicts can be caused by processes of alienation. The authors' analysis is based on existing literature and statistics, as well as their own previously published research. From the case of Norway, they suggest that rural and peripheral upheavals can be explained as alienation caused by a combination of two different phenomena: ongoing transitions within the rural political economy of nature-based industries and sectors, and changes in the role of the modern welfare state, towards a state that in several key policy areas withdraws from the peripheries. Combined, these economic and political developments have produced a state of rural alienation and sharpening centre-periphery tensions, even in the absence of marginalisation and increases in economic inequality. In conclusion, the main argument of the article is that combined, such economic and political developments have produced a state of rural alienation and sharpening centre-periphery tensions, even in the absence of marginalisation and increases in economic inequality.



### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 18 March 2022

Accepted 5 August 2022

### EDITORS

Arnt Fløysand, Catriona Turner

### KEYWORDS

alienation, centre-periphery tensions, Norway, rural political economy

Vik, J., Fuglestad, E.M. & Øversveen, E. 2022. Centre-periphery conflicts and alienation in a resource-based economy. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift–Norwegian Journal of Geography* Vol. 00, 00–00. ISSN 0029-1951.

### Introduction

In the past ten years or so, the Western world has witnessed rising tensions based in the centre-periphery dichotomy (e.g. Strjker & Terulin 2015; Cramer 2016; Goodhart 2017; Ashwood 2018; Hochschild 2018; Gully 2019; Pospěch et al. 2021). These tensions have been expressed both in political behaviour – in the form of electoral earthquakes such as the election of Donald Trump as US president in 2016 or the Brexit vote in the same year – and in social movements, such as the yellow vests movement in France. Analytically, the expressions of these tensions have often been understood in the context of the general re-emergence of nationalism and populism. Considerable scholarly attention has been paid to this analytical aspect during the past few years, often with a focus on the rural part of peripheries. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* devoted substantial space to articles on 'authoritarian populism and rural politics' in 2020 (e.g. Scoones et al. 2018;

Bernstein 2020; Carolan 2020; Edelman 2020), several articles on rural populism have been published in *The Annals of the American Association of Geographers* (Graddy-Lovelace 2019; McCarthy 2019), and there has been a special issue of *Sociologia Ruralis* on right-wing populism in rural Europe (e.g. Brooks 2020; Mamonova & Franquesa 2020a; 2020b). However, the populist/nationalist perspectives are not the only models of explanation for the increase in social unrest in peripheral regions. For instance, a recent article by Dijkstra et al. (2020, 737) suggests that the rural and peripheral discontent, as well as the intensification of centre-periphery conflicts are 'mainly driven by a combination of long-term economic and industrial decline, low levels of education, and a lack of local employment opportunities'. Rodríguez-Pose has termed the places where this happens 'places that don't matter', and he writes that 'the long-term decline of formerly prosperous places, disadvantaged by processes that have rendered

**CONTACT** Jostein Vik  jostein.vik@ntnu.no

© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

them exposed and almost expendable, has triggered frustration and anger' (Rodríguez-Pose 2020, 7). Such arguments point to the importance of change in economic relations, as well as in politics.

Thus, there is an impressive body of literature documenting how rural-urban tensions and centre-periphery conflicts correlate with economic decline and marginalisation in rural regions across the western world.<sup>1</sup> However, it seems that the rise in tensions also occurs in regions and countries with a relatively high degree of rural livelihoods, and where peripheral regions do not lag behind in economic terms. This has led us (the authors of this article) to suggest that it may be not so much marginalisation as such that creates the strengthened tensions, as the experiences of alienation related to transitions *within* the rural and peripheral political economies. This resonates with David Goodhart's theory on the growing divide between what he calls 'somewheres' and 'anywheres', which emerged as a popular thesis of explanation after Brexit and after the Trump election in 2016 (Goodhart 2017). The increasing divide that Goodhart describes between the global and mobile anywheres and the rooted and local somewheres can be explained as a process whereby people from rural areas and the peripheries have been subject to alienation caused by developments in the political economy. Goodhart's fairly simplistic distinction between the two groups is useful in this respect because it highlights alienation in heterogeneous groups across various rural and peripheral populations against ruling elites in the large cities. Goodhart's *somewheres* catches discontented and alienated groups in both rural areas and peripheries. Our argument is thus that rising tensions between groups in rural areas are caused by structural changes in politics and the economy, which in turn cause alienation. We build this argument on the Norwegian experience.

The World Bank routinely ranks Norway among the world's ten wealthiest countries measured in GDP per capita (World Bank 2022). The country is also ranked second on low income inequality and first in The World Economic Forum's Inclusive Development Index for 2018 (World Economic Forum n.d.). This is not accidental, as the Norwegian approach to rural development has been marked by a consensus that policies should support an even economic growth in all parts of the country, and stabilising settlement patterns (Berg & Lysgård 2017). Cruickshank et al. (2009) claim that 'topics which include economic safety and national

identity/nation-state are more or less fundamental to understanding the logic of the production of the concrete discourses of rurality in Norwegian politics'. Statistics Norway's annual study of living conditions for 2021 shows that the percentage of people in the population who cannot afford an unforeseen expense is close to identical across rural and more densely populated areas (18–20%) (Statistisk sentralbyrå n.d.). There seems to have been a growing divide in property prices between the central areas and the rural areas (Geier & Grini 2018; Omholt 2018), but this has not manifested in differences in, for example, living standards. Thus, a significant upheaval from the peripheries, with a strong rural basis has manifested itself – and has been visible in political behaviour as well as social protest movements – in Norway, which has an economy with a large degree of economic equality between urban and rural areas, as well as between centre and periphery<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this article is to analyse and discuss the puzzle that a significant upheaval has taken place in one of the richest countries in the world, a country where the differences in economic outputs between the rural and urban populations are close to non-existent, and where such differences are also small between centre and periphery. Through such an analysis we seek to contribute to the rapidly growing literature on rural and peripheral upheavals and unrest in the Western world. The Norwegian case is an outlier and a deviant case that may shed light on the underlying dynamics behind the somewhat troubled relationship between urban and rural areas and between centre and periphery. We suggest an explanatory model built on two phenomena: (1) ongoing transitions within the rural political economy of nature-based industries and sectors, and (2) changes in the role of the modern welfare state towards a state that in several key policy areas withdraws from the peripheries. While these developments may initially seem separate, we argue that it is possible to interpret them as a process of alienation in which rural populations are estranged from the process, products, and conditions of production. Interpreting the rural upheavals in Norway in terms of alienation thus helps to explain how the political cleavage between the urban centre and the rural periphery has been sharpened, even in the absence of increasing economic inequalities.

The remaining part of this article is outlined as follows. First, we present a clarification on our methodological stance, as well as information on methods and

<sup>1</sup>Some authors refer to the dichotomy centre-periphery, while others discuss urban versus rural. Different strands of the international literature use different terms.

<sup>2</sup>Knudsen (2018) has suggested that the centre-periphery dichotomy should be subdivided into a regional and a rural-urban dimension. In our case, we find it reasonable not to make a rigid divide between terms.

materials used. We then provide a brief outline of the theory of alienation, which centres on how changes in the political economy (e.g. rapid technological development, processes of commodification, economic centralisation), as well as state withdrawal, may produce generalised sentiments of social discontent and estrangement. Thereafter, we move on to describe the phenomenon that needs to be explained – Norway's rural upheaval – using the notion of rural alienation as our main analytical lens. Finally, we discuss our findings and present our conclusions.

### Methodology, methods, and materials

Methodologically, we apply a pragmatic and abductive approach in this article. Pragmatism implies that we take a modest approach and, in line with Feilzer, do 'not expect to find unvarying causal links or truths but [aim] to interrogate a particular question, theory, or phenomenon with the most appropriate research method' (Feilzer 2010, 13). The abductive approach, in contrast to an inductive or deductive approach, means that we start out with a somewhat surprising empirical finding (as described in the Introduction) and seek to find facts and interpretations that make the puzzle meaningful (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 37). This strategy implies exploring the fruitfulness of existing theories, but also adding alternative explanatory models.

In terms of research design, our case may be described as an *interpretive* case study (Lijphart 1971) of the upheaval happening in Norway's peripheries today. Arguably, the Norwegian case is interesting in itself and broadens the sample of available empirical examples. More importantly, it is also a *deviant* case following the typology of Lijphart (1971), as we can observe unrest without many of the explanatory variables observed in other studies (e.g. increasing rural poverty (Shucksmith et al. 2021) or long-term economic decline (Dijkstra et al. (2020)). It could also be claimed that it is a *critical* case, where the aim is to dismiss existing theories (Eckstein 1975; Moses & Knutsen 2019). However, we are more concerned with contributing to the growing literature on the field by deepening our understanding of complexities behind current cases of rural unrest and upheavals. Thus, the case serves as a tool for reflection on the dynamics behind the periphery-based upheavals that can be observed in the Western Hemisphere.

According to Yin (2003), a case is a contemporary phenomenon studied in its context, and a mixture of empirical data may be used. The empirical materials we use in this study are diverse and include available statistics, findings and results of other researchers, and observations from our own research.

### Theoretical approach

In order to make sense of the recent upheavals in Norway, we argue that the increasing tensions between the larger urban centres and peripheries may be related to an increasing *alienation* arising from changes within the political economy that affect rural areas and peripheries in particular. Somewhat unusually within the literature, we do not derive our notion of alienation primarily from Marx's *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, written in 1844 and first published in 1932, in which he applied Hegelian and Feuerbachian concepts of alienation on the commodification of labour Marx (1988 [1932]). Instead, we base our understanding on later works such as the *Grundrisse* and the first volume of *Capital*, in which the theory of alienation is grounded more firmly within Marx's critique of the capitalist political economy (Marx 1990 [1867]; 1993 [1939]) (for a recent review of capitalism and alienation in Marx's work, see Øversveen 2022). The starting point of alienation theory is Marx's concept of production, and its centrality for individual and societal development. Marx argued that during the productive process we set in motion our mental and physical capabilities in order to alter external reality according to our needs, interests, and desires. Production is therefore both an expression of our human subjectivity, as well as the primary mechanism through which we interact with the world outside us (Marx 1990 [1867], 283). Through production we also enter into and develop social relationships with other people, either through direct cooperation or through the establishment of a division of labour in which we produce for each other (Marx 1993 [1939], 243). The results of production are therefore not limited to use values, but also include the human subject themselves, their relationship with nature and to the society to which they belong and contribute.

Under capitalism, labour is sold as a commodity that is purchased and put to work by capitalists who, due to their ownership over the means of production, generally initiate and control the productive process (Marx 1990 [1867]). The commodification and exploitation of labour gives rise to alienation, which we define as a *process in which the results of production are appropriated and transformed into capital*. The concept of alienation highlights the tendency of capital to revolutionise continually the productive process in order to fit with its own imperatives, for example through reorganization of the labour process, the concentration of property, the introduction of machinery, and the development of increasingly complex and specialised divisions of labour, leading to historically unprecedented rates of

productive and thus social development. In *Grundrisse*, Marx (1990 [1867]) argues that productive development in general tends to increase vastly the power of the social collective relative to the individual worker, while also making people more interconnected and mutually dependent. However, due to the alienation of labour, the social power created by advances in science, technology, and the division of labour does not accrue to the workers directly, but rather strengthens capital as a social force (Marx 1993 [1939], 308). Workers are thus estranged from the process and results of production, which creates an economic system that confronts the individual as an alien, quasi-natural, and antagonistic order. The central argument of alienation theory is thus that productive development under capitalism tends to produce a social order that appears to become more independent of us the more we become dependent on it, engendering subjective feelings of powerlessness, nihilism, and isolation, which paradoxically increase as people objectively become more powerful and interconnected (Øversveen 2022).

An important implication of alienation theory is that capitalism does not only produce material inequalities in income and wealth, but also limits people's capacity to influence, identify with, and comprehend the societies in which they live and contribute. Thus, alienation theory broadens the question of economic inequality to include questions of meaning, self-determination, democratic participation, and identity. Empirically, alienation theory predicts that alienation will disproportionately affect workers in industries characterised by rapid changes in production, for example through technological development, the concentration of property, and the replacement of democratic institutions by bureaucratised systems. As it is possible to recognise all of these processes in the Norwegian case, alienation theory provides both a fitting and innovative perspective from which to analyse the recent upheavals in the Norwegian countryside. Significantly for our analysis, the theory of alienation also suggests that these mechanisms operate relatively independently of inequalities in wealth or income, thereby allowing us to make sense of the presence of discontent and social conflict among the relatively economically privileged populations in the Norwegian periphery.

## The Norwegian case – rural upheaval in a wealthy resource-based political economy

### *The current upheaval from the periphery*

During the last few years, Norway has seen a range of protests from the peripheries. These have ranged from

civil disobedience, such as trying to stop the construction of wind turbines, to peaceful marches in traditional folk costumes to save local maternity wards, torchlight processions against carnivore management policy, and media protests against a range of public reforms for centralising regional government and services. A variety of protests have led to regional policy being put on the political agenda (e.g. Almås & Fuglestad 2020; Flø 2021). In 2018, the Norwegian magazine *Samtiden* dedicated a whole issue to the aforementioned protests, and the magazine's editorial connects this to broader Western trends in which elites have been pitted against 'the people' (*Samtiden* 2018). David Goodhart's then new book *The Road to Somewhere* (2017) is also mentioned and it is suggested that his distinction between global *anywheres* and place bound, often rural *somewheres*, applied also to developments in Norway (*Samtiden* 2018). In 2020, Almås and Fuglestad' anthology was published, in which they chronicle and analyse various aspects of what was then termed the 'rural rebellion' – a term also used by a Facebook group with 47,000 members across the country (Almås & Fuglestad 2020).

By the time of the national election of 2021, it had become clear that discontent from the peripheries had been significantly manifested in electoral behaviour (Eidheim & Fimreite 2020). Some described this as an electoral earthquake. First and foremost, it had a political expression in the substantial electoral success of the Centre Party – traditionally a party for farmers and for rural interests. In the local election of 2019, the Central party had their best election results in the party's history, with 15.4% of the votes (Melås & Blekesaune 2020; Todal Jensen 2020). The Centre Party's success continued in the 2021 general election, in which it gained nine new representatives in the Norwegian parliament, leading several Norwegian political commentators to crown party leader Trygve Slagsvold Vedum as the election's winner (e.g. Bredeveien 2021; Meland 2021). In terms of rural and regional policies, it seemed that the elections in 2019 and 2021 were a call for change, and the government platform of the new government of 2021 directly addressed many of the grievances that had emerged from rural areas and peripheries during the previous years (Regjeringen.no 2021).

## Centre-periphery relations, populist explanations, and recent scholarship

Centre-periphery tensions are not new in Norwegian history. On the contrary, Norway has a long tradition of protest and opposition from the peripheries. The political sociologist Stein Rokkan developed models for

understanding centre-periphery relations in Norway, which have since become influential both nationally and internationally (Valen & Rokkan 1974; Rokkan 1987). Rokkan (1987) describes how a series of core political issues and cleavages in Norwegian politics – in languages, in alcohol policies, in religious versus secular values, in labour versus capital, and in fishermen's and farmer's interests versus the capital interests – were part of relatively stable conflict constellations with a centre-periphery dimension. The material conflicts in Rokkan's model were based on the fundamental conflict lines in an agrarian and industrial-based society, which were the dominant sectors of production in Norway when Rokkan developed his model in the mid-1960s. However, these material conditions have changed, and thus many of the new arising conflicts were not explicitly captured in Rokkan's model, nor was globalisation.

Parallel with Rokkan's structuralist work on centre-periphery relations, social scientist Ottar Brox launched an alternative interpretative frame for understanding such conflicts in Norway with his now well-known book *Hva skjer i Nord-Norge* (translation: What is going on in Northern Norway) (Brox 1966). The Broxian perspective was self-proclaimed populist, and with a rational choice element at its core. Populism as a perspective was further developed by Hartvig Sætra (Sætra 1971) and by Brox (Brox 1984). Key elements in their populist perspective were the importance of small and local government, and local use of natural resources and labour. At its core, this populism was both anti-capitalist and anti-communist, and it accentuated how technocratic policies lead to discontent (Olteidal et al. 2021). Thus, it is not surprising that the Broxian populism was subject to severe critique (Asheim & Valestrand 1985).

Stein (2019) suggests that Rokkan's works and Brox' works can be seen as two alternative perspectives on understanding centre-periphery and urban-rural relations in Norway. However, we see them more as complementary than competing, as together they point both to the importance of structural developments (Rokkan), and the importance of local relations and popular action (Brox).

Recently, researchers such as Todal Jensen (2020) and Melås & Blekesaune (2020) have argued that what is happening now can be explained as a resistance towards specific government policies. By contrast, Stein et al. (2021) have argued, in line with Rokkan, that spatial distance is a key explanatory factor in understanding recent distrust towards central politicians. Furthermore, Flø (2018) has argued for a longer term perspective on state withdrawal from the peripheries, combined with the emergence of new social and

economic elites. In connection to this, and similar to Rodríguez-Pose's 'places that don't matter' thesis (Rodríguez-Pose 2020), Flø (2021) describes what he calls 'the feeling of being robbed', as rural people feel increasingly angry due to being left behind and forgotten by the state and the elites. This, in turn, can be seen in relation to different arguments put forward by Knudsen (2018) and Teigen (2019) regarding how regional and rural policies in Norway have lost their specific and traditional rural or peripheral focus.

While the above explanations have much merit and add to our understanding, we argue that in order to account for the recent rural upheavals in Norway, we need to take into consideration current changes in the economic organisation of rural industries, as well as the changes in the state and the welfare state. Therefore, our model consists of two different, but related elements: (1) ongoing changes in the political economy of rural industries and sectors driven by technological change, economic concentration, and globalisation, and (2) ideologically founded changes in the organisation of the Norwegian welfare state. Combined, both developments might have contributed to an increase in alienation in the Norwegian peripheries, fuelling discontent towards a social order that is geographically associated with the urban centre. This interpretation opens for better understandings of why we may see a rural and peripheral upheaval in a political economy of wealth and relatively low economic inequality. This helps to explain why otherwise heterogeneous groups from rural areas and peripheries often place themselves together, in opposition to the political and financial elites in the cities. It may also be argued that this model represents a bridge between the structuralist explanations of the Rokkan tradition and the populist Broxian tradition, as it emphasises both the changes in the political economy and the retreating role of the state as sources of alienation in rural and peripheral communities. In the next section, we go into more detail as to how the two developments manifest in the Norwegian political economy.

### A natural resource-based political economy

Norwegian capitalism springs from a nature-based political economy (Thue 2008), and the resources (e.g. petroleum, hydropower, agricultural land, forestry, fishery resources, aquaculture sites, geological resources) are mainly located in rural and coastal areas. However, contrary to many other resource-rich countries, Norway did not develop a system whereby aristocracies or capitalist elites reaped the resource rents for themselves. This probably has both

geographical and institutional causes. A basic feature of Norwegian geography in general and of rural areas in particular is the rugged and mountainous landscape; only 3% of the country's land area is arable land (for a description of the conditions of Norwegian agriculture, see e.g. Forbord et al. 2014). Furthermore, the patches of agricultural land that do exist are often dispersed in small patches far from each other, either along the coast or in the valleys. One consequence of this is that Norway historically did not develop a strong landed aristocracy with an associated feudal system and centralisation. For this reason, Sejersted (2002) describes a particularly Norwegian 'democratic capitalism'. The smallholding farmers became a key element in the nation-building process, very often in opposition to the urban elites (Gjerdåker 2002; Lunden 2002). Another defining geographical feature of the Norwegian resource-based political economy is the long coast and its vast ocean area, which has enabled Norway to develop a large fisheries-based economy and a trade-based merchant class along the coast.

The institutionalisation of a social-democratic order in the mid-20th century (Furre 1991), led to a wide distribution of natural resources, such as land and fishing rights amongst the rural population. This further led to relatively populous peripheries and many small economic centres spread across the country. The social-democratic order and the distribution of resources became an institutionalised part of the country's political economy. By the early 20th century, 98% of farmers owned their own land, which the land law of 1928 further encouraged (Almås 2004). In the fisheries, a decade-long struggle about who should have the right to access the fish resources culminated in the establishment of the Participation Law from 1950 (Kolle 2014). The law made it clear that it was mainly the fishermen who had themselves participated in fisheries who could own fishing vessels.

The above-described developments were made possible by a negotiated political order. In 1935, a political alliance had been forged between the Labour Party and the Farmer's Party<sup>3</sup> that became the class compromise foundation for a post-war political economy in which the rural industries were integrated. This consisted of a series of institutions and regulations, including co-operative organisations of farmers, fishermen, and forest owners, who were given core roles in the management of their industries (Almås 2004; Johnsen & Finstad 2020). At the time, there was broad political inclusion through the social-corporative political arrangement of rural industries, as well as a political

system that secured a strong electoral influence for those with rural interests.

Although counter-factual arguments are hard to validate with certainty (Fearon 1991), it is likely that the absence of an overall dominating political and/or economic elite was important for the institutional solutions that were chosen when Norway had to build a new institutional regime around new natural resources, such as the growing hydropower energy sector in the early 1900s (Thue 2003), and the new petroleum sector in the 1970s (Moses & Letnes 2017). In both cases, the common good was given considerable weight, even though there was a political struggle regarding the solutions.

The post-war management model of rural industries has gradually been put under considerable pressure by globalisation and technological change. In recent years, there have been several studies of the transformative powers of technology in rural industries in Norway. In the fishing sector, the technological development has affected both the regulations and the political struggles between groups of fishers (Johnsen & Vik 2013, Johnsen & Finstad 2020). Aquaculture has gone from a modest side activity of fishermen and locals in the 1970s, to becoming a corporate multibillion industry, due to developments in technology and markets (Hovland et al. 2014). In forestry, we have witnessed a transition from a slow manual labour-based industry to a high-tech and capital-intense industry where the room for manual work is very limited (St.meld. nr. 17 (1998–1999); Meld. St. 6 (2016–2017)). In agriculture, technological changes, such as the milking robot (Vik et al. 2019) and the round bale technology (Fuglestad et al. 2021), are changing both the ownership structure and distribution of production rights.

Thus, we see apparent paradoxical situations in many of the key rural industries: huge improvements and growth in productivity and economic results, which have also led to a major structural change in which many have had to leave the rural and coastal industries. In agriculture, the home market sets limits on how much total production volume can increase. In this situation, increases in production for some units mean that others are being squeezed out of the market (Vik 2020). The fisheries are not limited by the home market, but by their access to resources and quotas. There is a strong concentration in both fish farming and traditional fishing. In all primary industries, there is a continuing decline in the number of businesses, such that fewer people produce more, and thus only a few people take part in the increased productivity. This means that

<sup>3</sup>Following a long debate, the farmers party changed its name to the Center Party in 1959 (Ohman-Nielsen 2001).

fewer people have a say in the use of the resources found in rural Norway. We see that the primary industries that for the past 70 years were founding pillars for rural policies have now become too marginal and too concentrated to have the same function. Thus, we also see that even in times when productivity and economy in rural economies prosper, an increasing part of the rural population finds itself disconnected and alienated from traditional rural industries.

However, there are prosperous alternatives to the traditional rural industries. In Northern Norway, tourism has now surpassed the primary industries in employment numbers (Førde 2020). The tourism industry is founded on the use of public resources – the nature, the Northern Lights, the sea, the fish, and the cultural landscape. This has led to a substantial increase in tourism-related jobs, but also to new tensions. Firstly, there are new tensions between villagers on the one side and tourists on the other. Secondly, we see that the profit often remains in the larger towns and cities where tourists often are accommodated, while the places they ‘consume’ are located in more remote villages. Thirdly, a new tension arises between those who live *off* the tourism industry, and those who live and work *in* the landscapes and villages that the tourists visit. Thus, also the growing rural tourism creates new tensions (Farstad & Rye 2013; Farstad 2018) and forms of marginalisation (Førde 2020).

### The greedy state – a large state that rolls back

In parallel to the economic developments, also the public sector and the political landscape of Norway are going through substantial changes. Across the Western world, the interventionist state is on the retreat (Zohlnhöfer et al. 2018). In the Norwegian case, we may describe the emergence of a more ‘greedy state’. This is not an expanding welfare state that provides more services to its citizens in a traditional social democratic spirit, nor is it the minimal state of the new liberal right-wing parties that argue that the state should be ‘rolled back’ (e.g. Hayek 1960; Nozick 1974). What we are seeing is the emergence of a new kind of state that combines a large public sector with rolling back services to the rural public and in peripheral areas in general. It is the combination of the worst of two worlds – a public sector that withdraws and reduces its services, but without reducing taxes, control, or bureaucracy. This has affected the peripheries in particular: During the past 30 years, the amount of money spent on specific rural

and regional policies has been substantially reduced (Teigen 2019). In addition, several institutions with a specific rural and peripheral focus, as Statens Fiskarbank (state fishers bank), Statens Landbruksbank (state agriculture bank), and the Regional Development Fund (Distriktenes utbyggingsfond) were merged into the more general institution, Innovation Norway (Innovation Norway n.d.), as rural policy was increasingly seen as being more about competition, export, and innovation, than about direct state support (Flø 2018). The 2018 police reform (Nærpolitireformen) has led to the closure of police offices in many rural communities, as well as a more centralised police forces (Stranden 2020). Also, ambulance services have been centralised, several maternity homes and local hospitals in the small and medium-sized towns are to be closed (Almås et al. 2020), university colleges are being centralised (Knudsen 2019), municipalities and counties are going through fusions (Stein et al. 2021), ferry prices have risen significantly, and domestic flight routes to more remote places are being shut down (Almås & Fuglestad 2020). As stated by an influential newspaper commentator, ‘Rural Norway is being built down service by service, institution by institution’ (Åmås 2020).

It is important to note that what is happening in Norway is not necessarily best described as centralisation. A publication from the Norwegian Agency for Public Management and e-Government contains the term ‘decentralised concentration’ (Difi 2019), meaning that public workplaces are located in fewer places, not necessarily in Oslo and central parts of Norway, but in the medium-sized cities and regional centres across the country.<sup>4</sup> This applies to services and institutions such as the Norwegian Coastal Administration, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration, and the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, all of which traditionally used to have a strong presence in coastal and rural areas. A driving force for the change is the ‘debureaucratisation and efficiency (ABE) reform’ (Avbyråkratisering og effektiviseringsreformen) launched by the Norwegian Government in 2015 (Oppegård et al. 2019). It is a relatively little discussed, but very significant reform. It imposes a 0.5% cut per year in the operating expenses of all public institutions. Initially, the ABE reform did not lead to any substantial political protests. However, when applied over several years, it became apparent that the cuts started to have a significant effect, especially for the institutions that were relatively small from the beginning. Oppegaard et al. (2019) show that the reform works through reducing staff, as well as

<sup>4</sup>DIFI’s notion of decentralised concentration of public workplaces is slightly different from the demographic tendency of decentralisation (e.g. Rasmussen 2010; Almås 2015).



reorganisations, both of which affect small public offices in rural and peripheral areas more strongly than the large offices in the capitol.

The withdrawal of public institutions and services from the peripheries despite substantial protests has contributed to a feeling of powerlessness and alienation. Analytically, the processes described above may be interpreted as part of a general process in which the welfare state has become more alienated from everyday life in the peripheries, rendering the political sphere more distant, less relatable, and less susceptible to local democratic control. From the periphery's perspective, the development of the welfare state that has taken place in recent decade is therefore adding to the alienation and marginalisation described in the development of the rural industries.

## Discussion

From the article thus far, it is apparent that two different but connected perspectives or frames of interpretation may be applied to understand the upheaval from the peripheries in Norway: an interest-based perspective that addresses the economic basis of rural political economy, and a political, ideologically based perspective that addresses what in Marxist terms may be described as the superstructure of peripheral realities, namely the welfare state, both of which create sentiments of alienation.

The first perspective implies interpreting the various mobilisations from the periphery as consequences of structural changes in rural industries and economic sectors. The new rural political economy, driven by technological change and globalisation, has altered the traditional decentralised distribution of property, creating new interest groups fighting for economic interests, and new forms of alienation. In agriculture, jobs disappear due to technological developments, mainly in the peripheral areas where geography and climate makes large-scale production difficult (Vik 2020). Norwegian food producers are losing ground in volume production due to increased international competition and reduction in protective tariffs (Bjørkhaug et al. 2015). Part of this loss, but far from all of it, can be compensated for by increased value creation, for example in the production of local food and rural tourism. The seafood and oil industries are doing relatively well in the context of globalisation, but the competitive nature of these industries is putting the employees under substantial pressure. Other rural industries and enterprises are struggling in export markets due to the high level of production costs in Norway. The onshore food industry is doing reasonably well, due to tariffs and other support schemes for Norwegian-made raw materials.

Nevertheless, increased productivity in combination with a fixed home market is leading to a centralising of production facilities, also in food processing (Kimek 2015). In abstracting somewhat, we therefore may speak of a general process in which economic and technological development has coincided with, and in some instances been accomplished through, the disenfranchisement of rural workers from industries and resources they have traditionally controlled, creating a process of economic alienation that breeds feelings of estrangement, powerlessness, and frustration.

The second perspective, as an interpretational frame, means that we see a change in the basis of ideology. In post-war Norway, the idea of a strong and active state, both in rural and regional politics and in general economic policy, was central (Lie 2012; Teigen 2019). This thinking has changed since the 1980s, when neoliberal policies and ideas entered into Norwegian public policy in general (Mydske et al. 2007), and rural and regional policies in particular (e.g. Teigen 2019). For rural areas and peripheries, this has implied fewer jobs and a stagnant and aging population (NOU 2020:15). In this context, the dismantling of specifically rural policies and institutions, 'decentralised concentration', and the rolling back of public services might have produced a sense of political abandonment in which the welfare state – traditionally a symbol of national identification and solidarity – is perceived as increasingly distant or even antagonistic. Thus, rural populations experience real losses in term of workplaces, services, and control. These developments may be interpreted as a form of political alienation, which combined with the economic alienation has provide a fertile ground for rural protests and upheavals.

The two frames of interpretation help us to understand how fundamental changes in the use of key rural resources such as agricultural land, forests, and fisheries, combined with a changing ideological approach to public policies, have provoked the recent upheaval from the Norwegian peripheries. On a more general level, the above-mentioned developments may be described as a process of rural and peripheral alienation, in which populations in such areas have become increasingly detached from local industries, the traditional ways of life with which they are associated, and the welfare state as a legitimate arena of political representation. While these developments may have been intended to stimulate economic growth and create a more efficient state apparatus, their benefits may not be immediately apparent from a local perspective. Rather, they seem to have produced experiences of powerlessness and isolation from the centres of control, in turn creating a paradoxical situation in

which economic development increases rather than decreases social dissatisfaction. As Cramer (2016) argues in her study of rural resentment in Wisconsin, perceptions of injustice are not necessarily directly determined by economic realities, but they are also shaped by people's experiences of power and status in their daily lives.

Applying alienation theory to the Norwegian case allows us to understand how changes in the political economy may produce qualitative experiences of deprivation relatively independently from quantitative changes in income or wealth inequality. Politically, the discontent created by the economic and political alienation of people in the peripheries may be easily mobilised into opposition towards an urban centre perceived as ultimately responsible for these unwelcomed developments. As a result, centre-periphery conflicts may be reactivated even in the absence of increasing inequality or industrial decline. Regardless of whether the current rural and peripheral protest movements in Norway fall, either partly or fully, under the umbrella of populism or nationalist politics, the key is to understand that the real changes to the country's political economy affect the lives of people living in the peripheries, and that populations in these areas and those identifying with them react to that. In this sense, we can say that there are elements of the Broxian populist tradition in the current rural and peripheral discontent. However, there are clearly also elements of the structural elements created in the political economy, which are similar to Rokkan's perspectives (Rokkan 1987). Taken together then, this points to a rural and peripheral alienation that may explain the recent global emergence of politics where otherwise heterogeneous groups fit together in groups of 'somewheres' and 'anwheres', to use Goodhart's terms (Goodhart 2017).

## Conclusions

In this article we have proposed alienation combined with a political economy perspective to understand recent upheavals from the peripheries in Norway. We have suggested that this can serve as a basis for understanding similar upheavals in Western countries in general. However, we do not claim this to be a definitive or fully developed perspective. Rather, the article is a reflective piece of work in which we have sought to put together fragments of a sort of 'third way' of understanding such upheavals in contemporary Western capitalist societies that places itself between current dominating populist perspectives on the one side and traditional centre-periphery models on the other side.

The approach is elaborated with the use of the Norwegian case. Our perspective is suggestive, and we point to the importance of looking at long-term developments in the nature-based rural industries, combined with ideological and functional changes to the state, and to how such changes unite various groups from the peripheries and from rural areas in a state of alienation vis-à-vis the urban political and economic elites. Our main suggestion is that it is not marginalisation that creates tensions between centre and periphery, but rather experiences of alienation related to transitions within the political economy. We have sought to show the usefulness of this theory with the Norwegian case, which is characterised by having a strong natural resource-based rural economy spread across a stretched out and mountainous country, and a well-functioning welfare state. For other countries and cases, different characteristics will be dominant. Notwithstanding this, alienation stemming from a combination of transitions in the political economy and public withdrawal may prove to be a core element for understanding upheavals in the peripheries.

## References

- Åmås, K.O. 2020. Ennå har vi bare sett den spede starten på distriktsopprøret. *Aftenposten*. 31 October 2020. <https://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/i/kRR3vQ/ennaa-har-vi-bare-sett-den-spede-starten-paa-distriktsopproeret-knut-ol> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Almås, R. 2004. *Norwegian Agricultural History*. Trondheim: Tapir Academic Press.
- Almås, R. 2015. Regionale utviklingstrekk og distriktskommunens framtid i eit tjueårsperspektiv. *Plan* 47(2), 15–21.
- Almås, R. & Fuglestad, E.M. (eds.) 2020. *Distriktsopprør: Periferien på nytt i sentrum*. Oslo: Dreyer forlag.
- Almås, R.M., Fuglestad, E.M. & Melås, A.M. 2020. Dei nye distriktsopprøra i lys av varige konfliktlinjar i norsk politikk. Almås, R. & Fuglestad, E.M. (eds.) *Distriktsopprør: Periferien på nytt i sentrum*, 9–31. Oslo: Dreyer forlag.
- Asheim, B.T. & Valestrand, H. 1985. *Kritisk regionalforskning i Norge: radikal samfunnsanalyse eller populistisk ideologi?* Geografisk Institutt, Universitetet i Oslo. <https://www.nb.no/items/3f976fc6537cbdc3ebd01a3d8ba1db70?searchText=> (accessed 3 August 2022).
- Ashwood, L. 2018. *For-Profit Democracy: Why the Government is Losing the Trust of Rural America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Berg, N.G. & Lysgård, H.K. 2017. Rural development and policies: The case of post-war Norway. Halfacree, K., Kovách, I. & Woodward, R. (eds.) *Leadership and Local Power in European Rural Development*, 255–272. eBook. London: Routledge.
- Bernstein, H. 2020. Unpacking 'authoritarian populism' and rural politics: Some comments on ERPI. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 47(7), 1526–1542.
- Bjørkhaug, H., Almås, R. & Vik, J. (eds.) 2015. *Norsk matmakt i endring*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

- Bredeveien, J.M. 2021. Valgvinner Vedum. *Dagsavisen* 13 September 2021. <https://www.dagsavisen.no/debatt/kommentar/2021/09/13/valgvinner-vedum/> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Brooks, S. 2020. Brexit and the politics of the rural. *Sociologia Ruralis* 60(4), 790–809.
- Brox, O. 1966. *Hva skjer i Nord-Norge?* Oslo: Pax.
- Brox, O. 1984. *Nord-Norge: Fra allmenning til koloni*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Carolan, M. 2020. ‘They say they don’t see color, but maybe they should!’ Authoritarian populism and colorblind liberal political culture. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 47(7), 1445–1469.
- Cramer, K. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cruikshank, J., Lysegård, H.K. & Magnussen, M.L. 2009. The logic of the construction of rural politics: Political discourses on rurality in Norway. *Geografiska Annaler, Series B: Human Geography* 91(1), 73–89.
- Difi 2019. Digitalisering, kompetansebehov og effektivisering gir desentral konsentrasjon. Om utvikling i lokaliseringen av statlige arbeidsplasser. Difi rapport 2019/4. Oslo: Direktoratet for forvaltning og IKT.
- Dijkstra, L., Polman, H. & Rodríguez-Pose, A. 2020. The geography of discontent. *Regional Studies* 54(6), 737–754.
- Eckstein, H. 1975. Case study and theory in political science. Greenstein, F.I. & Polsby, N.W. (eds.) *Strategies of Inquiry*, 97–122. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Edelman, M. 2020. From ‘populist moment’ to authoritarian era: Challenges, dangers, possibilities. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 47(7), 1418–1444.
- Eidheim, M.R. & Fimreite, A.L. 2020. Geografisk konflikt i det politiske landskapet: En fortelling om to dimensjoner. *Norsk Statsvitenskapelig Tidsskrift* 36(2), 56–78.
- Farstad, M. 2018. The moral dilemma of second home owners’ position in the host community. Hall, C.M. & Müller, D. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Second Home Tourism and Mobilities*, 258–266. Oxford: Routledge.
- Farstad, M. & Rye, J.F. 2013. Second home owners, locals and their perspectives on rural development. *Journal of Rural Studies* 30, 41–51.
- Fearon, J.D. 1991. Counterfactuals and hypothesis testing in political science. *World Politics* 43(2), 169–195.
- Feilzer, M.Y. 2010. Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: Implications for the rediscovery of pragmatism as a research paradigm. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 4(1), 6–16.
- Flø, B.E. 2018. Av svik kom misstru sigande. *Samtiden* [Tidsskrift for kultur og samfunn] 126(1), 54–61.
- Flø, B.E. 2021. The feeling of being robbed. Pospech, P., Fuglestad, E.M. & Figuriado, E. (eds.) *Politics and Policies of Rural Authenticity*, 94–109. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Førde, A. 2020. Uro i turismens tidsalder: Stadkvalitetar under press. Almås R. & Fuglestad, E.M. (eds.) *Distriktsopprør: Periferien på nytt i sentrum*, 260–275. Oslo: Dreyer forlag.
- Forbord, M., Bjørkhaug, H. & Burton, R.J.F. 2014. Drivers of change in Norwegian agricultural land control and the emergence of rental farming. *Journal of Rural Studies* 33, 9–19.
- Fuglestad, E.M., Vik, J., Finstad, T. & Søraa, R.A. 2021. Compressed growth – The transforming power of the round bale technology. *Journal of Rural Studies* 84, 174–179.
- Furre, B. 1991. *Vårt hundreår: Norsk historie 1905–1990*. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- Geier, P. & Grini, K.H. 2018. *Brattere trapp til lønnstoppen*. Statistisk sentralbyrå. 29 October 2018. <https://www.ssb.no/arbeid-og-lonn/artikler-og-publikasjoner/brattere-trapp-til-lonnstoppen> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Gjerdåker, B. 2002. *Norges landbrukshistorie III: Kontinuitet og modernitet: 1814–1920*. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- Goodhart, D. 2017. *The Road to Somewhere: The Populist Revolt and the Future of Politics*. London: C. Hurst and Co.
- Graddy-Lovelace, G. 2019. U.S. farm policy as fraught populism: Tracing the scalar tensions of nationalist agricultural governance. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 109(2), 395–411.
- Guilluy, C. 2019. *Twilight of the Elites: Prosperity, the Periphery and the Future of France*. Translated by Malcolm Debevoise. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Hayek, F.A. 1960. *The Constitution of Liberty*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Hochschild, A.R. 2018. *Strangers in Their Own Land*. New York: The New Press.
- Hovland, E., Møller, D., Haaland, A., Kolle, N., Hersough, B. & Nævdal, G. 2014. *Over den leiken ville han rå*. Norsk Havbruksnærings Historie Bind V. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.
- Innovation Norway. n.d. We contribute to sustainable growth and exports for Norwegian businesses through capital and expertise. <https://www.innovasjon norge.no/en/start-page/> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Johnsen, J.P. & Vik, J. 2013. Pushed or pulled? Understanding fishery exit in a welfare society context. *Maritime Studies* 12 (1): Article 4.
- Johnsen, J.P. & Finstad, B.-P. 2020. Er en annen verden mulig? Et institusjonelt perspektiv på kystopprør. Almås, R. & Fuglestad E.M. (eds.) *Distriktsopprør: Periferien på Nytt i Sentrum*, 195–218. Oslo: Dreyer forlag.
- Kimek, B. 2015. Fusjoner og oppkjøp i norsk matindustri under økt internasjonal integrasjon siden 1990-tallet. Bjørkhaug, H., Almås, R. & Vik, J. (eds.) *Norsk matmakt i endring*, 118–147. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.
- Knudsen, J.P. 2018. Towards a new spatial perspective – Norwegian politics at the crossroads. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift–Norwegian Journal of Geography* 72(2), 67–81.
- Knudsen, J.P. 2019. Reorganisering av UH-sektoren – nasjonsbygging med regionsmak. Knudsen, J.P. & Lauvdal, T. (eds.) *Geografi, kunnskap, vitenskap: Den regionale UH-sektorens framvekst og betydning*, 241–265. Oslo: Cappelen Damm.
- Kolle, N. 2014. Strid om veivalg. Kolle, N. (ed.) Bergen: Fagbokforlaget. En næring i omforming 1880–1970. Norges fiskeri- og kysthistorie bind 3, 395–416. Norges fiskeri- og kysthistorie bind 3. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.
- Lie, E. 2012. *Norsk økonomisk politikk etter 1905*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Lijphart, A. 1971. Comparative politics and the comparative method. *American Political Science Review* 65(3), 682–693.
- Lunden, K. 2002. *Frå svartedauden til 17. mai*. Norges landbrukshistorie II. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.
- Mamonova, N. & Franquesa, J. 2020a. Populism, neoliberalism and agrarian movements in Europe: Understanding rural support for right-wing politics and looking for progressive solutions. *Sociologia Ruralis* 60(4), 710–731.

- Mamonova, N. & Franquesa, J. 2020b. Right-wing populism in rural Europe. Introduction to the special issue. *Sociologia Ruralis* 60(4), 702–709.
- Marx, K. 1988 [1932]. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. New York: Prometheus Books.
- Marx, K. 1990 [1867]. *Capital. Volume One*. London: Penguin Classics.
- Marx, K. 1993 [1939]. *Grundrisse*. London: Penguin Classics.
- McCarthy, J. 2019. Authoritarianism, populism, and the environment: Comparative experiences, insights, and perspectives. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 109(2), 301–313.
- Meland, A. 2021. Han er valgets store vinner. VG 14 September 2021. <https://www.vg.no/nyheter/meninger/i/IVvKz7/han-er-valgets-store-vinner> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Meld. St. 6 (2016–2017). *Verdier i vekst – Konkurransedyktig skog- og trenæring*. Oslo: Landbruks- og matdepartementet.
- Melås, A.M. & Blekesaune, A. 2020. En kvantitativ analyse av fremgangen til Senterpartiet ved kommunevalget i 2019. Almås, R. & Fuglestad, E.M. (eds.) *Distriktsopprør: Periferien på nytt i sentrum*, 82–103. Oslo: Dreyers forlag.
- Moses, J.W. & Letnes, B. 2017. *Managing Resource Abundance and Wealth: The Norwegian Experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Moses, J. & Knudsen, T. 2019. *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research*. 3rd ed. London: Red Globe Press.
- Mydske, P.K., Claes, D.H. & Lie, A. 2007. *Nyliberalisme – Ideer og politisk virkelighet*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- NOU 2020:15. *Det handler om Norge – Utredning om konsekvenser av demografiutfordringer i distriktene*. Kommunal- og distriktsdepartementet. <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/nou-2020-15/id2788079/> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Nozick, R. 1974. *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Øversveen, E. 2022. Capitalism and alienation: Towards a Marxist theory of alienation for the 21st century. *European Journal of Social Theory* 25(3), 440–457.
- Ohman-Nielsen, M. 2001. *Bondekamp om markedsrett: Senterpartiets historie 1920–1959*. Oslo: Samlaget.
- Oltedal, A., Ystad, V. & Årsæther, N. 2021. Den venlege populismen. *Syn og Segn*. <https://www.synogsegn.no/2021/den-venlege-populismen/> (accessed 3 August 2021).
- Omholt, E.L. 2018. *Sterk formuesøkning, større ulikhet*. Statistisk sentralbyrå. 20 December. <https://www.ssb.no/inntekt-og-forbruk/artikler-og-publikasjoner/sterk-formuesokning-storre-ulikhet> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Oppegaard, S., Seip, Å.A. & Svalund, J. 2019. *ABE-reformen i staten: Avbyråkratisering og effektivisering gjennom budsjettkutt*. Fafo-rapport 2019:36. Oslo: Fafo.
- Pospěch, P., Fuglestad, E.M. & Figueiredo, E. 2021. *Politics and Policies of Rural Authenticity*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Rasmussen, T.F. 2010. Hele folket i storbyer? *Plan* 42(5), 36–41. Regjeringen.no 2021. *Hurdalsplattformen: 2021–2025*. 14 October 2021. <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/hurdalsplattformen/id2877252/> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Rokkan, S. 1987. *Stat, nasjon, klasse: Essays i politisk sosiologi*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Rodríguez-Pose, A. 2020. The rise of populism and the revenge of the places that don't matter. *LSE Public Policy Review* 1(1): Article 4.
- Sætra, H. 1971. *Populismen i norsk sosialisme*. Oslo: Pax forlag.
- Samtiden 2018. Det lokale nummeret 27(1). <https://www.idunn.no/toc/samtiden/127/1> (accessed 3 August 2022).
- Scoones, I., Edelman, M., Borrás, S.M., Hall, R., Wolford, W. & White, B. 2018. Emancipatory rural politics: Confronting authoritarian populism. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 45(1), 1–20.
- Sejersted, F. 2002. *Demokratisk kapitalisme*. Oslo: Pax Forlag.
- Shucksmith, M., Chapman, P., Glass, J. & Atterton, J. 2021. *Rural Lives: Understanding Financial Hardship and Vulnerability in Rural Areas*. SRUC. <https://pure.sruc.ac.uk/en/publications/rural-lives-understanding-financial-hardship-and-vulnerability-in> (accessed 3 August 2022).
- Statistisk sentralbyrå. n.d. *Fattigdomsproblemer, levekårsundersøkelsen. 12124: Økonomisk romslighet og betalingsvansker, etter bostedsstrøk 2017–2020*. <https://www.ssb.no/statbank/table/12124/tableViewLayout1/> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- St.meld. nr. 17 (1998–1999). *Verdiskaping og miljø – muligheter i skogsektoren*. Oslo: Landbruks- og matdepartementet.
- Stein, J. 2019. *What Happened in Northern Norway? A Comparative and Quantitative Analysis of Political and Demographic Development in Northern Norway from 1950 to 2015*. PhD Thesis. Tromsø: UiT The Arctic University of Norway.
- Stein, J., Buck, M. & Bjørnå, H. 2021. The centre–periphery dimension and trust in politicians: The case of Norway. *Territory, Politics, Governance* 9(1), 37–55.
- Stranden, A.L. 2020. *Nærpolitireformen ga et mer sentralisert politi*. Forskning.no 23 June 2020. <https://forskning.no/politi/naerpolitireformen-ga-et-mer-sentralisert-politi/1698329> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- Strijker, D., Voerman, G. & Terulin, I.J. (eds.) 2015. *Rural Protest Groups and Political Protest Parties*. Wageningen: Wageningen Academic.
- Tavory, I. & Timmermans, S. 2014. *Abductive Analysis: Theorizing Qualitative Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Teigen, H. 2019. *Distriktspolitikens historie i Norge*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk.
- Thue, L. 2003. *For egen kraft: Kraftkommunene og det norske kraftregimet 1887–2003*. Oslo: Abstrakt forlag.
- Thue, L. 2008. Norway: A resource-based and democratic capitalism. Fellman, S., Iversen, M.J., Sjögren, H. & Thue, L. (eds.) *Creating Nordic Capitalism: The Business History of a Competitive Periphery* 394–493. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Todal Jensen, A. 2020. Et rekordvalg for Senterpartiet – et brot fra periferien eller distriktspopulisme. Almås, R. & Fuglestad, E.M. (eds.) *Distriktsopprør: Periferien på nytt i sentrum*, 54–81. Oslo: Dreyer forlag.
- Valen, H. & Rokkan, S. 1974. Norway: Conflict structure and mass politics in a European periphery. Rose, R. (ed.) *Electoral Behavior: A Comparative Handbook*, 315–370. New York: Free Press.

- Vik, J. 2020. The agricultural policy trilemma: On the wicked nature of agricultural policy making. *Land Use Policy* 99: Article 105059.
- Vik, J., Stræte, E.P., Hansen, B.G. & Nærland, T. 2019. The political robot – The structural consequences of automated milking systems (AMS) in Norway. *NJAS: Wageningen Journal of Life Sciences* 90: Article 100305.
- World Bank. 2022. *World Development Indicators*. <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=NY.GDP.PCAP.CD&country=> (accessed 24 May 2022).
- World Economic Forum. n.d. *The Inclusive Development Index 2018. Summary and Data Highlights*. [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Forum\\_IncGrwth\\_2018.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Forum_IncGrwth_2018.pdf) (accessed 3 August 2022).
- Yin, R.K. 2003. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Applied Social Research Methods Series 5. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Zohlnhöfer, R., Engler, F. & Dümig, K. 2018. The retreat of the interventionist state in advanced democracies. *British Journal of Political Science* 48(2), 535–562.