

Transnational Rurality: Bridging Two Towns with Renewable Energy

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Abstract : The rural is no longer a space of only agricultural activities that gave into the global market demands; or an idyll to return after retirement; or only a reservoir of cultural values, but rather a vision to redefine the future in terms of production and consumption relations. Gulpınar in Turkey and Ashtarak in Armenia are two towns where a new ground of dialogue between two communities has been initiated: 'energy democracy', which is a significant driving force in a sense of gathering people of two historically conflicted communities around common future concerns; and in a sense of transforming the accepted knowledge on the rurality and all the social structures it represents. This paper seeks to provoke a discussion of to what extent such a rurality is attainable by contextualizing - through visits and meetings in person - two towns and two communities within a renewable energy project called 'Under the Same Sun' carried out by two local civil society organizations together at two public spaces.

Keywords : civil society, energy democracy, prosumer communities, renewable energy, transnational rurality

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