



Graduate School
for East and Southeast
European Studies



Institutional Change in Political Economies and Varieties of Methods in Social Science Research on Postcommunism

International Workshop

by the Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies

Date: 19-20 May 2017

Venue: Institute of Sociology, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München,
Konradstraße 6, 80801 Munich

Convenors: Prof. Dr. Alexander Libman, Peter Wegenschimmel, Mag.

Concept and Plan of the Workshop

The workshop's goal is to focus on the methodological challenges arising from the research on the multitude of economic transformation trajectories of the post-Communist countries (in Central and Eastern Europe and in the post-Soviet Eurasia) and their societal outcomes. One of the most contested issues between area studies and broader social sciences has been the need to, first, understand how concepts and theories developed in a particular environment 'travel' across different regions, and second, whether the empirical research methods are able to produce interesting results in different regional contexts (taking into account the specifics of local societies, data availability, constraints for researchers etc.). In some cases, this discussion is fairly elaborate (this is the case, in particular, for China). In case of the post-Communist world, this discussion has been more limited and, if happened at all, frequently detached from the actual empirical work done by social scientists. The workshop attempts to bridge this gap, with its two parts: the methods round table (devoted explicitly to understanding the conceptual and empirical challenges associated with studying post-Communist regions) and three thematical panels, where research papers on certain topics should be presented and demonstrate the actual empirical challenges researchers face.

Methods Round Table

The methods round table is devoted to a very general discussion of the methodological challenges (if any) associated with the research on the post-Soviet Eurasia and Central and Eastern Europe. The round table, in particular, aims to discuss the following topics:

- Advantages and limitations of standard social science methodologies (large-N quantitative research, qualitative theory-driven research, anthropological methods) in terms of studying post-Communist countries
- Changes of applicability of empirical methodologies to the post-Communist countries over time
- The ability of general social science theoretical concepts to ‘travel’ between the context in which they were developed and the post-Communist world
- Differences between the Central Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet Eurasia and the ability of the researchers to consider them as a unified region
- The problem of ‘academic protectionism’ in the social science communities in the post-Communist countries.

Individual sessions on particular topics

Subsequent sessions are devoted to the discussion of individual research papers, paying particular attention to the empirical and methodological challenges associated with their implementations.

- The first section (Transformation of the State) addresses issues concerning the change of the role of government and public policy in post-Communist economies (ranging from the relations between government and business and governmental regulation to the role economic policy place in stability of authoritarian regimes).
- The second section (Transformations of Industrial Relations) talks about change in the internal practices of business organizations (enterprises), as well as in the organization’s external environment (labor markets, relations to suppliers and consumers etc.).
- The last panel (Transformation of Informality) focuses at the economic practices beyond the formal sector. They have been conceptualized differently in the research on economic transition (e.g., as deinstitutionalization). The papers of this panel also look at the behavior of households and at the social boundaries of work.

Program

Friday, 19th May 2017

– Room 309 –

18.00 Opening

18:05 – 19:30 Research Methods Panel Discussion

Carsten Herrmann-Pillath (Erfurt)

Eeva Kesküla (Tallinn)

Adam Mrozowicki (Wroclaw)

Andrei Yakovlev (Moscow)

Chair: Alexander Libman (Munich)

Saturday, 20th May 2017

– Room 308 –

09:00 – 11:00 Transformations of State Agency

Piotr Kozarzewski (Lublin):

Evolution of the Ownership Role of the State during the Post-Communist Transition:
The case of Poland

Andrei Yakovlev (Moscow):

Attitude to the National Leader through the Lenses of Investment Climate
Assessment: The Case of Russia

Michael Rochlitz (Munich):

Regional Investment Promotion Agencies and Authoritarian Political Support:
Experimental Evidence from Russia

Peter Wegenschimmel (Regensburg):

Counter-Revolutions during Post-Socialist Transformations: Insights Provided by an
Organization-Based Approach

Chair: Alexander Libman (Munich)

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee Break

11:15 – 13:15 Transformations of Industrial Relations

Vassil Kirov (Sofia):

Revisiting Industrial Relations in South-Eastern Europe: Weakening, Awakening and
Specificity

Marta Kahancová (Bratislava):

Beyond the Crisis: Innovative Union Practices in Central-Eastern Europe

Manuela Troschke (Regensburg):

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Barbara Krug (Frankfurt):
Governance – Not Government! Insights from the Empirical Analysis of China's
Economic Transformation

Chair: Carsten Herrmann-Pillath (Erfurt)

13:30 – 15:00 Lunch

15:00 – 17:00 Transformations in Informality

Adam Mrozowicki (Wroclaw):
Shifting Boundaries of Work: Precarity in the Post-Transformational Poland

Eeva Kesküla (Tallinn):
Family in the Company: Family and the Company in Estonian and Kazakhstani
Mining Communities

Maja Breznik (Ljubljana):
Second Hand Workers

Alla Bolotova (St. Petersburg):
Transformations of Communities, Industries and the State in Single Industry Towns in
the Russian Arctic

Chair: Piotr Filipkowski (Vienna)

