

Unsettling the Hegemonic Gaze: Translation and Transfer of Knowledge on Southeast Europe

Workshop of the Südosteuropa Gesselschaft

In cooperation with the University of Regensburg, University of Goettingen, and with the additional support of Schroubek Fonds Östlichen Europa

When: 10-11 December 2021

Where: Leibniz Institut für Ost- und Südosteuropa Forschung, room 319, Landshutter str. 4, 93047 Regensburg

Working languages are German and English.

The workshop will provide a venue to discuss the relationship between language and the production of knowledge from a comparative transnational and European perspective.

Although scholarship is increasingly internationalised, connected, and oriented towards collaboration, it is also hierarchically structured in the economic and socio-political sense. These hierarchies point to inequalities at organizational, national, and international scales, which structure the process of cooperation between European centres and the Southeast European peripheries.

A good illustration of this are the German-speaking Southeast European studies, which are often inspired by a wish to support and strengthen Europeanization of this region and to enable the movement of knowledge between the “East” and the “West”. However, it is unclear how distant this goal remains, considering the hegemonic processes that take place at the level of geopolitics and the ways in which they structure the production of knowledge. What happens with the circulation of knowledge in everyday life? Who has access to this knowledge? It seems as if expert knowledge remains in a rather closed circulation between area specialists.

During the workshop, we will consider how the process of Europeanization of the humanities and social sciences, and the hierarchies between European regions, open some avenues for research and collaboration, but foreclose others, shaping the limits of what kinds of knowledge about Southeast Europe can be recognized and supported as relevant.

We will also look at the place that the research of Southeast Europe has in different academic disciplines. We will inquire what methodological assumptions are considered as relevant, or even defined as trend-setting.

More specifically, we will discuss the following key questions.

Sketching the hegemonic gaze at Southeast Europe:

What is the dominant way of imagining movement and “transfer” of academic, policy, and cultural knowledge between the EU and the Southeast Europe? What kinds of knowledge about Southeast Europe are hegemonically seen as relevant and worthy of financial and other support?

Reversing the hegemonic gaze at Southeast Europe:

How do Germany and the rest of the European Union learn from actors in Southeast Europe? What instances of policy-related “good practices” have been adopted from Southeast Europe and implemented in Germany or other EU countries? What scholarly concepts and theories have been translated, “transferred”, and are now taught at the universities in Germany and the rest of the EU?

Unsettling the hegemonic gaze at Southeast Europe:

What sorts of technologies, infrastructures, and unexpected actors (from international to non-human) enable the knowledge “transfer” and the translation of knowledge between Southeast Europe and Germany? What actors, directions, and characteristics of the movement of knowledge remain invisible, undiscussed, and undertheorized when we either reproduce or reverse the hegemonic gaze at Southeast Europe?

What is the situation with the making knowledge public?

Who works on making academic knowledge about Southeast Europe available to political and public arenas (and who takes responsibility for that?), so that discourses about Southeast Europe could become more informed by scholarly knowledge?

The workshop aims to provoke an exchange of ideas and experiences between advanced students and trained scholars of humanities and social sciences who conduct research on Southeast Europe at German-speaking universities. Representatives of cultural and media associations are also very welcome.

The event will take place in person. Due to the corona-imposed limitations, the number of participants in the audience will be limited. If you want to take part online, please send an email expressing interest to unsettling.the.hegemonic.gaze@gmail.com by 01 December and you will receive instructions for how to join.

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