

Leibniz Science Campus Eastern Europe – Global Area Thematic Workshop

Workshop Invitation: Theorising Cities from/with a Global East

Date: 10-12 December 2018

Venue: Leipzig and Zerbst (Germany). Limited travel support is available.

Organisers: Nadir Kinossian (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Germany); Martin Müller (University of Lausanne, Switzerland); Wladimir Sgibnev (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Germany).

If we look at **cities in Eastern Europe**, we are confronted with a **paradox**: while being “globalised”, cities in the region **continue to have a very marginal impact on the global urban theory production**. Despite the perceived need to rebalance the European and American bias of urban studies towards a more inclusive approach, the efforts of ‘theorising from the South’ (Miraftab 2009; Parnell and Robinson 2012; Schindler 2017) have bypassed cities of the Global East – or the former Second World. Tuvikene (2016, 139) diagnoses ‘**a double exclusion in analysis**, whereby post-socialist cities are neither at the centre nor the periphery, neither mainstream nor part of the critique. Arguments based on the post-socialist condition therefore encounter the problem that the former Second World is often ignored within wider urban scholarship.’

A growing number of publications on the topic (e.g. Tlostanova 2015, Ferencuhová and Gentile 2016; Tuvikene 2016; Brade and Neugebauer 2017) signal that the time is ripe for a more systematic analysis of this question. This workshop aims to **bring together scholars and strands of research**, in order to propose a **novel, synthetic and non-discriminatory framework**, which we call “Theorising from a Global East”. Instead of considering cities in what is provisionally called the ‘Global East’ as cases for the mere application of existing theories, this workshop seeks contributions that revive interest **in the Global East and its potential contribution to global urban scholarship** (Ferencuhová and Gentile 2016; Tuvikene 2016; Brade and Neugebauer 2017). If theorising from the South has become an important fixture in global urban studies (Miraftab 2009; Parnell and Robinson 2012; Schindler 2017), *theorising from the East*, or perhaps rather *with the East*, in a non-territorial fashion, should open equally interesting perspectives and possibilities. Such theorising can utilise the existing debates – transition, neoliberalism, state and space, mobilities, infrastructures, post-colonialisms and so on – and further develop them exploring their relevance beyond their centres of origin. Theorising cities from the Global East can also start from the distinctiveness of the East conducive **to developing original theoretical sensibilities and approaches**.

Contributions could consider the Global East as suspended between globalising processes and the legacies of multiple transformations from imperialism to communism to neoliberalism and neopatrimonialism. They could focus on the promiscuous *mélange* and superimposition of various political economies, architectural styles, urban policies and social practices. They could examine

cities in the Global East as interactions of global flows with local assemblages of knowledge, power structures, policies, capital, people, norms and materialities. They could unravel the multiple overlapping spatialities and temporalities that mark cities in the Global East, or latent yet undiscovered forms of theorisation.

How to contribute:

We believe that an **open and explorative approach** will contribute to the strength of the workshop discussion. As the **efforts to theorise cities from and with a “Global East” are nascent**, we cannot situate ourselves in a stable and established field. Instead, we are mapping out ways and possibilities for creating a novel, synthetic and non-discriminatory framework of theorisation. Whatever the exact focus of the contribution, it should feature a clear orientation towards distilling the potential of situated theorising from the Global East, thus stretching existing and predominant geographies of knowledge production.

The goal of the workshop is to bring together scholars to discuss a range of conceptual and empirical questions on cities from the Global East with a view of **producing high-quality manuscripts for a special issue on “Theorising cities from/with a global East” (working title)**. To achieve the goal, the **workshop aims to further develop manuscripts through intense discussion and feedback**. Drafts will be solicited in advance, and then distributed to and read by all participants. The event will start with a **panel discussion** provisionally entitled “Global cities in a Global East?”, while the second and third day will be dedicated to a concerted paper discussion of all participants involved.

Please let us know as early as possible, and no later than **30 September 2018** if you would like to participate. Two to three travel grants are available, covering travel, catering and accommodation. To apply, please send a 300 word abstract of your prospective paper and a short statement of how this contributes to the overall topic of the workshop. Full paper drafts are expected to be submitted not later than 20 November 2018. For application and inquiries, please contact Wladimir Sgibnev (w_sgibnev@ifl-leipzig.de).