

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS (WORKSHOP AND PUBLICATION PROJECT)

LEARNING ABOUT (POST)SOCIALIST SPACE: CONCEPTS AND MEDIA OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL EDUCATION IN FORMER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

The Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography together with the Collaborative Research Centre 1199 'Processes of Spatialization under the Global Condition' are inviting participants for the interdisciplinary workshop dedicated to the system of geographical education in former socialist countries. The workshop shall lead to a publication and possible exhibition project.

We are interested to explore the way geographical and spatial knowledge about post-socialist countries and the other parts of the world was (and is) constructed in Eastern Europe and post-Soviet countries and how it has been integrated in educational systems over the last century. We aim to capture a wide means of educations – from school education (textbooks, images, photography, maps and atlases) to public education (museums, media, art and state propaganda). We also seek to analyse the system of education on spatial knowledge itself by approaching various institutions, policies and actors, the knowledge transfer between (post)-Soviet countries and Eastern Europe, and the implementation and appropriation of the knowledge and ideas. We are interested to explore transregional knowledge (travel reports, expedition diaries and footage), and to understand what knowledge about the world was considered to be important for school and public education. We are also seeking to explore how this knowledge was contested or questioned on the backdrop of the processes of decolonisation and distancing from Soviet legacy. We are aiming to capture the diverse landscape of the spatial education concepts and policies to answer whether we can talk about socialist spatial language, or sovietisation of the spatial knowledge and their visual representations in Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics.

We primarily focus on the spatial knowledge and educational systems of post-Soviet countries and within Eastern Europe, but we are looking forward receiving submissions which would widen our geographical perspective, and help us to reveal the connections to the socialist educational policies in the Global South.

We are interested in the following thematic and empirical fields (but not limited to):

- 1) Structural Issues, e.g.: To which extent and by which means (atlases, textbooks, visual media etc.) have socialistic ideals, respective ideas of globalisation and teaching approaches been implemented in school education? How these are constructing the socialist spatiality that includes not only the Eastern Block but also the other parts of the world? Can we distinguish a unified 'socialist spatial language' or is it more diverse?
- 2) Historical Contexts, e.g.: In which way did political events, momenta and impulses of the XX century influence national spatial educational concepts and their transnational transmission? What is the role of the spatial knowledge in state propaganda?
- 3) Methodological Questions, e.g.: Which are appropriate research approaches to tackle representations in mixed media (e.g. text and maps; photos and text etc.)? Do different education systems have specific visual media for representing (and shaping) the ideas about the space?
- 4) Conceptual Issues, e.g.: Do different educational media interact with each other? And if so: How is this accomplished? What are the official and central geographical concepts produced and used in national education systems? Have there been transnational educational systems with similar geographical concepts, e.g. in socialist

countries? And if so: How they have been developing, transforming and circulating within socialist countries? Have they been contested by grassroots educational initiatives, or by local actors?

Editorial team: Dr. Sofia Gavrilova, Dr. Philipp Meyer, Dr. Jana Moser, Prof. Dr. Sebastian Lentz, Dr. Steffi Marung.

We invite scholars from diverse background (aimed but not limited to human geographers, historians, sociologists, art historians, environmental historians) to submit an abstract of 250 words and a short CV to LAPSS22@leibniz-ifl.de by the end of January 2022. Accepted contributors would be notified by end of February 2022 and asked to submit the first drafts (of 3000 – 4000 words) by July 2022. We are aiming to hold a workshop with the contributors and editorial team to discuss the drafts, and bring contributions together early September 2022 in Leipzig (in hybrid format); we would expect second drafts to be submitted by the end of December 2022.