

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

The Geopolitics of Ideas: The Circulation of Knowledge and Power in Europe and North America

Strasbourg (France), 2-5 November 2011

Convened by:
Niilo Kauppi

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

1. Executive summary

The ESF Exploratory Workshop ‘The Geopolitics of Ideas: The Circulation of Knowledge and Power in Europe and North America’ took place at the University of Strasbourg, France, between 3 and 4 November 2011, convened by Professor Niilo Kauppi.

Initially, there were 22 invited participants, of whom the representative of the European Science Foundation, Professor Galin Gornev. One delegate from Sweden could unfortunately not come due to another engagement as president of the International Institute of Sociology (IIS), a delegate from Belgium was prevented from joining us due to a medical condition, and a third delegate from Hungary could not leave due to severe meteorological conditions in Sarajevo. Finally, 18 persons showed up and we had 15 presentations and discussions that followed. Participants came from 10 separate ESF member states as well as Canada. The workshop offered a broad representation from countries with different experiences of the circulation of ideas and of the power structures involved in this circulation. Scholars represented a wide range of disciplines, sociology, gender studies, political science, European studies, international relations, history, and literary theory to name a few. However, although all participants had a primary affiliation in one of the above disciplines, they were all acquainted with some of the other disciplines listed. Furthermore, these truly interdisciplinary scholars all had experience working in several academic settings and national contexts. As the workshop dealt with the transnational circulation of ideas in various disciplines between different national contexts, it has to be noted that the experience of the participants was exceptionally well in tune with the issues discussed. This cultural and social fit probably explains - partly at least - the success of the workshop.

The aim of the workshop was to explore the possibility of longer-term research collaboration on the transnational circulation of ideas and power. Papers had been distributed in advance to all participants. This arrangement eliminated the need to ritualistically present these papers. After a brief presentation of the participants by the session chairs, short presentations were followed by free-ranging, brainstorming discussions involving all participants. The discussions were taped for further use in developing common projects. This set-up led to very

stimulating and high-quality discussions and exchanges of ideas that took place in an informal, relatively status-free and good-humored atmosphere.

The workshop kept to the planned preliminary programme. Following an introduction by the convenor, Professor Niilo Kauppi, the representative of the ESF Professor Galin Gornev offered useful information on the Foundation and its funding schemes. The workshop was divided into four thematic sessions. The first session of the first day, chaired by Professor Niilo Kauppi, was devoted to discussions of presentations on broad theoretical and methodological issues relative to the circulation of ideas. Dr. Wiebke Keim discussed some of the factors that enable the acceptance or rejection of traveling theories and concepts, taking the example of sociological theories in South Africa. According to her, these include ideas of scientificity as well as cultural figures of thought and linguistic concerns. Professor Neil McLaughlin's presentation found resonance with other papers presented as it dealt with American philanthropy and more specifically the global reputation of George Soros and the activities of his Open Society. This intervention led to a lively discussion on the transnational circulation of tropes and images such as anti-semitism and their appropriations in various national contexts in order to legitimize and/or delegitimize certain political goals. Professor Kari Palonen's paper brought us back to the most microlevel mode of circulation of ideas, that of specific works. As a Weberologist Professor Palonen discussed translation politics and the types of knowledge that circulate with texts such as Max Weber's *Politik als Beruf*. Unfortunately the next speaker Professor Wittrock could not make it, and Professor Kauppi's talk was a last minute change to the programme. Niilo Kauppi contrasted a transnational approach to the circulation of ideas to an international one, highlighting some of the limitations of the traditional narrative and interpretative framework.

The afternoon session, chaired by Dr. Ioana Cîrstocea, was devoted to issues of gender and transnational feminism. Three papers were discussed in this session. Dr. Julie Carlier could not attend and neither could Professor Raluca Popa, but their papers were distributed to all participants. Dr. Cîrstocea's detailed comments also dealt with the papers of the two colleagues who could not make it to our session. Chiara Bonfiglioli's paper dealt with how women's movements have been framed across Cold war borders, taking as examples the Italian and Yugoslav cases. Dr. Anne Epstein took a more historical perspective, analyzing the transnational intellectual networks operating in Europe at the turn of the 20th century through the example of the 'Revue de morale sociale'. Professor Miglena Nikolchina

intervened on the theme of the permanent end of feminism through a development on the concept of “heterotopic homonymy”. These presentations were followed by a lively discussion on the transnational level as one of the conditions of possibility of national feminisms and women’s movements, which are examples of broader processes. The evening was spent at the Alsatian restaurant le Tire-bouchon, where participants continued their spirited discussions.

Following the preliminary programme the workshop continued the next day. The morning session was devoted to the issue of the circulation of ideas and people. Chaired by Professor Jessica Gienow-Hecht, the first papers were presented by Dr. Nicolas Guilhot on the invention of international relations theory and Professor Laurent Jeanpierre on recent historiography of the transatlantic circulation of ideas. These two presentations by French scholars were followed by a paper from Professor Wolfram Kaiser on the European field of museums. The last presentation of the morning session was by Dr. Ioana Macrea Toma, who discussed Radio Free Europe, Romanian exiles and the Romanian émigré community in Western Europe. The afternoon of the second day was chaired by Dr. Tero Erkkilä and dealt with international education in the broad sense that is on the institutions that form many of the highly mobile individuals that become members of transnational networks. Dr. Dorota Dakowska discussed reforms of Polish higher education and the influence of transnational expert communities, Eleonora Dugonjic-Rowin international secondary schools, Professor Ann-Christina Lauring Knudsen the historiography of transnational history and the developers of this new historical turn, , and Dr. Stefan Seidendorf the French-German history textbook for secondary schools.. The evening dinner was at the Restaurant de la Bourse, a typical French-style bistro.

2) Scientific content

The major themes of this workshop were cultural globalization and the circulation of ideas and knowledge. The participants took up these broad themes in three domains, gender, circulation/exile/migration and education. Three levels of analysis could be detected: analysis of ideas/concepts/theories, actors, and institutions or spaces. All sessions presented papers that dealt with these issues. More directly analyzing ideas/concepts/theories were Kari Palonen’s paper on the French translations of Max Weber’s, Wiebke Keim’s on traveling theories and concepts, and Nicolas Guilhot’ paper on the invention of international relations

theory. While Kari Palonen's paper focused on the politics of translation and the construction of different kinds of works, one intended for the lay public and the other one at a professional public, Nicolas Guilhot analyzed the links between positions in transnational networks and specific theories in IR. In his talk, Niilo Kauppi attempted to draw together the various papers and ideas floating around and thematized two distinct approaches to analysis of the circulation of ideas, a traditional national/international approaches, that resonates with realist and neorealist epistemologies and ontologies, and a transnational, more socio-historical one, that attempts to examine circulations processes between various national spaces as processes of entangled histories. This distinction could provide a point of departure that brings together the various papers and approaches. Actors were the next level in the analysis of ideas and theories. Ioana Macrea Toma presented a sophisticated analysis of Radio Free Europe and especially Monica Lovinescu and Neil McLaughlin on George Soros and the politics of reputation at the global level. However, most papers touched on the third level of analysis, institutions and spaces. Neil McLaughlin scrutinized the actions of Soros's Open Society and its numerous institutions. In Nicolas Guilhot's intervention the role of foundations like the Rockefeller Foundation were instrumental in the development of international relations theory. Laurent Jeanpierre argued in his paper that instead of an imposition of American imperialism, the relationship between American and European counterparts was one of interaction: both needed one another, in different ways. The final session on international education concentrated on the institutions that train and form individuals specialized in international mobility. Leonora Dugonjic-Rodwin's paper dealt with two such international schools, the international school of Geneva and the UN International School in New York. Anne Esptein's talk took a more historical perspective. She discussed the transnational networks at the turn of the century in Europe. Ann-Christina Lauring Knudsen linked ideas, actors and institutions by analysis of transnational history and its practitioners. The afternoon session's final paper was delivered by Stefan Seidendorf who talked about the French-German history textbook project.

Each session was followed by intense discussions and brainstorming on the transnational circulation of ideas and their mechanisms. A final discussion was organized at the end of the second day, aiming at pointing toward future development. The comments of the ESF observer Professor Galin Gornev were particularly useful. The two-day workshop was extremely dense, but as the presentations were short and did not just repeat the content of the distributed papers, the discussions developed their own situational logic, pointing to several

alternative paths for further scientific collaboration. In the process, several methodological issues were raised. Kari Palonen and Laurent Jeanpierre underlined the importance of “close reading” and “thick description”. Several participants raised the key problem of translation from language and discipline to another, as well as the tension – visible especially in works in the sociology of knowledge – between ideas and their contexts of production.

3) Assessment of the workshop

The presentations and discussions brought to light the complexities of studying the transnational circulations of ideas as knowledge and power production processes. This complexity has to do with on the one hand the difficulty of analyzing abstract ideas and on the other hand collecting empirical material on these phenomena. A lot of the existing literature centers on national contexts. Transnational processes are put to the fore only in exceptional circumstances, such as during the first and second world wars, or under relatively unique circumstances as in relation to the process of European supranational integration. But the normal state of affairs in terms of circulation of ideas is the national context. Other processes that were discussed included the modes and mechanisms of circulation, the links between ideas and institutional contexts, the lives of ideas and their transformation. Ioana Macrea Toma and others raised the issue of the definition of the basic units of our discussions and the refinement of concepts and constellations of concepts. In terms of the conundrum power/knowledge a possible avenue of research would be to differentiate between modes of transmission in terms of types of ideas, distinguishing from one another for instance concepts, theories but also so-called power-ideas as intellectual metapreferences (human rights, democracy, liberty...) that cannot be evaluated on the scale right-wrong. Circulation of ideas through space and time involves analysis of multiple dimensions such as national, transnational and global levels, north-south and east-west dimensions, as well as between the elites or the center and the margins (Neil McLaughlin’s work on marginal optimality is central here), as well as masculinities and femininities and issues of sociability and collaborative circles. All these were touched upon by many of the papers and discussions. Dr. Ioana Cirstocea highlighted how feminism fits well with the main concern of the workshop that is the social and political conditions of transnational knowledge production and circulation. The circulation of ideas and knowledge is not only horizontal or synchronic. Ideas are transformed through time while they travel in space. From ideas among ideas some of them become power ideas that transform practices and cultures, as well as individual lives as

intellectuals live literally of ideas. Generational transmission can succeed or fail, as Laurent Jeanpierre and others pointed out. The young Marx is separated from the old Marx, the first wave of feminism from the second wave of feminism, the idea from the –ism in which it is entangled. Cultural memories and gender regimes are constructed. For many of the participants, ideas and their transmission took place in the context of the Cold War. Exchange was not confined to one or the other side of the curtain, as the stimulating discussion of the development of feminism on both sides of the so-called Iron Curtain in Italy and Yugoslavia demonstrated. The circulation of ideas and knowledge takes place through different disciplines and sciences. This leads to a series of questions that have to do with the type of knowledge circulating and its chances of gaining visibility and legitimacy. Some ideas succeed, some fail (zero-degree of diffusion). Failed ideas and failed intellectuals might give us a new perspective as to the conditions that enable intellectual success.. Types of knowledge, empirical or theoretical will influence the level of interdisciplinarity of the ideas involved. Thus, a theory that deals with issues at an abstract level can be more easily appropriated by scholars working in different disciplines. Theories can be more interdisciplinary because they might find more resonance in other texts, or in some parts of these texts. More intertextual, they might appeal to more basic levels of ideas circulating, like the analysis of Alwin Gouldner of the paleo-symbolic narrative levels of Marxist discourse raised by Wiebke Keim demonstrates. Grand narratives such as that of human liberation can be encrusted in a variety of textual contexts.. Theory and its concepts might have then more chances of being transhistorical, transnational and transmodal. In distinction to the national/international type of circulation, where ideas and knowledge are produced in one context and diffused into other contexts, ideas and knowledge that circulate are thus always entangled with a variety of contexts (intercontextuality) and connected in various modes to other ideas (intertextuality), requiring, as Jessica Gienow-Hecht pointed out, analysis of the infrastructure of circulation and the variety of actors involved in this activity (thinkers/sellers/buyers). Several participants pointed out that ideas and their lives cannot be reduced to an export/import marketization or commodification model. Horizontal and vertical circulation and transmission take place thus in varying intercontextual and intertextual environments. The reception of ideas, their appropriation by individuals and groups, the negotiations involved, a concept mentioned by Wolfram Kaiser, require an understanding of the multiplicities involved. Ideas are assembled and reassembled and translated into various languages, not just into linguistic groups but also into professional and disciplinary jargons for instance.

The interventions and discussions in the workshop demonstrated that the shared interdisciplinary frameworks on historically and geographically varied objects of research are not given once and for all. Their further development requires additional meetings and exchanges that would lead to the elaboration of a common research project.

4. Final programme

Thursday, 3 November 2011

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| 09.00-09.10 | Welcome by Convenor
Niilo Kauppi (CNRS, Strasbourg, France) |
| 09.10-09.30 | Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)
Galim Gornev (ESF, Standing Committee for Social Sciences
(SCSS)/Bulgarian Academy of Science, Bulgaria) |
| 09.30-12.30 | Morning session. Transnationalisation and the global circulation of ideas:
theoretical and methodological aspects
Chair Niilo Kauppi (CNRS, Strasbourg, France) |
| 09.30-10.00 | The global circulation of ideas – reasons for acceptance and rejection of
travelling theories and concepts
Wiebke Keim (University of Freiburg, Germany) |
| 10.00-10.30 | The international circulation of attacks and reputational consequences of
local context: Scapegoating Soros in Russia, post-Soviet Lithuania and the
United States
Neil McLaughlin (McMaster's University, Canada) |
| 10.30-11.00 | The Max Weber of Julien Freund and Catherine Colliot-Thélène, the two
French translators of 'Politik als Beruf'
Kari Palonen (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) |
| 11.00-11.30 | Some theoretical points on the geopolitics of ideas
Niilo Kauppi (CNRS/University of Strasbourg) |
| 11.30-12.30 | Discussion |
| 12.30-14.00 | Lunch MISHA (Salle Europe) |

- 14.00-17.00 Afternoon session. Transnational feminism
Chair Ioana Cîrstocea (CNRS, Strasbourg, France)
- 14.00-14.30 From East to West and back: framing women's emancipation across Cold War borders
Chiara Bonfiglioli (Utrecht University, the Netherlands)
- 14.30-15.00 Gendered expertise, intellectual networks, and the emergence of 'feminist' knowledge in the early 20th century: a transnational perspective
Anne Epstein (University of Helsinki, Finland)
- 16.00-16.30 Theses on the permanent end of feminism
Miglena Nikolchina (Sofia University, Bulgaria)
- 16.30-17.00 Coffee / tea break
- 17.00-18.30 Discussion
- 20.00 Dinner Le Tire-Bouchon

Friday, 4 November 2011

- 09.00-12.00 Morning session. The circulation of people and ideas
Chair Jessica Gienow-Hecht (University of Cologne, Germany)
- 09.00-09.30 French connections: international relations theory in a transatlantic perspective
Nicolas Guilhot (CNRS, University of Antilles and Guiana)
- 09.30-10.00 The politics of American research foundations: Lessons from recent historiography
Laurent Jeanpierre (University Paris 8, France)
- 10.00-10.30 Multiple actors in a fragmented field: Negotiating memory in European museums
Wolfram Kaiser (University of Portsmouth, UK)
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee / Tea Break
- 11.00-11.30 Reshaping Cold War rhetoric through national cultural militancy. The case of Romanian exiles as anti-Communist broadcasters
Ioana Macrea Toma (Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Germany)
- 11.30-12.30 Discussion

12.30-14.00	Lunch MISHA (Salle Europe)
14.00-17.00	Afternoon session. Education: international aspects Chair: Tero Erkkilä (University of Helsinki, Finland)
14.00-14.30	Transnationalisation and internationalisation of Polish higher education after 1989 Dorota Dakowska (University of Strasbourg, France)
14.30-15.00	International secondary education: the case of IB World Schools Leonora Dugonjic-Rodwin (University of Geneva, Switzerland)
15.00-15.30	Transnational historiography, education and careers, 2001-2011 Ann-Christina Lauring Knudsen (University of Aarhus, Denmark)
15.30-16.00	From marginal idealism to materialization in a common textbook: 'multiperspectivity' and the teaching of history Stefan Seidendorf (Deutsch-Französisches Institut, Germany)
16.30-18.30	Discussion on follow-up activities/networking/collaboration
18.30	End of Workshop
20.00	Dinner Restaurant de la Bourse

5. Final list of participants

Chiara Bonfiglioli, University of Utrecht, the Netherlands
 Ioana Cîrstocea, CNRS/University of Strasbourg, France
 Dorota Dakowska, University of Strasbourg, France
 Leonora Dugonjic-Rodwin, University of Geneva, Switzerland
 Anne Epstein, University of Helsinki, Finland
 Tero Erkkilä, University of Helsinki, Finland
 Jessica Gienow-Hecht, University of Cologne, Germany
 Nicolas Guilhot, CNRS/University of Antilles and Guiana, France
 Laurent Jeanpierre, University of Paris 8, France
 Wolfram Kaiser, University of Portsmouth, UK
 Niilo Kauppi, CNRS/University of Strasbourg, France
 Wiebke Keim, University of Freiburg, Germany
 Ann-Christina Lauring Knudsen, University of Aarhus, Denmark

Ioana Macrea-Toma, Wissenschaftkolleg Berlin, Germany
 Neil McLaughlin, McMaster's University, Canada
 Miglena Nikolchina, Sofia University, Bulgaria
 Kari Palonen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
 Stefan Seidendorf, Deutsch-Französisches Institut, Germany

6. Statistical breakdown of participants

6.1. By country of employment

-Belgium	1	-Germany	4
-Bulgaria	1	-the Netherlands	1
-Canada	1	-Switzerland	1
-Denmark	1	-UK	1
-Finland	3		
-France	5	-Total	19

6.2. By approximate age

-Under 35	2
-35-50	13
-51-65	4
-Total	19

6.3. By gender

-Women	10
-Men	9

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