International Workshop

Civic Activism and Protest Culture in the Black Sea Countries

New Europe College, Bucharest
22–23 June 2017

The workshop is organized within the framework of the Pontica Magna Fellowship Programme in partnership with the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe (University of St. Gallen) and is supported by the VolkswagenStiftung

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During the past decades civic engagement underwent remarkable changes throughout the world. Activism is today a versatile and dynamic phenomenon, continuously adapting to the challenges of the digital age and fueled by social media, and it can be productively analyzed by political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists or communication experts. While western democracies have been facing a steady decline in civic engagement, the countries around the Black Sea have seen increasing civic activism. For some, this has haled the emergence of a protest culture that has been shaping their domestic political scene and their positioning within the international one.

Over the past decade, in cities throughout the wider Black Sea region, in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Turkey or Ukraine, huge crowds of people rallied in support of a variety of causes, ranging from broader political issues such as the westward or eastward orientation of a country to societal challenges such as corruption and social justice. Originating in, and as responses to complicated national and international political contexts, the protests are frequently backed by activists outside traditional political parties or civil society organizations. With all countries in the Black Sea area divided by huge social disparities that are clearly expressed in electoral preferences, political unrest has been regarded ambivalently, either as a marker of growing civic awareness or a threat to stability and political order in the age of global populism.

As multifaceted, contemporary phenomena, rising civic activism and protest culture in the Black Sea countries deserve a closer study by scholars working in the social sciences and the humanities.
PROGRAM

THURSDAY, JUNE 22ND

09.30–09.50
Welcome address
Valentina SANDU–DEDIU, New Europe College, Bucharest
Dirk LEHMKUHL, University of St. Gallen

09.50–11.10
Session 1
Civic Activism in the Post-Communist Region. Theoretical Approaches
Moderator: Valentina SANDU–DEDIU, New Europe College, Bucharest
Discussants: Darya MALYUTINA and Aram TERZYAN

Farda ASADOV, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan
Separating the Theory and Practice of Civil Society in Europe and Post-Soviet Space
(the Case of the South Caucasus)

Gilda HOXHA, University of Tirana
Influence of Self-Organized Groups in the Democratization Process and
New Forms of Participation: A Theoretical Approach

11.10–11.30
Coffee break

11.30–13.30
Session 2
The Making of a Protest Culture in South-Eastern Europe
Moderator: Carmen SCHEIDE, University of Bern
Discussants: Irina Ana KANTOR, Valeria KORABLYOVA and Alina DOLEA

Henry Peter RAMMELT, Institute for Political Studies Lyon / Lyon University
The Evolution of a Specific Romanian Protest Culture
Dragomir STOYANOV / Leyla SAYFUTDINOVA,
VUZF University, Sofia / Independent researcher, Sofia


Diana MĂRGĂRIT, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași

Don’t Steal Our Right to Vote! A Comparative Analysis
of the Electoral Protests in Romania and Moldova

13.30–15.00
Lunch

15.00–16.20
Session 3
Protest and / for the City
Moderator: Katharina BIEGGER, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin
Discussants: Lucian CÎRLAN and Ramona DIMA

Natalia OTRISCHCENKO, Center for Urban History of East Central Europe, Lviv
Inhabiting Urban Landscapes: Protest Spaces in Kyiv, Lviv, and Kharkiv during Euromaidan

Lia TSULADZE, Tbilisi State University
Civic Response to Urbicide and its Main Challenge in Georgia

16.20–16.40
Coffee break

16.40–18.40
Session 4
Solidarity and Civic Engagement
Moderator: Dirk LEHMKUHL, University of St. Gallen
Discussants: Farda ASADOV, Dirk LEHMKUHL and Gilda HOXHA
Valeria KORABLYOVA, Charles University, Prague
‘Constructive Revolutions’ as Anti-Politics: What is Their Afterlife?

Mariam PIPIA, Tbilisi State University
*From Elites Change-Oriented Protests to Social Solidarity Movements: Evolution of Civic Activism in Georgia*

Gevorg PETROSYAN, National Academy of Sciences, Yerevan
*Minority in Action. Armenian Youth Activism in Turkey*

19.30
*Dinner*
FRIDAY, JUNE 23\textsuperscript{TH}

09.40–11.00

Session 5

Virtual Spaces of Protest – Social Media and the Protest Culture
Moderator: Gevorg PETROSYAN, National Academy of Sciences, Yerevan
Discussants: Klaudia KALETA and Lia TSULADZE

Alina DOLEA, University of Bucharest

\textit{Social Media, Civic Engagement and the Co-Construction of National Identity in the Romanian February Protests}

Iulia ANGHEL, Polytechnic University of Bucharest

\textit{Crafting the New Civil Society – Romania’s Protest Cultures and the Social Media}

11.00–11.30

Coffee break

11.30–13.30

Session 6

Civic Engagement between Traditional Values and Human Rights
Moderator: Constantin ARDELEANU, New Europe College, Bucharest
Discussants: Iulia ANGHEL, Mariam PIPIA and Dragomir STOYANOV

Ramona DIMA, University of Bucharest

\textit{New Trends of Homophobic Activism in Romania}

Lucian CIRLAN, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris-Sorbonne

\textit{“Christian Civil Society”. Religious Engagement and Political Mobilization for Traditional Values in Romania}

Klaudia KALETA, University of Poznan

\textit{Case Studies: ‘Mother of God, Drive Putin Away!’ And ‘Fixation Art’ as a Form of Political Protest in Russia in the 2010s}
13.30–15.00

Lunch

15.00–17.00

Session 7

The Ethics and Politics of Civic Participation
Moderator: Farda ASADOV, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan
Discussants: Natalia OTRISCHCENKO, Diana MĂRGĂRIT and Henry Peter RAMMELT

Aram TERZYAN, Yerevan State University

Political Dimensions and Evolution of Civic Activism in Armenia:
A Path to Civil Society? (2008 – present)

Irina Ana KANTOR, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca

No Man is an Island. Ethics of Representation and Ethics of Participation
in the Flux of Populist Deconstruction of Democracy

Darya MALYUTINA, New Europe College, Bucharest

Researching Ukraine During and After the Euromaidan:
Impact and Challenges beyond Academia

17.00–17.30

Conclusions

Constantin ARDELEANU, New Europe College, Bucharest
Dirk LEHMKUHL, University of St. Gallen

19.00

Dinner
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