



EEGA

Leibniz ScienceCampus

Report

2023 – 2024

**Eastern Europe –
Global Area**

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The Leibniz ScienceCampus »Eastern Europe – Global Area“ (EEGA), supported by the Leibniz Association, has been an integral part of academic research and discourse since its founding in 2016. As we approach the conclusion of its second and final funding phase in March 2025, it is a fitting moment to reflect on the outstanding achievements and milestones reached over the last year.

Throughout 2024, EEGA has continued to foster innovative interdisciplinary research, bringing together scholars from diverse fields to explore the complex relationship between Eastern Europe and its global context. One of the highlights of the year was the **Final Symposium** held in Leipzig in June, which encapsulated the breadth and depth of EEGA's work. This event included the **General Assembly**, multiple **Round Tables**, a **Writing Workshop** for early-career researchers, and a thought-provoking Science Lounge on the theme of »Visualizing War«. These events not only served as a platform for academic exchange but also reinforced EEGA's commitment to nurturing the next generation of scholars and fostering critical dialogues on contemporary issues.

EEGA's engagement with the international academic community continued to thrive, promoting the active participation of researchers in **international conferences**, thus contributing to the global discourse on Eastern Europe. In line with this, we have been proud to support a number of **publications** that showcase the richness and relevance of our research output. A key achievement in

2025 will be the publication of the EEGA textbook *Globalizing Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture and Economics from the 18th to the 21st Century*, officially released on 10 July, by Bloomsbury Academic. The edited volume brings together the expertise of numerous scholars involved with EEGA and serves as a significant contribution to the ongoing discourse on Eastern Europe's place in the global context.

There have been two changes in personnel over the last year: Following the retirement of **Sebastian Lentz**, Professor **Judith Miggelbrink** has taken over his duties at the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (IfL) and thus also the position of EEGA spokesperson. After many years of dedicated participation in EEGA's Scientific Advisory Board, Professor **Judith Pallot** left the committee and handed over to **Matthias Neumann**, Professor of Modern History at the University of East Anglia, United Kingdom.

In addition to our regular activities, we have been delighted to welcome a new cohort of **scholarship holders** to Leipzig this year. Their presence once again highlighted EEGA's role as an international hub for scholars and researchers focused on Eastern Europe's global connections.

A significant milestone in 2024 was our continued collaboration with the **Regional Studies Association (RSA)**. Building on the success of our joint efforts in September 2022, the **RSA Central and Eastern Europe Conference** was held outside Leipzig for the first time. This year's event took place in Dubrovnik, Croatia, and was a testament to the growing importance of Southeastern Europe in both historical and contemporary research. The conference, entitled »Unfinished Statebuilding and Contested Democracies« provided a rich and interdisciplinary

exploration of critical themes such as migration, border policies, global value chains, and the notion of global connectedness. These discussions were especially pertinent given the region's ongoing geopolitical challenges and its evolving relationship with the European Union and the broader international community.

As we approach the end of funding of EEGA by the Leibniz Association, we are already reflecting on its future and continuing activities, such as a roundtable discussion on »**Eastern Europe in Global Transformations**« at the **XI ICCEES World Congress 'Disruption'** (University College London, July 2025). The past eight years have demonstrated the continued relevance of research on Eastern Europe in its global contexts, and we are currently exploring possibilities for sustaining and expanding the network of researchers, collaborators, and initiatives that have developed over time. We are committed to ensuring that the connections fostered by EEGA will continue to thrive, whether through new institutional partnerships, research projects, or informal networks.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of EEGA thus far – our members, partners, and researchers – and we look forward to the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. The work done over these past years has proven that Eastern Europe remains a crucial area of study, with far-reaching implications for global politics, economics, and culture.

We hope you enjoy reading this report, which captures the essence of our activities and achievements over the past year, and we look forward to continuing the journey into the future.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Dr Judith Miggelbrink
(Spokesperson)



Prof Dr Matthias Middell
(Spokesperson)

02 EEGA Members

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03 The Research Areas

The Leibniz ScienceCampus EEGA is organised in five research areas:

- 1) Mobilities and Migration Regimes in Eastern Europe under the Global Condition
- 2) Self-Positioning of Eastern Europe in a New World Order
- 3) Economic and Regional Development under the Global Condition
- 4) Cultures of Internationalism and Internationalism of Cultures
- 5) Populist Movements and Regimes in Eastern Europe.

Their research activities all aim at understanding how Eastern Europe's diverse, rich, and incidentally conflicted societies position themselves in global processes and conflicts, engage in the dynamics of global integration, and champion these developments.

Research Area 1:

Mobilities and Migration Regimes in Eastern Europe under the Global Condition

Coordination: **Jonathan Everts** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg) / **Steffi Marung** (Leipzig University) / **Wladimir Sgibnev** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography)

In the wake of economic and political transformations, fuzzy territorialities, and technological innovations, mobility and migration regimes have repeatedly shifted on all scales. After investigating transformations and contestations of mobility and migration in the region, Research Area 1 aims at a better longitudinal understanding of underlying normativities and infrastructures and their effects on the region's position and agency in processes of globalisation. Thus, it addresses present and historical migration and bordering practices, materialities and technologies, and justice regimes.

A joint outcome will be to develop a comprehensive and historically informed collection of forms and methods of visualisations to grasp the region's ambiguous and disputed mobility and migration regimes in a trans-regional perspective.

Affiliate Researchers: **Kristine Beurskens** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography) / **Bettina Bruns** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography) / **Larissa Fleischmann** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg) / **Diana Forker** (Friedrich-Schiller University Jena) / **Karin Wiest** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography)

Research Area 2:

Self-Positioning of Eastern Europe in a New World Order

Coordination: **Frank Hadler** (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe) / **Marek Mikuš** (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology) / **Lela Rekhviashvili** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography)

The collapse of state socialism in Eastern Europe marked an ending of the global Cold War and ushered in a new world order. This initially rather unipolar (US-led) order has been challenged by the rise of China's power, waning US hegemony, renewed tensions between Russia and the North Atlantic bloc, and is being confronted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Research Area 2 focuses on the positioning of Eastern European (EU member and non-member) states and societies in the context of the evolving geopolitical conditions. It encourages a dialogue between post-socialist and post-colonial approaches and looks specifically at changing geostrategic imaginations and spatial reconfigurations at multiple scales as well as the roles of finance, social movements and academia in these processes.

Affiliate Researchers: **Lyubomir Pozharliev** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography) / **Stefan Rohdewald** (Leipzig University) / **Asta Vonderau** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg) / **Paolo Zucconi** (FGZ – Institute for Social Cohesion)

Research Area 3:

Economic and Regional Development under the Global Condition

Coordination: **Sebastian Henn** (Friedrich Schiller University Jena)/**Nadir Kinossian** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography)/**Lena Kuhn** (Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies)/**Uwe Müller** (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe)

The transformation from planned to market economy and the integration of the economies of Eastern Europe into a unified global economy have brought about accelerated industrial structural changes with serious social and demographic effects to this day.

Research Area 3 deals with the development of regional disparities with a special focus on external influences such as foreign direct investments in Eastern Europe. It also addresses the extent to which regional policy objectives and instruments are shaped by historical experience, external approaches and interests as well as by various actors such as the European Union.

Affiliate Researchers: **Azar Aliyev** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)/**Corinne Geering** (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe)/**Marco Zimmermann** (Fraunhofer Center for International Management and Knowledge Economy IMW)

Research Area 4:

Cultures of Internationalism and Internationalism of Cultures

Coordination: **Katja Castryck-Naumann** (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe)/**Stefan Keym** (Leipzig University)/**Yvonne Kleinmann** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)

International collaboration as well as intercultural transfers and entanglements are two crucial and partly overlapping domains in which actors from the region positioned themselves in global relations and processes. Such developments have a long intriguing tradition, speeding up and expanding spatially since the middle of the 19th century.

Research Area 4 investigates Eastern European actors, initiatives, strategies and positions in international exchanges, movements and organisations, which interconnect the societies of the region in multiple ways. It explores a wide range of cultural fields – music, literature and other arts, and in a broader sense also legal, political and scholarly cultures – to gain a nuanced understanding of the potentials and limits of cultural globalisation in Eastern Europe. This includes its dialectic relationship with the search for imperial, national and regional identifications, and of the impact of Eastern Europeans on international cultural developments.

Affiliate Researchers: **Patrick Becker-Naydenov** (Leipzig University)/**Christoph Brumann** (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)/**Linda Cimardi** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)/**Jan Gerber** (Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow)/**Beáta Hock** (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe)/**Sven Jaros** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)/**Nadine Menzel** (Independent Researcher)/**Klaus Näumann** (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)/**Martin Rohde** (IOS Regensburg)

Research Area 5:

Populist Movements and Regimes in Eastern Europe

Coordination: **Gert Pickel** (Leipzig University)/**Alexander Yendell** (Leipzig University)

So-called populist movements and the openness of citizens for populist arguments have gained in importance worldwide. They are more successful in Eastern Europe than in many other parts of the world. In some Eastern European countries right-wing populists even came to power. However, explanations for the specific success of populists in Eastern Europe are rare. Especially when it comes to empirical and comparative analyses.

Research Area 5 contributes to the comparison of populisms and investigates the effects of long-lasting traditions, social and political circumstances and recent experiences with transformation, migration, and external influences of globalisation on populism.

Affiliate Researchers: **Hana Antal** (Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe)/**Yvonne Jaeckel** (Leipzig University)/**Astrid Lorenz** (Leipzig University)

04 Final Symposium and General Assembly from 4 – 7 June in Leipzig

↓
Gilad Ben-Nun (left) and Katja Castryck-Naumann present a milestone project of EEGA: a textbook on »Eastern Europe: Global Perspectives« to be published with Bloomsbury. © Swen Reichhold



At the beginning of the first funding phase, the Leibniz ScienceCampus »Eastern Europe – Global Area« (EEGA) set itself the goal of establishing a multidisciplinary cluster of excellence in the Leipzig-Halle-Jena region by pooling expertise in the field of Eastern European studies. A very good interim evaluation in 2020 confirmed the quality and achievement of the Campus' objectives. Strengthened and more focused, it started the second funding phase in 2020. In its final symposium, the researchers and affiliates of the Leibniz ScienceCampus "Eastern Europe – Global Area" (EEGA) looked back on the results of the joint work in the years 2016 – 2024, presented key products of the cross-institutional cooperation and provided an outlook on future collaboration. Guests from the scientific community and media representatives enriched the varied programme.

Tuesday, 4 June 2024

Review and Outlook

On Tuesday, June 4, 2024, EEGA started into a filled week by hosting its Symposium and General Assembly at Tagungslounge. The event focused on reviewing the accomplishments of EEGA from 2016 to 2024 and looking ahead to future initiatives. The symposium began with welcoming remarks, followed by a detailed review of EEGA's achievements over the past eight years, presented by **Matthias Middell** from Leipzig University. Middell revisited the initial application he and **Sebastian Lentz** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography) submitted to the Leibniz Association in 2016, and emphasized the key projects and collaborations that have defined the ScienceCampus' influence on the study of Eastern Europe since then.

A major highlight of the event was the presentation of the milestone project, EEGA textbook *Globalizing Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture and Economics from the 18th to the 21st Century* by Bloomsbury Publishing. The editors of the textbook, **Gilad Ben-Nun** from Leipzig University and **Katja Castryck-Naumann** from GWZO, introduced the book and discussed its contributions to the field. The session was moderated by **Sebastian Henn** from Friedrich Schiller University Jena, ensuring a seamless flow of discussions and engaging the audience in meaningful conversations about the future directions of EEGA.

The programme resumed, moderated by **Steffi Marung**, with the presentation of the anthology *Rethinking Globality in Times of War on Ukraine. A Sourcebook* by **Dennis Dierks** from Leipzig University. This presentation addressed the global implications and perspectives following the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The collaborative effort of the team, consisting of **Dennis Dierks, Steffi Marung, Bohdan Novoshytskyi** and **Amelie Stel-ter**, which covers big linguistic areas, was awarded with further questions and interested remarks.

The symposium concluded with an outlook for 2024 and beyond, presented by **Judith Miggelbrink**, new director of the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography Leipzig and spokesperson of EEGA. Her presentation outlined the future initiatives and goals for the ScienceCampus, which includes an application for a Research Training Group as part of the overall strategy for the Global Hub, currently under construction on Wilhelm Leuschner Platz Leipzig, that should be integrated into the Global and European Studies Institute (GESI) Graduate School and interlinked with other research networks via PIs.

↓
Judith Miggelbrink, new director of the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography Leipzig and spokesperson of EEGA, outlines future initiatives and goals. © Swen Reichhold



Keynote Lecture and Reception



↑ In his keynote lecture, Francis Onditi calls for expanded transregional cooperation within the academy and beyond. © Swen Reichhold

Francis Onditi, Professor of International Relations at Riara University in Nairobi, outlined global perspectives on Eastern Europe in his lecture. Based on a critical discussion of the textbook *Globalizing Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture and Economics from the 18th to the 21st Century* (Bloomsbury Publishers, forthcoming), developed within the framework of the Leibniz ScienceCampus EEGA for higher academic teaching, Onditi unfolded his thoughts on how the perspectives of the interdisciplinary book and also selected topics discussed therein can be relevant for research and researchers in Sub-Saharan Africa. He presented exemplary aspects and called for expanded transregional cooperation within the academy and beyond. With these wishes for future cooperation, he heralded a communicative evening of networking.

EEGA Research Area coordinators and affiliate researchers, board members, former and current postdoc fellows continued networking during the reception on the rooftop of Tagungslounge.

Wednesday, 5 June 2024

Summer School: Workshop for Young Researchers on Science Communication and Knowledge Transfer with Reference to Eastern Europe

For the third time, EEGA offered a workshop for young academics at the interface between academia and communication in cooperation with the Junge DGO, the young

academics' organisation within the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Osteuropakunde e.V. (German Society for Eastern European Studies). The workshop primarily aimed at young academics at PhD and postdoc level with an interest in Eastern Europe in its global relations, but interested students at the end of their MA studies were also welcome. Participants from Leipzig and the surrounding area, but also from Augsburg and Regensburg, for example, met in Leipzig on June 5, 2024 at the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO).

The workshop day started with a welcome address by EEGA coordinator **Lena Dallywater**. In the first part of the workshop, which was also streamed online, the co-organizers **Magda Wlostowska** and **Madeleine Hartmann** (both Junge DGO) introduced the programme and this year's experts, **Renate Zöller** (Kulturkorrespondenz Östliches Europa), journalist/editor with a background in history, and **Pandeli Pani** (Deutsche Welle), editor and linguist. After a short round of introductions of all participants, the two speakers presented and discussed the differences between academic and journalistic texts and reported specifically on their everyday work as editors and journalists.

In the second, practice-oriented part of the workshop, which was conducted jointly by **Renate Zöller** and **Pandeli Pani**, the participants were given a more detailed insight into the respective media and their different target groups. As a specialist journal, the bimonthly *Kulturkorrespondenz Östliches Europa*, published in print and digi-



↑ Renate Zöller (left) and Pandeli Pani give practical advice in writing articles for special audiences. © Swen Reichhold

tally by *Deutsches Kulturforum Östliches Europa* (German Cultural Forum for Eastern Europe) since 2019, publishes articles relating to German culture and the history of Eastern Europe. With this clear regional focus, each issue highlights a different key topic. In addition to its own contributions, the editorial team, consisting of **Renate Zöller** and her colleague **Markus Nowak**, also includes articles by external authors on historical topics as well as reports on German culture and history in and from Eastern Europe in the magazine. Using examples from the editorial team, **Renate Zöller** highlighted typical problems in the editorial process and explained the necessary text adaptations and consultations with the authors. As a general online information source with daily news and analyses every day, *Deutsche Welle* covers a wide range of topics and addresses a broader audience. **Pandeli Pani** described his working routine and explained the editorial process, which is much more fast-paced than that of a specialist journal.

In the following part, the participants were asked to come up with a suitable teaser text and a headline for an article in a short period of time. First of all, it was important to focus on the target group – which was to be freely chosen –, pointing out the need to interest an audience with the title so much that they keep reading on at all. As the experts emphasized, the headline should not be misleading and merely be a “click bait”, but instead must cleverly refer to the content. The teaser should summarize the information of the text without being too detailed. The participants then voted the best headline and the best introductory text and discussed their choice.

After a joint lunch break, the next practical exercise was carried out: Here, the participants had the opportunity for interview training and were able to test themselves as interviewed experts or interviewers under the guidance of the trainers. In addition to the presentation of various interview situations, especially the division of roles and the associated different perspectives helped the participants to better understand what (science) journalists are aiming for in their interviews and how to best meet this interest as researchers.

The workshop concluded with a final round in which **Julia Reinke** (MUA CAS) once again summarized the results of the day and outstanding questions and comments were discussed. Overall, the workshop participants were able to gain a fundamental and practical

insight into the work of editorial offices, which was also reflected in many positive evaluations afterwards. Now the young academics will be able to present their research results to media representatives in a more confident and targeted manner or become active in the field of science communication themselves.

The event ended with a joint dinner in Leipzig's city center, which gave the participants the opportunity to exchange ideas, continue networking and reflect on the impressions of the day in a relaxed atmosphere.

Written by Madeleine Hartmann, Julia Reinke and Magda Wlostowska



↑ Interview situations are practiced in small groups. © Swen Reichhold

Panel: »African Perspectives on Transregional Spaces«

In a time of two global wars, when polarisation, economic crises and hostility towards Israel are dividing societies, the academy is urged to respond. In the interdisciplinary panel discussion on 5 June 2024 on »African Perspectives on Transregional Spaces« the following questions were discussed: How have our perspectives on transregional spaces changed since the beginning of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine? How are concepts of resilience changing? And how does transregional research react to this? The panel was held at and in cooperation with the Research Centre Global Dynamics (ReCentGlobe) of Leipzig University. Moderated by **Ulf Engel** and **Lena Dallywater**, the event featured distinguished scholars **Temitope Oriola** (Alberta), **Francis Onditi** (Nairobi), and **Chris Saunders** (Cape Town).



↑
Chris Saunders (right) talks about African perspectives on transregional research, moderator Ulf Engel attentively listens. © Swen Reichhold

The focus was on the perspectives from the Global South on war and conflict, highlighting their potential for future discussion and historically contextualise the developments in Eastern Europe in relation to developments on the African continent.

Thursday, 6 June 2024

Editorial Workshop »Communist Actors«

The volume *Communist Actors in African Decolonial Transitions – Comparative Perspectives* (De Gruyter, Berlin, forthcoming) follows those in this series on *Southern African Liberation Movements and the Global Cold War »East«* (2019) and on *Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and Africa* (2023). Like them, it will be an edited collection of essays that brings together contributions focusing on different perspectives on the actions of national and transnational actors from the communist world who interacted with the new-emerging African states and actors at key moments of evolutionary or revolutionary political transition.

As a start into the Editorial Workshop “Communist Actors” happening during the Symposium week, the participants, amongst them **Ana Moledo** (Leipzig University), **Mariusz Lukaziewicz** (Leipzig University), **Steffi Marung** (Leipzig University), **Robin E. Möser** (University of Potsdam), were invited to a working lunch at ALEX in Leipzig for initial conversations in a casual atmosphere. In the following editorial workshop, the co-editors **Lena Dallywater** (IfL), **Christopher Saunders** (University of

Cape Town), **Helder Adegar Fonseca** (University of Évora) then discussed draft chapters of the book. Invited guests functioned as commentators.

The workshop was continued on Friday 7 June with discussions, editorial notes on chapters, concluding reflections of the editors and next steps forward.

Book Presentation »Disarming Apartheid«

Robin E. Möser (University of Potsdam) presented his monograph *Disarming Apartheid. The End of South Africa’s Nuclear Weapons Programme and Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 1968–1991, 2024*, published with Cambridge University Press. The book reconstructs South African decision-making and diplomatic negotiations on the country’s nuclear weapons programme and its international status, drawing on new and extensive archival material and interviews. The Q&A was moderated by **Ana Moledo** (Leipzig University) at Tagungslounge Leipzig.

EEGA Media Advisory Board Meeting

EEGA has developed and implemented new formats of academic communication – such as academic lounges, summer schools with journalists or writing workshops, as well as institutionalising a Media Advisory Board. At the occasion of the EEGA Symposium, the Media Advisory Board of the Leibniz ScienceCampus convened for its annual meeting. **Gemma Pörzgen** (independent journalist) and **Leonid Klimov** (dekoder.org) were introduced to the new spokesperson **Judith Miggelbrink** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography Leipzig) at Tagungslounge in Leipzig, while **Ivo Mijnsen** (NZZ / Handelsblatt) joined via Zoom from Ukraine.

Science Lounge »Visualising War: Shifts in proximity, technology and care«

The EEGA Science Lounge, in cooperation with the project **KonKoop** (Cooperation and conflict in Eastern Europe), hosted a compelling event titled »Visualising War: Shifts in proximity, technology, and care.« The discussion featured esteemed guests: **Monica Rùthers** from the University of Hamburg, **Bohdan Shumylovych** from the Centre for

Urban History in Lviv, who joined online from Ukraine, and **Petra Bopp**, an art historian and curator from Hamburg. Moderated by **Mela Žuljević** of the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, the event delved into the evolving visual narratives of war, exploring the implications of technological advancements and changing societal proximities and care structures in the context of conflict. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine is one of the most visually documented conflicts in the history of war globally. Different actors and parties produce, publish and appropriate various kinds of images and visual representations on daily basis: social media photos and videos, crowdsourced maps of conflict sites, journalist reports, drone and satellite images, etc. The event started with short inputs of the invited guests, each focusing on different aspects of the topic.

Bohdan Shumylovych gave an insight into his seminars with university students in Ukraine and put an emphasis on the importance of visual arts and artistic outlet during traumatic experiences in war time, serving as a mechanism for processing and integrating difficult experiences and providing individuals with means of managing and making sense of their emotions and fears. Shumylovych gave the chance to get a glimpse on written statements and drawings by his students revolving around their nocturnal dreams, which were very impressive and scarred by “quiet trauma”. A term, that is used by Tanya Marie Luhrmann, Ann Kaplan and Chari Larsson, who often refer to it as ordinary trauma or “common trauma” (Deirdre Barrett). It encompasses the psychological effects of chronic stress,



↑
Monica Rùthers examines the evolution of war imagery, from the Crimean War to contemporary drone photography. © Swen Reichhold

constant fear and ongoing adversity that people face during conflict. Dreams are a unique window into trauma and its consequences. (Deirdre Barrett, ed., *Trauma and Dreams* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). He closed his input with the quote by Viet Thanh Nguyen: »Alle Kriege werden zweimal geführt, das erste Mal auf dem Schlachtfeld, das zweite Mal in der Erinnerung.«

Monica Rùthers delved into the past of using imagery and photography to discuss the historical development of motifs in war images in photography. Since the Crimean War, in which telegraphs were first used to transmit news in real time, towards contemporary image-making, a canon of motifs often emerged, where some wars have their own visual language, while others do not. Rùthers talked about the phenomenon of iconic images, perspectives of visibility and dealing with shock images. In doing so, she reflected on the use of technology and new media, such as the increased production of drone images by Ukrainian army and civilians in proactively documenting the war.

Petra Bopp gave the final talk providing a curatorial perspective to dealing with images of war. In particular, she referred to her work with images produced by soldiers and how their private collections work as selective memory of the war. She gave examples of dealing with such images in artistic and curatorial practices across different periods. In particular, she pointed out innovative curatorial approaches which focus on how visual material can be cared as an act of future-making.



↑
Petra Bopp discusses curatorial approaches to war imagery, focusing on soldiers’ private collections and innovative methods for preserving visual material as acts of future-making. © Swen Reichhold

05 Annual Conference in September 2024 in Dubrovnik



After a successful joint effort of the **Regional Studies Association (RSA)** and the Leibniz ScienceCampus in September 2022, this year the cooperation ventured outside the familiar EEGA headquarters in Leipzig and aimed to combine both – historically informed research and current political issues in the Western Balkans. This year's conference took place 11 – 13 September 2024 in Dubrovnik, Croatia, and offered innovative academic work from a range of disciplines, such as history, human geography, political science, sociology, cultural studies, and neighbouring fields of research.

The RSA Central and Eastern Europe conference themes are renowned for their broad scope, encapsulating an interdisciplinary blend that spans global perspectives and policy-driven discussions. The 2024 Annual Conference of

EEGA in partnership with the RSA endeavoured to enrich these general RSA themes with a nuanced exploration that is both region-specific and content-focused. This initiative was particularly tailored for professionals in the humanities and social sciences with a keen interest in Southeastern Europe, emphasizing the post-Yugoslav nations and Albania.

Entitled **»Unfinished Statebuilding and Contested Democracies«**, EEGA's annual conference 2024 zeroed in on a curated selection of themes that hold paramount importance for the region amidst the current geopolitical landscape. It delved into critical border policy issues, including migration, global value chains, and the concept of »global connectedness«. The theme »Unfinished Statebuilding« further prompted an examination of the institutional frameworks in place, signalling a comprehensive review of the factors at play. Additionally, the conference scrutinized demographic trends as potential catalysts for social and economic change within the former Yugoslav territories, alongside an assessment of social movements and the dynamics of urban politics. This confluence of topics aimed to foster a deeper understanding and generate scholarly discourse on the intricate processes shaping the region, offering a platform for academic exchange and policy formulation that is both regionally focused and globally aware.

Keynote **»Democratic struggles in contested states«** by Jelena Dzankic

The keynote lecture on 11 September introduced participants to the EEGA conference theme "Unfinished Statebuilding and Contested Democracies" and opened the discussions. The speaker of the Leibniz ScienceCampus EEGA, **Judith Miggelbrink** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leipzig, Germany), welcomed all delegates and guests. The guest speaker, **Jelena Dzankic** (Robert Schuman Centre of the European University Institute, Florence, Italy) was then introduced by the moderator of the session, **Christian Costamagna**, historian and EEGA Postdoc Fellow.

Evidently, the twenty-first century has deeply disappointed the promise of democracy for the Western Balkan states. Despite the hopes that the 'democratic moment' of the early 2000s would bring about more open, inclusive, and democratic societies, over the past two decades, the



↑ In her keynote lecture, Jelena Dzankic talks about “Democratic struggles in contested states”. © Swen Reichhold

political reality of these countries has been the one of the rule of law backsliding, competitive authoritarianism, and low transformative capacity at the level of society. Why has this been the case? Dzankic’s lecture explored the ways in which the contested nation- and state-building projects have curbed the democratic capacity in the Western Balkans. It highlighted different mechanisms through which these contestations of borders, identities, and institutions have cemented political power strongholds, and opened up spaces for the rise of dependencies on non-democratic actors, such as China, the Gulf States, or Russia. In her talk, Dzankic differentiated among democratic struggles of the



↑ Nebojša Stojčić, Vice Rector for Business Affairs at University of Dubrovnik, welcomes the conference participants. © Swen Reichhold

different countries in the Western Balkans, reflecting on the broader European and global trends of democratic decline. The lecture was followed by a lively Q & A with the audience.

In the evening, the RSA Welcome Reception took place on the Terrace of the Department of Economics and Business, University of Dubrovnik. Welcomed by the Vice Rector for Business Affairs at University of Dubrovnik, **Nebojša Stojčić**, the participants were able to engage in conversation and round off the evening with snacks and drinks enjoying summery temperatures.

EEGA Special Session: Reflections on the Kosovo War: 25 Years Later

The panel discussion »Reflections on the Kosovo War: 25 Years Later«, chaired by **Lena Dallywater** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leipzig, Germany), offered a comprehensive reflection on the Kosovo War, examining its historical significance and enduring impact a quarter-century after the conflict. Through diverse perspectives, the panel addressed the broader implications of the Kosovo War, including its socio-political ramifications, regional dynamics and international interventions. In his talk »Kosovo state building: US policy«, **Arbër Hadri** (Institute of History »Ali Hadri«, Pristina, Kosovo) outlined key aspects of the US policy and discussed the role it played in state-building in Kosovo. **David Kanin** (Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC, United States) presented his research on Western policies and the failure to achieve



↑ Christian Costamagna analyzes US goals in the Kosovo War, focusing on regime change in Serbia. © Swen Reichhold

stability in the Balkans in his talk »Toward Polyarchy: The Bombing Campaign’s Stunted Impact«. By means of consultation and comparison of recently available primary sources, **Christian Costamagna’s** (Leibniz ScienceCampus »Eastern Europe – Global Area« (EEGA), Leipzig University, Germany) presentation “The Kosovo War: Understanding the US Goals” aimed to analyze and challenge one of the most complex thematic nodes related to the Kosovo War, that is, to promote a regime change in Serbia. His research is located at the intersection of the history of Southeast Europe and American foreign policy at the end of the 20th century.

EEGA Special Session: Wars in the Archives: New Perspectives and Opportunities

The panel »Wars in the Archives: New Perspectives and Opportunities« explored challenges and opportunities with archival materials from conflict-marked regions, focusing on former Yugoslavia. Chaired by **Christian Costamagna**, (EEGA, Leipzig University, Germany), it discussed identifying and preserving documents related to the conflicts in former Yugoslavia in the 1990^s, emphasizing safeguarding dispersed materials for cultural heritage.

The policies of the Clinton Administration regarding the former Yugoslavia were explored by **Kara Ellis** (William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum in Little Rock, Arkansas, United States) by examining presidential records. This included accessing unreleased records via the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Mandatory Declassification Review process. In her talk



↑ Kara Ellis explores the policies of the Clinton Administration regarding the former Yugoslavia. © Swen Reichhold



↑ Suzanne Scott discusses the importance of preserving and ensuring the access to ICTY and IRMCT archives. © Swen Reichhold

Ellis also delineated the archives’ role in justice, legal reforms, and memory initiatives and advocating for digital preservation. Emotional dimensions in war-torn archives along with challenges of trauma among families and their communities were discussed by **Robert Parnica** (Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives, Budapest, Hungary). Moreover, the panel covered preservation and accessibility of tribunal archives managed by the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, that is a part of the United Nations system. **Suzanne Scott** (Mechanism Archives and Records Section, United Nations International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, The Hague, The Netherlands), in her talk »Management, Preservation, and Access of ICTY and IRMCT Archives« emphasized the importance of the archives in global discussions on peace, justice, and accountability. Finally, **Nevenka Tromp-Vrkic** (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands) pointed to the significance of the ICTY Trials as historical source, showing how historians – and other social scientists – can utilize the evidence from a large-scale atrocities trial.

EEGA Panel: Geographies of Identity and Discontent

The panel »Geographies of Identity and Discontent«, chaired by **Gregory Gan** (Leibniz ScienceCampus »Eastern Europe – Global Area« (EEGA), University of Halle, Germany), turned its attention to the social and political consequences of spatial inequalities. The contributions examined experiences of migration, stigmatization and marginalization as well as the role of architecture and urban structures in the creation of identity. Discussed were



↑ Gregory Gan presents his research on 'Decolonial Plattenbauten', exploring the emotional ties of postmigrant actors to Berlin's socialist-era panel-block housing. © Swen Reichhold

processes of urban planning and urban change in cities of Central and Eastern Europe, the intended and unintended effects as well as the creative reactions of citizens to their living spaces.

Based on a systematic literature, the presentation »Geographies of Discontent: A Central and Eastern European Perspective« by **Anna Grzelak** (Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization Polish Academy of Sciences (IGSO PAS), Warsaw, Poland), **Frederik Beinvogl** and **Andreas Klärner** (both Thünen-Institute of Rural Studies, Braunschweig, Germany) offered insights from a CEE perspective on the discourse surrounding the 'geography of discontent'. In their collaborative project, 'Regions Left Behind' (<https://regions-left-behind.soc.cas.cz/en>), they explore the social and political consequences of spatial disparities within CEE. **Jan Szczepański** (University of Warsaw, Poland) in his talk on »Rejecting myths – the formation of identity in the space of Lviv« presented the main assumptions and most important results of his doctoral dissertation. His paper, based on case studies of historical periods from the founding of the city to the present, discussed the formation of the identity of Lviv's

space and its appropriation by subsequent states and nations in the context of changing systemic affiliation. **Gregory Gan** (Leibniz ScienceCampus »Eastern Europe – Global Area« (EEGA) talked about his research on »Decolonial Plattenbauten: Home feelings amongst post-migrant actors living in Berlin's postsocialist panel-block housing«. In his project he analyses the affective afterlives of socialist architecture of former East Berlin, focusing on Plattenbauten (industrially-built, residential panel-block housing), which remains the most ubiquitous architectural legacy of state socialism. He presented several case studies based on visual anthropology and multimodal research to consider how actors of postmigration consider, remember, and shape these neighbourhoods through creative means.

EEGA Special Session: Book Presentation and Discussion »Rethinking the Global during the War on Ukraine. Interventions from around the World«

Two years after the beginning of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, there is an increasing number of publications that provide basic knowledge about the attacked country and its history, as well as articles which offer interpretations and analyses. In the special session »Rethinking the Global during the War on Ukraine. Inter-



↑ Dennis Dierks, one of the editors, introduces a publication, exploring the global consequences of the Russian war on Ukraine and its impact on world order. © Swen Reichhold

ventions from around the World«, the leading scientific researcher **Dennis Dierks** (Leipzig University, Germany) presented their endeavour to add a publication that is devoted to two so far less discussed issues: firstly, the consequences of the war for global interrelations and world order, and secondly insights into the reflection on the global consequences from around the world. Moderated by **Lena Dallywater** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leipzig, Germany), one of the editors of the new anthology, Dierks outlined the aim to compile a collection of texts by international authors who, since the beginning of the war of aggression (2022 ff), have analysed the war as a caesura for world-wide interdependencies, and the interrelation of Eastern Europe with other regions of the world. The focus is, as the editors and contributors explained, on the global embeddedness of the war, the global effects and the possible consequences for the emergence of a new world order. Together with **Bohdan Novoshytskyi** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leipzig, Germany) they discussed central claims, layed out what they have developed so far and engaged in a discussion with the audience.

EEGA Special Session: Book Presentation and Discussion »Off white – Central and Eastern Europe and the global history of race«

The volume *Off white – Central and Eastern Europe and the global history of race* (2024) foregrounds racial difference as a key to an alternative history of the Central and Eastern European region, which revolves around the role of whiteness as the unacknowledged foundation of semi-peripheral nation-states and national identities, and of the region's current status as a global stronghold of unapologetic white, Christian nationalisms. Contributions address



↑ Monika Bobako (left) and Ivan Kalmar, authors of the edited volume *Off White – Central and Eastern Europe and the Global History of Race*, discuss the role of whiteness in shaping national identities, politics, and global dynamics. © Swen Reichhold

the pivotal role of whiteness in international diplomacy, geographical exploration, media cultures, music, intellectual discourses, academic theories, everyday language and banal nationalism's many avenues of expressions. In the round table, chaired by **Dana McKelvey** (Central European University, Hungary), one of the editors, **James Mark** (University of Exeter, United Kingdom), together with the discussants **Monika Bobako** (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland) and **Ivan Kalmar** (University of Toronto, Canada) deliberated about the new paradigms for understanding the relationships among racial capitalism, populism, economic peripherality and race that the book offers.

06 Co-operations and Events

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In the reporting period, EEGA co-financed and co-organised various workshops, conferences, panel discussions, and public events that were visited by national and international guests.

International Academic Conference: Colonial Entanglements in Central and Eastern Europe Before 1939

The International Academic Conference on **»Colonial Entanglements in Central and Eastern Europe Before 1939«** took place at the Institute of Polish Culture of the University of Warsaw, Poland on September 4–5, 2023. The EEGA decided to contribute to the conference with the shared goal to bring together scholars interested in the field of colonial and imperial histories of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), discuss the methodological challenges of researching colonial entanglements and imperial culture in CEE as well as test bold ideas, hypotheses and doubts in an academic environment. Presentations by a total of 16 academics and two artists were distributed over six sessions on the two conference days in Warsaw.

Banner of the conference
»Colonial Entanglements in Central and Eastern Europe Before 1939«
↓

4-5 IX
2023

Institute of Polish Culture,
University of Warsaw (IKP UW)
in cooperation with Leibniz
ScienceCampus Eastern Europe
– Global Area (EEGA)

**COLONIAL
ENTANGLEMENTS
IN CENTRAL AND
EASTERN EUROPE
BEFORE 1939**

The first session was introduced by the organizers **Agata Łuksza** and **Łukasz Zaremba** of the Institute of Polish Culture, who opened the conference with a warm welcome to all participants. The morning continued with presentations on Polish historical writing in Britain and racial fantasies in 19th-century Polish culture, followed by artist talks in session 1B. The afternoon delved into topics such as the foundation of Central-Eastern European nation-states after World War I, colonial goods and commodity racism in Czechoslovakia 1918–1938, and everyday practices of migrants from Polish lands in the interwar period.

On the second day, **Lena Dallywater**, representing the Leibniz ScienceCampus EEGA, provided an introduction outlining EEGA's commitment to developing new research perspectives on Eastern Europe, focusing on the positioning of Eastern European actors within global processes, conflicts, and the new world order. She continued explaining how EEGA's approach aligns with the theme of the conference as EEGA equally brings forth research that explores the region's interconnectedness with and imprints on the global sphere while acknowledging the reciprocal impacts that these engagements brought about in Eastern Europe itself. Dallywater delved into the two facets of entanglement, which the conference explores in its colonial perspective: positioning oneself and being positioned by others. Both facets were highlighted in research studies presented at the conference's first day. She summarized, that the conference was not only a welcome contribution to the networks' internationalization strategy by fostering exchange with colleagues from the region in Eastern Europe itself, the exchange also showed the significance for collaborative and transnational research, interdisciplinary approaches, and the exploration of untapped sources from various archives and languages to contribute to a deeper understanding of the region's position within global processes.

The second day continued with discussions on transnational colonial imagination in 1930s Poland and the pre-World War II Polish colonial project. The second session included presentations on race and sovereignty in literature as well as Poland's entanglements in Africa in the 20th century. The final session covered global histories of race and colonialism in Hungary, interwar Poland's aspirations of global status, and the tracing of ethnogra-

phic shows in Central and Eastern Europe. The conference concluded with a summary and final discussion, offering insights into the entangled histories and diverse perspectives presented throughout the event.

Book Discussion at Aleksanteri Conference in Helsinki, Finland

At the Aleksanteri Conference 2023 on **»Decolonizing space in the Global East – Legal Choices, Political Transformations, Carceral Practices«** from 25–27 October, 2023, the Leibniz ScienceCampus EEGA organized a book discussion on *Globalizing Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture and Economics from the 18th to the 21st Century* (to be published with Bloomsbury in 2025). In public discourse, Eastern Europe is still rather often seen as a place where social, political, and strategic objectives are executed over and above the will, freedoms, or choices of this region's populations. Taking a somewhat different approach, the new textbook for MA and PhD education recognizes not only subordination but also agency and scopes of action. It explores Eastern Europe as a dynamic and global area, not in isolation but in the context of constant exchanges, by revealing the multiple ways in which its societies have positioned themselves in and towards global processes through entanglement from the 19th through to the 21st centuries.

Aim of the discussion at the Aleksanteri conference was to reach out to scholars of Eastern European and Eurasian studies, from student to professor, to give a taste of the book and its three parts, and to make a topical



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Konstantin Branovitskii explores the path of the legal reform of selected Eastern European countries and discusses the significance of involving foreign experts in such reforms. © EEGA

as well as a methodological intervention. To do so, editors and authors of the textbook presented some of the most pertinent findings from selected chapters and discussed them with the guests. First, **Gilad Ben-Nun** (Leipzig University, Germany), one of the editors, gave an introduction into aims and structure of the textbook. Then, the round table speakers shed light on aspect of Eastern Europe in relation to international political and legal spheres, via deeper explorations of the ways in which its actors came to participate in and heavily impact on international organizations and structures of global governance. From the influential role played by representatives at the League of Nations and the United Nations to the making of modern international law by East European jurists, they demonstrated how this region shaped the so-called »international community«. Over the past century, Eastern European legal systems have faced several ruptures and have recalibrated the region's domestic and multilateral legal bedrocks. **Konstantin Branovitskii** (Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg) gave examples of Eastern European countries' endeavors to break away from the post-Soviet model of civil procedure. He explored the path of the legal reform of selected countries and discusses the significance of involving foreign experts in such reforms. **Lena Dallywater** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography) then presented some of the aspects central to part II of the book, with a special emphasis on migration, mobil-

ity (of people and ideas), and transfer. Afterwards, **Gilad Ben-Nun** depicted Eastern European impacts on modern international law while pointing to other world regions where these principles were later applied. **Francis Onditi** (Riara University, Nairobi, Kenya) brought the contributions together in a critical comment from the perspective of International Relations and Diplomacy. He offered an intellectual vision of what the aspects presented mean to a different world region, and pointed to the position of Africa in a global system, as agent of decolonisation. Onditi reflected on how the ambition of the textbook might be transferred to other area studies, and ended his commentary with thoughts on human to human bonds and people-dependent diplomacy.

EEGA Fellow Christian Costamagna as Expert at Two International Events

At the end of March, 2024, the University of Pristina together with the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service hosted the »25th Anniversary of NATO Intervention in Kosovo. Democracy, Human Rights, and Peace Building International Conference«. It brought together practitioners, policy makers, and scholars to reflect on the lessons of the humanitarian intervention in Kosovo and the developments in the last 25 years that offer both challenges and opportunities for democracy, peace, and security not only in Southeastern Europe, but around the globe. The aim of the conference was to discuss and debate bold actions for promoting human rights, building peace, and progressing democracy globally based on lessons from taking just and necessary stands, such as the one taken in Kosovo, against genocide and the violation of human rights. The conference themes centered around State Building, Security & Peacebuilding, and Transitional Justice. EEGA fellow **Christian Costamagna** gave a talk on »Legacy and Challenges of Operation Allied Force: Yugoslav Generals' Memoirs and Contemporary Balkan Dynamics«.

The International Academic Week (HSW) is the Southeast Europe Association's (Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft – SOG) annual key event to bring together early-career researchers and experienced scholars from all over Europe and beyond to present and discuss their research on the re-



↑ Christian Costamagna talks on »Legacy and Challenges of Operation Allied Force: Yugoslav Generals' Memoirs and Contemporary Balkan Dynamics.« © Courtesy of the University of Pristina

gion. This year's conference, hosted by PD **Dietmar Müller** (Leipzig University) and **Florian Bieber** (University of Graz), focused on the topic of »Smallness in International Politics: The Agency of Small States in Southeast Europe«. The 62nd International Academic Week from September 30 to October 4, 2024 in Tutzing, Germany, approached the »smallness problem« in international politics from a constructivist angle and with methods from international relations and security studies, the cultural history of politics, transnational feminism, and European studies. On different levels of agency, from local, to regional and national, from bi- and trilateral to international and in different fields of policy and society the participants examined discourses and policies that tried to mitigate and compensate the smallness of nations and states. The analysis focused on the role of agency and position of countries from Southeast Europe in the larger European and international state system, with a particular focus on four historical periods: a) the emergence of modern nation states in Southeast Europe in the 19th century, b) the state-system in interwar Europe, c) Cold-War Southeast Europe, and d) the 21st century. EEGA Fellow Christian Costamagna participated with a presentation on »No Strategy and no Allies: The Security Dilemmas of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) during the Kosovo War (1998–1999)«.

Workshop »Critical Approaches to Militarisation and Space«



↑ The organisers, Bettina Bruns, Kathrin Hörschelmann and Linda Ruppert welcome the workshop participants and provide an introduction to the workshop. © EEGA

The workshop »Critical Approaches to Militarisation and Space« took place on 20th and 21st March 2024 in Leipzig and was organised by the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography and EEGA Research Affiliate **Bettina Bruns** (RA 1) in cooperation with **Kathrin Hörschelmann** of the University of Bonn and **Linda Ruppert** of Freiburg University.

The first day started with a warm welcome by the three organisers and a round of introductions where the participants got to know each other by presenting the person seated next to them, their research interests and a fun fact about them.

The first paper session was initiated by a thought-provoking presentation by **Elena Racheva** (University of Oxford, United Kingdom) on the relations between war veterans, the Russian state, and society. She explained how the state narratives about Russian veterans shifted from criminals to defenders of the homeland and how this patriotic instrumentalization fuelled the narrative of a 'never-ending war' as well as school-based educational approaches, however not the veterans' quality of life.

Linda Hart (Laurea University of Applied Sciences, Finland) followed, speaking about »Infrastructures of Sustenance in Civilian Preparedness Training for Women in Finland«. The insightful talk on how these material infrastructures and preparations enhance civic social skills sparked a lively very exchange on materiality and its consequences for civic culture.

Hana Cervinkova (Maynooth University, Ireland) who reflected on Militarization and Cultural Intimacy in Post-Socialist rounded up the first session by recounting her fieldwork in Czechian military bases in the early 2000^s. This made her realize that post-socialist Czech military officials were melancholically hanging on the material and non-material past of their work life, while on contemporary Czechia was overcoming post-socialism by high-speed militarization of politics, society and culture to become part of the West.

In paper session 2, **Urszula Markowska-Manista** (University of Warsaw) presented her substantial work on the practices of the militarisation of childhoods as well as young people's voices from Ukraine and Poland, showing an extensive collection of how Ukrainian children expressed their wartime experiences creatively. She also spoke about how »Difficult Knowledge« is being taught

in Polish schools to familiarize children with these topics, prepare them for eventualities and prevent insecurities in their knowledge.

Håvard Bækken (Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, Oslo) shared his insights on Military Patriotic Education in occupied Ukraine, explaining how militarizing patriotism in Russia started already in the pre-Putin era with the Great Patriotic War, but intensified over the last two decades with Putin's conservative turn, merging past wars and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine to one 'continuous' war. As part of Russia's border expansion strategy, this Russification of the youth especially can now also be seen in Russian-occupied Donbas where letters to Russian soldiers show the St.-George-Z and resemble replicates of World War II propaganda.

Victoria M. Basham (University of Cardiff) concluded the second paper session with an interesting talk on inter-generational injustice and war preparedness, presenting three ideas for spatio-temporal research projects. She focused on diverging military compensations that result in social disparities and hierarchies, the implications of intergenerational memory and trauma for the preparedness for war, as well as ecological implications of warfare for future generations.

Each of the presentations of paper session 2 sparked lively debates and queries, which were continued during a coffee break, before **Timothy Williams** (Bundeswehr University München) reflected upon the first day. He identified four interconnecting elements that could be found in all of the six presentations. Firstly, cultural contexts are of importance when it comes to where militarization happens. Secondly, agents and their agency are relevant for discussing whose perspectives are being thought of as well as their intergenerational impact. Thirdly, narratives and the roles that are attributed to actors cannot be lost out of sight in the context of militarization when speaking about responsibility and copability. And lastly, militarization happens in social spaces e. g., in post-socialist spaces, in the context of patriotism, regarding in- and outgroups as well as within threat constructions.

A successful and thought-provoking first day was rounded off at a restaurant with interesting conversations and inspiring debates.

The second day was initiated by **Linda Ruppert** (Freiburg University) who presented her research on the

geopolitics of technological futures, investigating warfare technologies and future battlefields that are being discussed in German security debates. She argued that shifting geopolitical imaginaries including AI and Hyperwar imply technological changes which in turn effect normative visions and leitmotifs of future warfare as well as socio-technological realities on the battlefields.

After an engaging debate on the future of warfare, as in where battlefields will be located and what type of combatants will be involved in the war, the last but not the least presentation of the day was reached. **Katharine Hall** (University of London) presented her archival research on British Drone Experiments in Iraq in the Interwar period, shaping militarism and future weapons testing in the UK. By thinking through the experimental, she seeks to explain the geographies of laboratories, the persistent narratives and the relationship between science and warfare.

The closing discussion of the day was led by **Frank Stengel** (Kiel University) who summarised the two-day workshop with his impressions on ethical aspects of and critical approaches to researching militarisation and space. While the presentations differed in terms of conceptualizing »militarisation« as well as in the prevalence of ethical and normative issues, all speakers stressed the importance of Spatio-temporality, as in the historic origins, the future implications and the intergenerational relations of militarisation. Moreover, the participants realized the importance of materiality, be it in civilian preparedness for war in Finland, educational adaptations in Poland and Ukraine or technological warfare innovations in the UK, Germany and the Czech Republic.

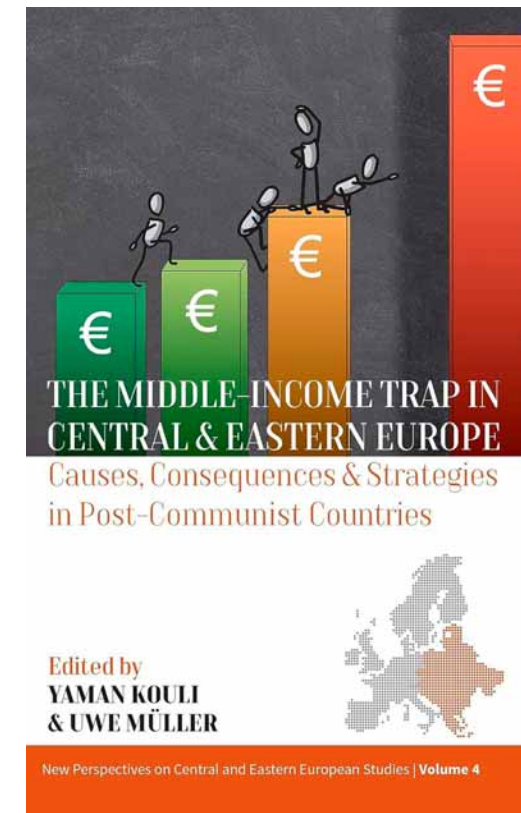
The workshop has been informative, inspiring and nurturing and can be deemed a success: connections have been established and strengthened, plans for a Special Issue with reflections on the workshop's results have been made and future meetings have been planned.

Book presentation »The Middle-Income Trap in Central and Eastern Europe«

The audience was delighted when **Yaman Kouli** (Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf) finally held up the printed version of *The Middle-Income Trap in Central and Eastern Europe* (Berghahn Books, 2024) on the 23rd of April 2024. The editor presented the outcomes of the project at

The volume examines the reality of the diminishing marginal utility of further international investments alongside the pitfalls of higher government spending to cultivate innovation, which ultimately makes foreign capital less attractive. Authors from diverse disciplinary perspectives reflect on current debates surrounding the developmental bottlenecks in East-Central Europe. Their common goal is to analyse the manner of socio-economic transformation, question of the relevance and impact of the »middle-income trap« and identify possible ways to escape it with measures at company level, through national policy and via European programs.

The presenter and the audience engaged in a discussion afterwards that stretched from the Polish furniture industry to the ramifications of the Covid-19 pandemic in Eastern Europe and transferability of the concept, which sparked interest for a sequel.



the new location of the Fraunhofer-Zentrum für Internationales Management und Wissensökonomie IMW in the heart of Leipzig in cooperation with the Leibniz Science-Campus »Eastern Europe – Global Area« (EEGA). EEGA supported the book project from the very beginning to the end. Starting alongside the Herder Research Council and the Fraunhofer-Zentrum für Internationales Management und Wissensökonomie IMW, it sponsored the conference in November 2018, where the majority of the papers completed in subsequent years were discussed for the first time.

In *The Middle-Income Trap in Central and Eastern Europe*, the editors argue that after the transformation shock, i.e. since the mid-1990s, the economic development of Central and Eastern Europe has maintained high economic growth rates, seemingly leading to an era of prosperity. In the last decade, the limits of the FDI-based growth model have become more visible. Today, many do not hold out much hope of the East quickly catching up with the West. This is fuelling the rise of right-wing populism in the region, without being able to offer a successful concept to overcome the middle-income trap.



↑ Editor Yaman Kouli explains a table used in the book on the development of gross domestic product per capita. © EEGA

Thesis Defense by EEGA PhD Fellow Ana Moledo

Recent research has shown that the transition from empire to nation-state was by no means the only and inevitable path and that there were numerous alternatives to decolonization that were developed in close exchange with transnational anti-colonial actors and ideologies. The dissertation project »**Spaces of liberation: networks, practices and imaginaries of Lusophone African liberation movements' diplomatic revolution (1960s-1974)**« by EEGA PhD Fellow **Ana Moledo** analyzes mobili-

ties, connections and practices of anti-colonial activists in Lusophone Africa, reconstructing spaces that shaped and were shaped by liberation politics in the 60^s and 70^s of the 20th century. The successful public defense took place on 18 June at Leipzig University!

Gregory Gan at the 18th EASA Biennial Conference in Barcelona

The European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) hosted the 18th EASA Biennial Conference in person from 23 to 26 July 2024 in Barcelona, Spain and online 18 July. Over 2000 delegates attended four days of panels, presentations, keynotes and other activities. EEGA Fellow **Gregory Gan** attended the conference, and presented a paper entitled »Delinking« **Berlin's Soviet Colonial Legacies using Watercolours and other Artistic Media**. This research surveys urban activism and artistic practices in Berlin that have responded to the challenge to »delink« the city from its Soviet colonial legacy, which, in turn, recognizes Russia's current neoimperial ambitions as constitutive and consequential of its Soviet colonial past.

Keynote lecture by Béata Hock on »Vectors and Dynamics of Cold War Cultural Exchanges«

EEGA Affiliate Researcher **Béata Hock** was part of the international workshop »Iron Curtains or Artistic Gates? Communism and Cultural Diplomacy in the Global South (1945–1991 and Beyond)« that took place 19–20 September 2024, in Vienna, Austria. Her keynote lecture focused on »Vectors and Dynamics of Cold War Cultural Exchanges. A Triangulation«. The two-day workshop challenged traditional East-West Cold War narratives by examining the cultural interactions between communist Europe and the Global South. It primarily focused on art, culture, and heritage as sources of new insights into historical narratives.

Editorial Workshop and Paper Sessions »Communist Actors in African Decolonial Transitions – Comparative Perspectives«, 30 September 2024 in Bayreuth

The Editorial Workshop »Communist Actors in African Decolonial Transitions – Comparative Perspectives« took



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The audience applauds after the keynote lecture by Grace A. Musila
© Robert Götze – Fabrica Lux Photography

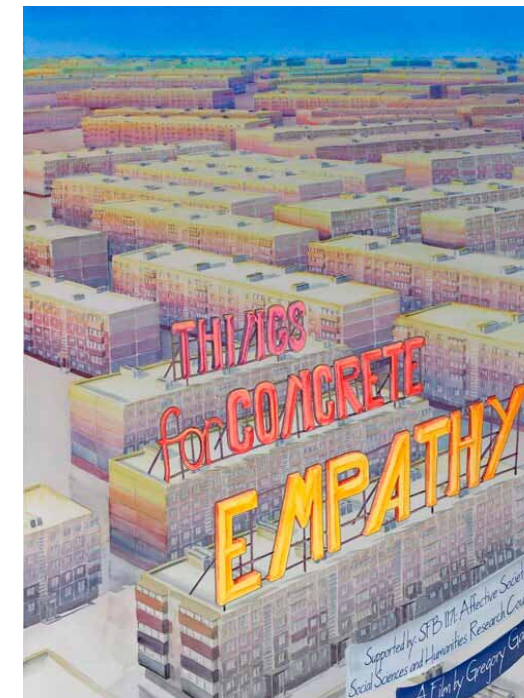
place in the framework of the Association for African Studies in Germany e.V. (VAD) Conference from 30 September to 2 October 2024, in Bayreuth (Germany). The conference theme was **Reconfigurations in Africa – and in African Studies**, addressing current and past crises and processes of transformation on the African continent, as well as the need to critically reflect on the means—academic, artistic and otherwise—by which we approach them globally to expand knowledge production.

In the workshop, the co-editors **Christopher Saunders** (University of Cape Town), **Helder Adegar Fonseca** (University of Évora), and **Lena Dallywater** (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography) discussed draft chapters of the volume »Communist Actors in African Decolonial Transitions – Comparative Perspectives« (De Gruyter, Berlin, 2025 forthcoming), drafted the section introductions to the three parts of the book, and finalized the general introduction for submission to review in October 2024. The workshop was followed by the conference's keynote lecture on »Black sensemaking | Discretion« by **Grace A. Musila** (Department of African Literature, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg). Afterwards the co-editors continued their working day with two related paper sessions on »Communist Actors in African Decolonial Transitions«, featuring contributions by several of the volume's authors, namely **Chris Saunders**, **Helder Adegar Fonseca**, **Joao Fusco Ribeiro**, **Tycho van der Hoog**, and **Barbora Menclova**, as well as a comment by **Robin E. Möser**, whose research previous-

ly featured in a publication by the co-editors (Saunders, Fonseca, and Dallywater 2023). The panels focused on the roles of communist actors in key moments in the political transition from colonial/white-ruled states to new independent majority-ruled states, each showcasing different examples from a comparative perspective. The day ended with informal conversations during a working dinner with invited guests to facilitate networking and discussion with the authors.

Filmscreening & Discussion

»Empathy for Concrete Things«



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Movie poster © Gregory Gan

Within the framework of the Geographical Colloquium of the MLU Halle-Wittenberg, EEGA Fellow **Gregory Gan** showed his film »Empathy for Concrete Things« on October 9th in Halle and discussed it afterwards with the large audience. Based on their experiences living and working amongst Soviet-era concrete, panel-block apartments, the filmmaker, together with five visual artists, examine past and present attitudes towards their former homes. Combining personal stories with experimental research on the history of twentieth-century art and architecture, the film creates both a compelling narrative, and a con-

temporary aesthetic of panel-block mass housing using original watercolors, put into motion using digital animation and stop-motion techniques. As global and personal histories interweave, the film explores notions of moral and political responsibility as evinced in physical space. »Empathy for Concrete Things« thus considers how modern architecture has become the site of both utopian fantasies, and major calamities that shaped the history of the twentieth century. As former postsocialist countries have been thrust, or hang on the edge of new humanitarian and political crises, the film expresses its own rallying cry against destruction, all from the vantage point of concrete, panel-block apartments.

Discussion and talk with the journalists Gesine Dornblüth and Thomas Franke on »Putins Gift. Russlands Angriff auf Europas Freiheit«

(**Putin's Poison. Russia's attack on Europe's freedom**) A battle between authoritarianism and democracy is raging in the post-Soviet space, and not just in Ukraine. Russian poison is destroying societies by using violence, cheap promises and disinformation to exploit existing weaknesses and deepen rifts, argue journalists **Gesine Dornblüth** and **Thomas Franke** in their latest publication. In the hybrid discussion on 16 January at the GWZO Leip-



↑
Gesine Dornblüth reads out some passages from the book © EEGA



The interested audience asked many questions and commented on the experts' statements. © EEGA

zig, the authors of the book *Putins Gift* (›Putin's Poison‹) spoke about the subtle methods Russia is using to infiltrate states that have become independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union and how those who have taken up the fight against Russia's poison can be given a voice. Thirty years after the end of the Soviet Union, the power-

ful in the Kremlin are still constantly trying to destabilise and disintegrate the states in their former sphere of influence. In Georgia, for example, tens of thousands are protesting against repressive measures by the pro-Russian government. In Moldova, Russia has established a criminal pseudo-state entity in Transnistria and weakened the republic in the long term. The war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh was also triggered by the interference of Soviet secret services, the guests laid out. In dialogue with the audience, the authors discussed their insights into the region. During the conversation, **Gesine Dornblüth** and **Thomas Franke** emphasized that disinformation in their view is the most dangerous poison, a threat they view as corrosive and insidious to democracies. They also expressed a shared conviction with the audience that media literacy should be taught from an early age, ideally starting with at elementary school, as a necessary safeguard against the manipulative powers of media and disinformation. Historian Dennis Dierks (Leipzig University) moderated the event. Stefan Rohdewald, Professor of East and Southeast European History at Leipzig University, commented. The lively discussion concluded the active last six months of the second funding phase of EEGA supported by the Leibniz Association.

EEGA Colloquium – A Forum for Global, Transregional and Eastern European Studies

EEGA organises a colloquium for researchers, students and interested guests involved in the fields of Global, Trans-regional and Eastern European Studies, and neighbouring disciplines. The colloquium serves as a hub and melting pot for research in Leipzig – Halle – Jena, crossing borders and strengthening the network between the various academic and research institutions in the region. Here, researchers from EEGA's partners, EEGA's own Research Areas and holders of the EEGA Fellowship enjoy the limelight of an expert forum to present and discuss activities, projects, strategies and plans.

The colloquium incorporates events at EEGA's partner institutions, thus offering a stage with a broader audience and building up momentum for development and outreach within an overarching framework.

Five (former) EEGA fellows presented their research in 2024.

Tatia Tavxeliidze: Ethnocentrism and value judgements against ethnic minorities in Georgia

Tatia Tavxeliidze (Research Area 5) talked about her research project **»Ethnocentrism and value judgements against ethnic minorities in Georgia«**. She explores how individuals often exhibit a bias in favour of their own culture, leading to beliefs in cultural superiority and the assessment of other cultures from a narrow cultural perspective. This dynamic can contribute to discrimination, antipathy, and potentially even ethnic conflicts. During her talk, **Tatia Tavxeliidze** presented the core theories of ethnocentrism and illustrated them through specific examples of stereotypes and prejudices held by the ethnic Georgian majority against ethnic minorities. Objective of her research is, at the example of Georgia, to shed light on how cultural differences and distinctiveness influence the formation of cultural stereotypes.

Erika Nagy: Municipal agency in a changing multilevel polity. Diverse pathways in Central and Eastern Europe

Erika Nagy (Research Area 3) presented her research on **»Municipal agency in a changing multilevel polity. Diverse pathways in Central and Eastern Europe«**. The series of current crises, i.e. the financial and economic meltdown, the migration crisis, the pandemic and the war in

Ukraine have undermined the pre-crisis constellations of power, challenged institutional systems and also created possibilities for alternative narratives and agencies for development. Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) was hit by the above processes severely exhibiting the structural weaknesses of pre-crisis economic trajectories and the deficits of national institutional systems in managing the unfolding, spatially uneven social crises, and entailing substantial changes in the political arenas (e.g. the rise of populism) and the reorganisation of state power. Nagy's research aims to grasp the above processes through a local lens, placing municipalities in the focus as the agents of place-based development which mobilise resources in times of shocks to cope with the unfolding crises in the local economy and society, as the manifestations of state power and its spatial organisation, and as the bodies representing the interests of local communities hence, a source of citizenship. The questions to be addressed:

- (1) How did the subsequent crises (since 2008) impacted the position of municipalities in the multilevel polity in CEE?
- (2) What did the spatial reorganization of state power entail to local agency shaping (changing/maintaining/recovering) local and regional development paths?
- (3) Although, CEE countries took different paths in state devolution, could we identify processes and drivers of the spatial organisation of power which are rooted in the shared structural (semi-peripheral) position of CEE?

The research rests on a comparative desk research on the municipal scope in development policies, the distribution of public funds, organisation public services, the legitimacy of local leadership moreover, on the political struggles shaping the variegated paths of de/re/municipalization in CEE, conducted at the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leipzig in October 2023 – January 2024.

Špela Drnovšek Zorko: »Eastern European« in Japan? Refracted geographies of »Eastness«

Former EEGA fellow **Špela Drnovšek Zorko** (Research Area 1) talked about **»Eastern European« in Japan? Refracted geographies of »Eastness«**. Based on interviews conducted with Central and Eastern Europeans

living in Japan, the talk investigated the geographic imaginaries and power relations of »Eastness« in relation to cultural geographies of migration. In Japan, an "ethno-nationalist immigrant society" (Liu-Farrer: 2020), categories of foreignness are both implicitly and explicitly racialized. Yet contrary to some contexts, particularly in Western Europe, intra-European distinctions between »East« and »West« are largely collapsed into an unmarked European-ness, where »Eastern Europe« becomes a blank slate and »Eastern Europeans« are folded into the broader category of predominantly white Westerners (Drnovšek Zorko and Debnár 2021). Drawing on the narratives of both recent arrivals and longer-settled residents in Japan, the talk unpacked »Eastness« as a contingent geographic imaginary refracted through individual migration biographies. First, it highlighted the opportunities – as well as the latent complicities – of not being readily mapped within locally dominant schemas. Second, it identified those analogies that portray the East not as a geographic concept but as a contextual power relation between differently positioned »Easterners« and »Westerners« providing a means for making sense of shifting racialized identities.

Christian Costamagna: 25 Years after the Kosovo War: Historical Research Perspectives

Christian Costamagna (Research Area 2) presented his research project **»25 Years after the Kosovo War: Historical Research Perspectives«** within the framework of the colloquium **»Grundprobleme der Geschichte Ost- und Südosteuropas«** (Key problems in the history of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe) organized by Stefan Rohdewald at Leipzig University. Twenty-five years after the end of the Kosovo War, historical controversies of interpretative nature persist, reflecting the polarization that has emerged in memory politics concerning the conflict. The Kosovo War (1998–1999) encompassed various phases, dimensions, with both local and global actors involved. The conflict has generated an immense amount of histo-

rical sources, and scholars have conducted a substantial quantity of research. However, what is the current state of art? What archives and sources are available to historians? What interpretative and research challenges may arise? These questions were addressed by **Christian Costamagna** during his talk in light of his recent research.

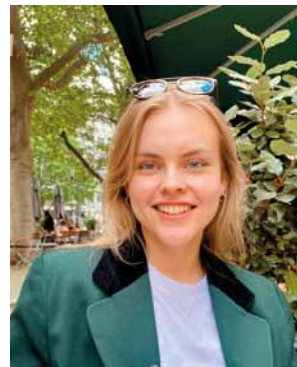
Yevheniia Shyshkina: From Internationalism to Imperial Nationalism: "Russkij mir" in the Russian-Ukrainian Information War of 2014–2022

Yevheniia Shyshkina (Research Area 2) worked on the research project **»From Internationalism to Imperial Nationalism: „Russkij mir“ in the Russian-Ukrainian Information War of 2014–2022«** during her EEGA fellowship. The aim of the research is to study the external, theoretical component of the "Russkij mir" (which actively instrumentalizes the concept of internationalism, linking it to the historical experience of the USSR) and its practical implementation on the example of the war in Ukraine (indicating the imperial-nationalist component of this concept in the political reality). It also considers the specifics of the "Russkij mir" which combines a left-radical propaganda component (instrumentalization of the history of the USSR's struggle with Nazi Germany) and an ultra-right-wing method of implementation (refusal to recognize the existence of the Ukrainian nation and the destruction of the Ukrainian population unwilling to accept the "Russkij mir"), which became evident during the Russian-Ukrainian war. Analyzing the reasons for this creates prerequisites for the disclosure of the broader theme of the confrontation between the Global North and the Global South. As the intentions of the ruling regime in Russia to use the rhetoric of ultra-radical left and right-wing political forces to destabilize the social order in the countries of the North Atlantic Alliance and to form a pro-Russian coalition of the leading countries of the Global South become more and more obvious.

08 Postdoc Fellows and Interns

The EEGA supports researchers from within and outside the science region Leipzig – Halle – Jena. In the reporting year five Postdocs received an EEGA fellowship (between 3 and 6 months) and stayed at one of our partner institutions.

→
Amelie Stelter
© private



The Leibniz ScienceCampus EEGA was able to welcome **Amelie Stelter**, its second intern in funding phase II. She completed a ten-week compulsory internship at EEGA in Leipzig in spring 2024. She is a student in political science at University of Heidelberg, and her personal research interests lie particularly in peace and conflict research. During her internship Amelie Stelter gained insights into various departments and worked on different projects, e.g. research for an anthology (see Publications).

→
Christian Costamagna
© Swen Reichhold



Christian Costamagna (Research Area 2): three months stay at Leipzig University; research project: Advancing Regional Studies: Contemporary Perspectives from Southeastern Europe.

→
Tatia Tavxelidze
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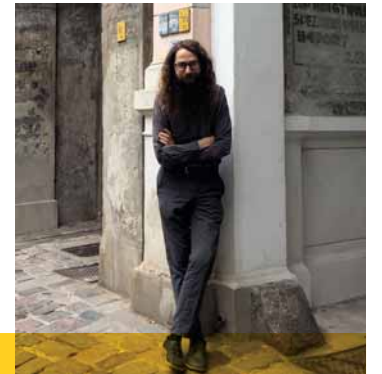
Tatia Tavxelidze (Research Area 5): six months stay at Leipzig University; research project: Local and regional aspects of Ethno-centrism in Georgia.

→
Yevheniia Shyshkina
© private



Yevheniia Shyshkina (Research Area 2): six months stay at the Leipzig University; research project: From Internationalism to Imperial Nationalism: "Russkij mir" in the Russian-Ukrainian Information War of 2014–2022.

→
Gregory Gan
© private



Gregory Gan (Research Area 1): three and a half months stay at Halle University; research project: Affective architecture: Berlin's *Plattenbauten* as a creative space for postmigrant artists from former Soviet republics.

→
Erika Nagy
© private



Erika Nagy (Research Area 3): four months stay at the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography; research project: The scalar organisation of state power and the changing scope of local agents to respond to global crises in various CEE contexts.

09 Publications

In the following a selection of the latest EEGA-related publications from EEGA, its partner institutions, EEGA Fellows and Affiliates are presented.

Founded in 2016, the Leibniz ScienceCampus »Eastern Europe – Global Area« (EEGA) is committed to developing new research perspectives on Eastern Europe. EEGA promotes young researchers and stimulates knowledge exchange together with other Eastern European stakeholders in this region. In this vein, EEGA contributes substantially to the integration of the Central German academic region, an area marked by the successful and longstanding cooperation of universities and research institutes. The EEGA research agenda addresses the overarching question of the positioning of Eastern European actors through and within global processes, conflicts and a new world order. A multi-disciplinary and multi-faceted examination of globalization processes is key for an informed understanding of societal developments. Released in 2024, the **Who-is-who brochure** introduces the many colleagues who shape EEGA, their research projects and interests. The brochure, which was compiled with the valuable support of the two student assistants **Lucas Hübner** and **Clara Seeber**, is available online and in printed form.

Russia's war on Ukraine is being closely watched and debated around the world. This debate, whose outcome is not yet clear, is not only about the war as such. It shows how global interdependencies and globality are currently rethought and redefined. The forthcoming anthology **Rethinking Globality in Times of War on Ukraine. A Sourcebook** (working title) is the result of a comprehensive review of daily and weekly newspapers, online journals, blogs, academic journals, and political and cultural magazines that deal with the global consequences of the war or discuss globally relevant aspects of belonging, solidarity, or the distribution of political, economic, and epistemic power under the impact of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The translated and annotated texts from all regions of the world offer reflections on international law and organisations, post-colonial and decolonial critiques of power, transregional religious solidarities, the economic and environmental consequences of war, rearmament, neutrality and non-alignment, and the transformation of regional cooperation. The collec-

tion, edited by **Katja Castryck-Naumann, Lena Dallywatter, Dennis Dierks, Steffi Marung, Stefan Rohdewald**, includes texts in English, translated from French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Serbian, Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, Turkish, Arabic and Chinese, reflecting the broad linguistic and regional expertise of the editors and contributors. Introducing voices that are otherwise unheard, this sourcebook shows how key notions of globality are being renegotiated, and offers crucial insights into the current rethinking of future international relations.

EEGA's second special issue in cooperation with the e-journal *Connections* on »**Conjunctural Geographies of Post-socialist and Post-colonial Conditions**«, edited by **Lela Rekviashvili, Kasia Narkowicz, Nikolay Karkov, Zhivka Valiavicharska, Ovidiu Tichindeleanu**, is part of the

ongoing efforts of scholars, artists and activists to challenge knowledge production hierarchies in and about the post-socialist East. It takes the latter as its point of departure as a site of autonomous theoretical and political practice. The articles in this special issue focus on a range of topics, including infrastructure and mobility, protest and social contention, feminist and queer activism, property rights and human-soil relationships. All papers reveal and contest the erasure, marginalization and reductionism at play in academic, media and public discourses when it comes to the sociopolitical realities and the histories of the post-socialist East, along with the lived and embodied violence that ensue from the domination of Eurocentric models in post-socialist societies. Each paper offers its own ways of moving beyond political and epistemological dead ends, offering alternative interpretations, methods, ways of theorizing, and academic, activist, and artistic practices, in an effort to contribute towards decolonizing knowledge production and political practice in the region. These contributions offer different strategies through which to navigate and push against our marginalization in knowledge production by engaging with post- and decolonial thinking, unearthing forgotten or marginalized histories, or creat-



Sample pages from EEGA's Who-is-who brochure





Dr Uwe Müller

Institution Leibniz-Institut für Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Europa / Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO)

Position in EEGA (Research Area) Research Area Coordinator (RA 3)

Contact uwe.mueller@leibniz-gwzo.de

Which topics do you deal with (from which perspective, with which focus)?

- › Economic and Social History of Eastern Europe from the 18th to the 21st Century
- › Eastern Europe in processes of globalization and deglobalization
- › History of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance with a focus on the external relations, transport, and energy policies
- › Agrarian movements, land reforms and cooperatives in Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries
- › Central and Eastern European transport history from the 18th to the 21st century

About

From 1983 to 1988, Dr Uwe Müller studied History at Leipzig University, where he stayed as a PhD-student until 1992. In 1997 he acquired his Doctorate (Dr. rer. pol.) with a thesis on Prussian and Brunswick chausse construction policy in the 19th century. He has been working as Research Assistant at the German Museum of Books and Writing and Humboldt University, Berlin, and the European University "Viadrina", Frankfurt (Oder), at the Chair for Economic and Social History of Modern Times and for Comparative European Economic and Social History. From 2008 to 2011 he was Research Associate at Saarland University, Saarbrücken. Since 2011, Uwe Müller is Research Associate at GWZO.

Current or planned projects

Uwe Müller is currently working on three projects focussing on Eastern Europe's trade relations with other parts of the world. While the project "Comecon and the Global Economic Order" examines the European Comecon states' economic relations to countries of the Global South, "Global Trade" analyses the politics of foreign trade and infrastructure as essential elements of East-European positioning strategies within economic globalization in the 19th and 20th centuries. His third project "Institutions and Cultures of Economic Activity" investigates the transfer of economic institutions into Eastern Europe and their adaptation to regional parameters, value judgments and patterns of behaviour. It is searching for answers to what role processes of entanglement and globalization played in the formation and development of regionally specific cultures of economic activity. Within the framework of this project, he is working, among other things, on the development of rural cooperatives in Central and Eastern Europe since the middle of the 19th century.

Where do you see connecting points/in which thematic fields and areas would you be particularly interested in (interdisciplinary, trans-regional, institutional) cooperation and new findings?

I see the most important connecting points within the framework of EEGA in the research on regional economic development. I very much appreciate the exchange with colleagues from the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies, the geographical institutes of the universities, and the guests of EEGA.

Best of EEGA

A highlight of the work within EEGA was the presentation of our manuscript "The Middle Income Trap in Central and Eastern Europe – Emergence and Ways out". EEGA had already sponsored a conference on the topic (alongside the Herder Research Council) and organised this book launch in October 2021. We had the rare opportunity to discuss the papers revised for publication with the authors – in front of and with an audience.



Dr Katja Castryck-Naumann

Institution Leibniz-Institut für Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Europa / Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO)

Position in EEGA (Research Area) Research Area Coordinator (RA 4)

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Which topics do you deal with (from which perspective, with which focus)?

Working on global history with a focus on East Central Europe, Katja Castryck-Naumann's research deals with international organisations and internationalism, the history of historiography, area studies, and social sciences. She has published on the development of world/global history in the US and Europe, as well as on the role of transnational actors and international secretariats in the League of Nations, the early UN and in UNESCO. Among her recent publications are the edited volume *Transregional Connections in the History of East Central Europe* (de Gruyter, 2021) and the articles "Competing Politics in Regionalizing the Social Sciences. UNESCO, CODESRIA, and the European Research Council, in: *Revue d'histoire des sciences humaines* (Special Issue "The South of Social Sciences", 2022/4).

About

Dr Katja Castryck-Naumann is an historian by training and received her PhD from Leipzig University with a study of the development of world history in the US (1918–1968). Currently she is senior researcher in the department "Entanglements and Globalization" at the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO) and teaches regularly at Leipzig University. As guest researcher she worked among others at the ENS Paris and the German Historical Institutes in Washington and Warsaw, while she taught at Science Po Lyon, Aarhus University, and the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is an editor of *Comparative Journal for Global History and Comparative Studies and of Connections. An e-Journal for Historians and Area Specialists*.

Current or planned projects

Katja Castryck-Naumann is currently writing a monograph on the politics of experts and civil servants in secretariats of the League of Nations and UN in the fields of health, trade, and disarmament (1920–1975). Within EEGA she served as a chief editor of the textbook "Eastern Europe: Global Perspectives" which will be published with Bloomsbury. She contributes to the "Palgrave Handbook on Global History" and is co-chair of the History of Humankind edited on behalf of International Council for Philosophy and the Social Sciences.

Where do you see connecting points / in which thematic fields and areas would you be particularly interested in (interdisciplinary, trans-regional, institutional) cooperation and new findings?

I see connecting points in the fields of my expertise, of course, but also in new issues that we have begun to address, not the least the question on how the ongoing war between Russia and the Ukraine in the broader context of a changing world order transforms interrelation within Eastern Europe and above all its global connections.

Best of EEGA

My best moment with EEGA was when we began to work on a textbook for advanced graduate students in which we outline how Eastern Europeans positioned themselves proactively and influentially in globalization processes in past and present. I enjoy the productive discussions within the Research Area. I co-coordinate and appreciate the stimulating exchanges in the Steering Committee as well as with scholars from EEGA partner-institutions. To me EEGA has become a thrilling framework to explore Eastern Europe's global nature from angles other disciplines than my own bring into our joint work.

ing new spaces for knowledge production for post-socialist lives beyond conventional Western paradigms.

The special issue »**Entanglements and Transfers: Socialist East-Central European Actors as Co-Producers of Socio-Economic Globalization Processes**«, edited by **Zsombor Bódy** and **Uwe Müller** (= *Comparativ*, Vol. 34, No. 1–2, 2024), brings together seven studies on the position of East Central



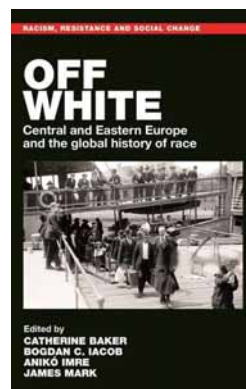
European countries and actors in globalization processes in the second half of the twentieth century. Following on from the latest wave of research on this topic, the contributions all focus on the role of actors from areas usually described as (semi-)peripheral but that were nevertheless actively involved in shaping globalization processes. The image of globalization as largely shaped by the West is thus critically questioned. The authors start from the observation that actors in state socialism were often subject to fewer ideological constraints but greater constraints in shaping socio-economic processes than in politics. In the process, diverse transnational interdependence processes developed within the Eastern Bloc, with the “West” and with the “Global South”. The articles examine how these interactions influenced each other and show that socialist actors were not only forced to adapt to the trends and rules of Western-dominated “globalization”, but also often helped to shape socio-economic globalization processes themselves.

While Soviet influence on China’s development during the 1950^s is well documented, the traces of Soviet involvement in modernization projects are still explained by the concept of the Soviet model, a homogeneous category that scholars turn to explain Soviet influence not only on the path of Chinese economic development but also on specific projects within it. By focusing on the history of one of the microcosms of the early PRC industrialization, the industrial zone of Jianxi and its city-forming enterprise, No.1 Tractor Plant (YTO), the article »**City of Red Tractors: Soviet Models and the Transfer of Agricultural Technology in Luoyang**« EEGA PhD Fellow Karina

Khasnulina examines the nuances of the Soviet involvement in technological, urban, and industrial development during the 1950^s. Drawing on unpublished contractual documentation in Russian and Ukrainian archives, as well as interviews with the factory workers, this article argues that particular industrial venues within the Soviet Union were used as the reference for China’s technological, urban, and industrial projects. For the YTO and its workers, what came to be known as the “Soviet model” was a particular local model of the Kharkiv tractor factory. The article was published in *Between Trade and Aid: Theories, Practices, and Results of Attempts at Exporting State-Socialist Development Models to the Third World*, edited by **Max Trecker** and **Aurelia Ohlendorf** (= *Comparativ* vol. 33/3, 2023).

The edited volume **Off white – Central and Eastern Europe and the global history of race** (eds. Catherine Baker, Bogdan C. Iacob, Anikó Imre and James Mark, Manchester University Press, 2024) foregrounds racial difference as a key to an alternative history of the Central and Eastern European region, which revolves around the role of whiteness as the unacknowledged foundation of semi-peripheral nation-states and national identities, and of the region’s current status as a global stronghold of unapologetic white, Christian nationalisms. Contributions address the pivotal role of whiteness in international diplomacy, geographical exploration, media cultures, music, intellectual discourses, academic theories, everyday language and banal nationalism’s many avenues of expressions.

As essential components of globalization, the study of practices and processes of space formation edited by **Steffi Marung** and **Ursula Rao** promotes a nuanced understanding of globalization. How do people create spaces for social action under the global condition, especially since the nineteenth century, when global interconnectedness increased rapidly? The various authors explore the problem through specific case



studies. Anthropologists, historians, geographers, sociologists, global studies scholars, and cultural studies scholars examine the agency of, e. g., members and staff of African regional organizations, Indian migrant workers, female GDR activists, Soviet planning experts, or US novelists. By studying elites as well as middle-class and micro-entrepreneurs – i.e. more and less influential actors – they encourage reflection on the relation-



ship between power and space and examine how spatial entrepreneurs attempt to influence the shaping of space and their spatial literacy. The analysis aims at a better understanding of the different globalization projects, their crisis-like clashes, and the resulting conflictual development of spatial orders. The edited volume *Spatial Entrepreneurs. Actors and Practices of Space-Making Under the Global Condition* was published within the series *Dialectics of the Global* (vol. 7, De Gruyter Oldenbourg: Berlin 2023).

EEGA closely co-operates with the e-journal *Connections* (<http://www.connections.clio-online.net/>). Here, EEGA has its own column »EEGA in dialogue«, publishing news, calls for applications and for papers, and events. It also serves as a platform for EEGA members, guest researchers, and Postdoc Fellows to publish their project outlines and first findings.

Articles and reviews published by EEGA Fellows and Research Area Coordinators since September 2023:

Yevheniia Shyshkina: review on **Russia in the Context of Global Transformations. Capitalism and Communism, Culture and Revolution.** (by Aleksandr Buzgalin, Lyudmila Buzgalin, and Andrey Kolganov).

For further publications of EEGA and our EEGA fellows, please have a look at our **Open Access Library** (<https://www.leibniz-eeega.de/open-access/>)

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