



Ökologie und Politik in Südosteuropa Ecology and Politics in Southeastern Europe

Dr. Armina Galijaš and Dr. Hrvoje Paić

Sommersemester 2023 / Summer Semester 2023
Schubertstr. 51 / HS 31.11

Mittwochs 13:00 – 15:00 / Wednesdays 1 am – 3 pm



08 March / Armina Galijaš and Hrvoje Paić

Einführung / Introduction

15 March / Tihomir Dakić, Center for Environment, Banja Luka
Political Activism and environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the past decade many citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina are engaging in struggles for sustainable protection of environment. They are organized mostly in local initiatives and watchdog organizations who are trying to be counterpoints to foreign investors as well as local corrupt political practices. From individual-idealistic perspective of political activist, lecturer as one of them, is examining the following questions: is activism "paying off", and if yes how and for whom; what are the tools and overall the role of civil society in struggles for environment protection; how is local academic community positioning toward those struggles and why; how are local media and politicians involved and not-involved in related struggles and why?

Tihomir Dakić works as program coordinator at the Center for Environment. Center for Environment is an organization that is clearly focused on environmental issues since its founding and beginning of activity. It was founded in 1999 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim to influence and contribute to the improvement of the environment through its active and proactive actions.

22 March / Vedran Horvat, Institute for Political Ecology, Zagreb
Political Ecology in Theory and Practice – Views from European Semi-Periphery

Departing from theoretical framework of political ecology we will dive deeper into recent developments in Southeastern Europe and explore avenues of academic, activist and political engagement that has led to social change. We will analyze current conflicts, disruptions and frictions and how they resonate with political ecology framework. While transformative and emancipatory potential of political ecology and its limits will be central theme of this conversation, we will also focus on new social movements that emerge along its theoretical axis (degrowth, municipalism, commons), their current and future trajectories.

Vedran Horvat is the managing director and head of the Institute for Political Ecology. From 2005 to 2015 he was the country director of the Zagreb office of Heinrich Böll Stiftung, a German green political foundation. Since 2012 he's been the national correspondent for Green European Journal, and from 2012 to 2017 he was the managing board member of the National Foundation for Civil Society Development. From 1998 to 2004 he worked as a journalist and web-editor in the daily political newspaper Vjesnik. He is a sociologist specialised in human rights, regularly publishing on European politics, civil society development, environmental issues, migration etc. Since 2019 Vedran is a member of the board of directors of the Green European Foundation.

29 March / Srdjan Ilić, Architect and Activist, Belgrade **Digital Ecology Footprint**

Political decisions are in the middle of most digital and ecology solutions, and they directly affect their implementation into the system. We have products, services and working force, but we need political and governmental support to develop them further and faster, so they can find their direct use.

This lecture is going to explore the correlation between ecology and digital products such as social media, blockchain technology, gaming and streaming industry, as well as the uprising AI global use, with the special focus on the region of Balkans. Today's global average carbon footprint is close to 4 tons per person. If we want to get down to 2 tons by 2050, we need to change our products, politics, but first of all, we need to understand the digital possibilities, to embrace them and be ready to change our digital habits.

Srdjan Ilić is an Architect by vocation, but his three-decade experience and work has been oriented around graphic and digital design, new technologies and solving complex systems architecture.

He was a technical and chief-editor in several magazines and currently owns two different businesses. His company *FatIT* is devoted to development and creation of an off-grid IT studio in the rural mountain Serbian country side and dedicated to exploring renewable resources and mixing them with modern technologies with the purpose of creating natural environment for high demanding IT projects. On the other side, *Two Dogs Studio*, Belgrade based company, is a web development and design studio.

He is an environmental activist engaged in protection of Serbian nature, heritage and culture, as well as one of the creators of many initiatives that combine creative industry, digital solutions and pure-hearted on-street activism.

3 May / Danko Simić, University of Graz **Waste(d) Scapes in Southeast Europe**

A dichotomous understanding of nature and culture and romanticising imaginations of a 'pure' versus a 'polluted' nature remain prevalent in public and political discourses on nature preservation and sustainable transformation. Unveiling (material) ties of waste colonialism in Southeast Europe through the lens of discard studies can foster more informed understandings. By looking at Sisak, Croatia, as an (old) industrial place that is recently being transformed into a place of handling (national) waste streams, I want to discuss why waste streams 'end' at certain places and how waste can be understood as a materialization of manifold socio-ecological relations.

Danko Simić is university assistant at the Department of Geography and Regional Science at the University of Graz and board member of the Austrian Association of Academic Geography. He is member of the interdisciplinary collective *Waste in Motion* funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). In his research he focuses on commodities, markets and Europeanization processes in Southeast Europe taking a more-than-human perspective.

10 May / Philipp Freund, Pavjo Gjini, Christopher Lam Cham Kee, Diana Malaj, Sophia Schönthaler, University of Graz
Emerging environmental movements in Albania and their vicissitudes.
The case of Zall-Gjoçaj

Over the last decade, several environmental movements and campaigns have emerged in Albania, mediating new forms of politics. From the movement for the protection of Valbona Valley to the movement for the protection of the last wild river of Europe, Vjosa, organizations, local communities, and several other actors have been using various means to oppose investment projects, namely constructions of hydropower plants - perceived as harmful to the environment and detrimental to the local communities. The case of Zall-Gjoçaj is one of these instances, with the local community being a central actor in building a movement against the construction and in solidarity with the protection of Lurë-Mali i Dejës National Park. Deprived of the water flowing through the streams of Flim river, a river vital for the support of their way of life, the local community managed over the last five years to organize a series of actions using different means and methods to oppose the construction of a hydropower plant inside the National Park of Lurë-Mali i Dejës. Their actions include protests, guerrilla actions, lawsuits, campaigns, and online activities to support their cause. Our lecture will present the development of the trajectory of this movement while highlighting the impediments that it has faced over the last couple of years: the way the local municipality treated the local community, the reactions of the private company, the response of central authorities, courts decisions, and procedure and also the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the developing of the movement. We aim to bring forward the dynamics accompanying these new types of emerging environmental movements and their intersections with different authorities.

Philipp Freund is a PhD-Candidate at the Centre of Southeast European Studies at the University of Graz (CSEES). He holds an MA in International Peace and Security from King's College London and a BA in International Relations from Webster University Vienna.

Pavjo Gjini is a PhD-Candidate at the CSEES. He holds a MA in Political Theory and a BA in Political Science at the University of Tirana.

Christopher Lam Cham Kee is a PhD-Candidate at the CSEES. He holds a MA in Global Studies at the University of Gothenburg, and a BA in Political Science at McGill University.

Diana Malaj is a PhD-Candidate at the CSEES. She holds a MA in Criminal Law and a BA in Law at the University of Tirana.

Sophia Schönthaler is a PhD-Candidate at the CSEES and a Junior Researcher at EURAC Research, Bolzano/Bozen. She holds a MA in International Relations from the University of Bologna, a BA in Political Science and a BA in Cultural and Social Anthropology from the University of Vienna.

17 May / Alina Brad, University of Vienna

Die Klimakrise aus der Perspektive gesellschaftlicher Naturverhältnisse

Die Folgen des Klimawandels – Dürren, Überschwemmungen, Hitzeperioden – haben weitgehende gesellschaftliche Implikationen und führen zur Destabilisierung von Gesellschaften. Die Klimakrise ist vor allem ein gesellschaftliches Problem und bedarf einer sozialwissenschaftlichen Betrachtung. Im Zentrum der Vorlesung steht die Fragen: Warum ist die gesellschaftliche Reaktion auf die Klimakrise so zögerlich? Warum greifen Klimaschutzmaßnahmen zu kurz? Welche Machtstrukturen liegen den dominanten klimapolitischen Steuerungsmechanismen (z.B. CO₂-Bepreisung und Emissionshandel) zugrunde und was verhindert eine angemessene Lösung der Klimakrise?

Alina Brad ist als Senior Scientist am Institut für Politikwissenschaft an der Universität Wien tätig. In ihrem FWF-Forschungsprojekt untersucht sie, ob und inwiefern durch die Integration von *Carbon Dioxide Removal*-Technologien in die europäische Klimapolitik Klimaschutzmaßnahmen verzögert werden. Ein weiterer Schwerpunkt ihrer Forschung liegt auf bestehenden Prioritäten und zukünftigen Potenzialen von nachfrageseitigen Klimaschutzstrategien in Österreich. Sie ist koordinierender Leitautorin im APCC Assessment Report on Climate Change in Austria.

24 May / Aleksandar Šobot, University of Novo Mesto

The Impact of Europeanisation on the Nature Protection System of Countries of Southeast Europe

Europeanization refers to the process of adjustment that is characteristic of the countries that wanted to enter the EU and which therefore had to adjust their policies and legal order, as well as carry out institutional corrections. The field of nature and environmental protection was not exempt from this. As far as political ecology produced any research, it was rare and primarily directed at the policy and normative level, and not at the establishment of a new institutional system (polity and politics). Such a move as regards research was made by Aleksandar Šobot in the Natura 2000 field; he carried out research on the structural and systemic conditions under which policy, normative, and institutional changes occurred. The results of his research lead to the conclusion that in a given political community political, social, and civil society structures as well as their mutual interrelations that had existed before the process of Europeanization determine the manner of their functioning, their political power, and their level of initiative. Where expert non-governmental environmental organizations had developed, they played an important role in determining the Natura 2000 area, as well as in its institutionalization, thus they were the bearers of Europeanization. However, in the areas where they were not present, civil society did not have a significant impact on the process of Europeanization, rather this process occurred vertically, in a top-down manner, with the bearers being the states and their institutions. In the case of Natura 2000 in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the process of Europeanization was carried out with the support of various actors at the forefront, and therefore in different ways this has resulted in the relativization of the theory of Europeanization in the Natura 2000 field, as the latter can no longer consider the process of Europeanization to be state-centric, but instead, it is being decisively driven by the objectives of civil society and expert organizations. Furthermore, Aleksander Šobot calls attention to the further development of Natura 2000 on the normative, institutional, and program levels in each of the above-mentioned countries.

Aleksandar Šobot is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences, University of Novo Mesto, and an associate member of the Center for Political Theory, University of Ljubljana.

31 May / Tijana Trako Poljak, University of Zagreb

Social-ecological challenges of rural development: Croatia in national-specific and *comparative* European perspective

Rural areas are specific social-ecological systems and their uniqueness should be taken into consideration when examining their resilience, adaptability and vulnerability in face of contemporary social-ecological challenges, as well as when thinking about their perspectives within the rural development strategies. In Croatia, rural areas have gone through three major waves of modernization over the past century, marked by dramatic changes including ideological, economic and social. In this talk, we will present the theoretical framework and some empirical results of the research project “Socio-ecological challenges to rural development: objective and subjective indicators of resilience of Croatian rural social-ecological systems – SECURURAL”, (2020-2024) funded by the Croatian Science Foundation under the grant number UIP-2019-04-5257. The theoretical framework and empirical analysis include the examination of contemporary state of Croatian rural areas through the lens of rural social-ecological systems (RSESs). The empirical results show how the comparative perspective with other European countries, as well as the use of mixed methods, by integrating quantitative data and qualitative research, enable us to more fully answer the research questions.

Tijana Trako Poljak is an Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. Her research interests include the relationship between humans and their natural and cultural environment, rural sociology, with a particular focus on micro-sociological perspectives and visual sociology. She is also interested in social symbolism and identity construction, especially in Central/Southeast European countries.

7 June / Lucas Meyer and Keith Williges, University of Graz

Distributing the Burden of a Climate-Neutral Transformation - from Global Considerations to Regional Implications, especially for Southeastern Europe

Transitioning to a climate neutral society will require substantial changes to nearly all facets of life, many of these will entail reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. But the way in which that effort is divided, particularly amongst countries, can have drastic implications on future emissions allowances. The central question of how emissions should be allocated is inherently normative and can be based on arguments to historical responsibility, capability to act and equality or needs, among others. We propose a method of allocation which meets basic fairness considerations and apply it at a global level. We also apply a similar method to the case of the European Union, and assess how different allocation approaches would affect effort-sharing burdens to 2030, with regional implications particularly relevant for Southeastern European countries.

Lukas H. Meyer is Professor for Philosophy and Head of the Section for Moral and Political Philosophy. His fields of work include philosophy, ethics, political, legal and social philosophy. His research focuses on justice in space and time. Ongoing research projects on intergenerational justice, the ethics of climate change and historical justice. Since May 2019 Lukas Meyer is the spokesperson of the Field of Excellence Climate Change Graz.

Keith Williges is a post-doc jointly at the Institute of Philosophy and Wegener Center for Climate and Global Change, both at the University of Graz. He received his doctorate from the Department of Economics and Doctoral Programme Climate Change at the University of Graz. He is also a scientist at the Wegener Center for Climate and Global Change. His research interests are centered around the transition to a low-carbon society and the impacts of weather- and climate-related disasters. His recent work has focused the implications of considerations of fairness in global or regional agreements on climate change mitigation, potential impacts of climate change on the energy sector and possible co-benefits of mitigation.

14 June / Karin Doolan, University of Zadar

The micropolitics of schools in disaster settings: disruptions, continuities, reinventions

As Tierney (2019) has pointed out, natural hazards are becoming increasingly frequent, devastating occurrences across the globe. Educational researchers have engaged with the risk and effects of hazards including floods, earthquakes and fires by focusing on the physical vulnerability of educational institutions and their hazard protection infrastructure, emergency preparedness in terms of risk perception and awareness, contingency plans and checklists, the effects of disasters on academic achievement, students' psychological and physical health, and curriculum provision in terms of delivering planned educational content. This talk will contribute to a missing link in the disasters and education research landscape: how disasters affect the micropolitics of schools, and in particular the disruptions, continuities and reinventions of post-disaster schools in relation to questions of power, conflict and camaraderie. The talk is based on case study research conducted in post-disaster schools in Croatia in 2022.

Karin Doolan is Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology, University of Zadar. She holds a PhD degree in sociology of education from the University of Cambridge. Her teaching activities are rooted in critical and engaged pedagogy, and she conducts research on the interface between social class inequalities, education and disaster events. Based on a critical sociological lens, she has endeavoured to contribute to advocacy alliances and policy interventions driven by a vision of a more just society.

21 June / Ivan Rajković, University of Vienna

Whose death, whose eco-revival? Filling in while emptying out the depopulated Balkan Mountains

When environmental activists in Serbia encountered decarbonization in form of predatory hydropower, they launched a massive campaign against an actual degrowth that plagued their depopulating lands. This bridging of environmental and reproductive concerns helped to create a broad ecopopulist alliance that saved the local rivers, and yet it sneaked in another quasi-universalist subject – urban, middle-aged and male – who assumed a

central role in the countryside eco-revival. As they “bring life back” to the “dying” Balkan Mountains, I argue, revivers also erase the ways of life that still thrive in them. Such duality exposes emptiness as a problem space that is necropolitical inasmuch as vitalist. As efforts to sustain the further flow of life, revivals are a battle for defining who needs to survive and who is anyhow destined to expire.

Ivan Rajković is a social anthropologist and a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Vienna. After finishing his PhD at the University of Manchester, he was Mellon fellow at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at the University College of London, and a researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale. In his first book project, *Regifting Labor*, Ivan explores entwinements of debt and redistribution in a post-Yugoslav car factory. His new research project, *Patrimonial Ecologies*, focuses on inheritances of life in the aging Balkan Mountains.

28 June / Examen

Ten questions - one for each unit

Maximum score is 100

100-90 = 1

80-89 = 2

70-79 = 3

60-69 = 4

0-59 = 5

Schubertstr. 51 / HS 31.11