

9–10 October 2018

Incubators of Modernity

Liminal spaces between informal practices and state action

- Where:** National Library of Lithuania, Gedimino pr. 51
- Organization:** German Historical Institute Warsaw, Branch Vilnius
- Partners:** Institute of Lithuanian History, Vilnius; Institute of East European History, University of Vienna, Laboratory of Critical Urbanism Vilnius
- Organizers:** Felix Ackermann (Warsaw), Matthias Kaltenbrunner (Vienna), Gintarė Malinauskatė (Vilnius)
- Registration:** Please register until October 5 via E-Mail: malinauskaite@dhi.lt

This workshop will investigate spaces shaped by the dynamics between informal practices and the state's correlating attempts to regulate them. Since the 19th century, border control checkpoints, customs regulations and practices, train stations, city centers, and prisons have become liminal zones of both strict segregation and intense interactions. Among the instituted practices are surveillance, policing and prohibitions. Economic, religious, and political practices that are perceived as new, potentially dangerous, or a threat to the established normative order are limited, legalized or explicitly non-regulated. Whereas many non-state actors easily and quickly adapt to changing legal frameworks, procedures and criminal laws, the competing layers of modern states usually adopt a slower momentum in adjusting to shifting informal practices. As a result of this bi-directional process of adoption and regulation, both, informal practices and the various layers of governance transform themselves. Thus, attempts to adjust criminal justice as a legal tool in order to limit the actions of informal networks create a dynamic of action and re-action.

The workshop will focus on analyzing the spatial dimension of this interplay from the various perspectives of several disciplines including geography, sociology, criminology, history, and social anthropology. A historical comparison will include processes such as the territorial fragmentation of German lands during the 19th century, a process which facilitated the transformation of informal practices as non-harmonized legal systems into a lacuna non-state actors could occupy. A more recent example is the emergence of transnational business networks after the break-up of the Eastern bloc, which eventually led to the internationalization of policing in Europe. Yet, the nation states involved never fully caught up with their more flexible non-state counterparts. Today, we can observe the changing relationship between existing nation-states and supranational structures of governance as a reaction to new and unregulated global economic practices, which are themselves partly an outcome of the long-term deregulation of markets.

Among spaces discussed, where encounters between the informal and the state occur, the workshop will address the modern prison. The various interpretations of ideal prisons erected during the 19th century were supposed

to provide an infrastructure for solitude confinement. The facilities that were built during this time period embody the era's reform discourse, which envisioned individual progress made due to a specific set of religious and labor practices. The modernity of these prisons was twofold. On the one hand, the architecture itself provided a set of new technical solutions; yet on the other hand, they were built as representations of the *progressiveness* of a given state. During the workshop, we wish to go beyond this linear understanding of modernity by looking more closely at incarceration spaces as micro spaces of state failure. Thus, instead of becoming spaces of isolation, prisons continued to host the synapses of informal networks—networks among the inmates themselves in the prison and those connecting the prisoners with the society at large. Prisons, until today, can be described as incubators of various forms of informal networks—economic, religious, and political—networks that are valuable for many prisoners even well after their release. These facilities are modern in that they still promise to actively create “better citizens” through the means of incarceration, yet those involved in the everyday management of these prisons are familiar with their ability to function as spaces of exchange and communication.

Beyond serving as hotspots of social interaction, we ask how spaces such as border control and customs checkpoints, train stations, airports, prisons, and city centers have, throughout the 19th and 20th century, transformed into laboratories of modern state practices. This query also acknowledges earlier forms of segregation based on social status, gender, age, and ethnicity. Furthermore, we will tackle the question of how these liminal spaces become places where discourses on health and hygiene evolved into systematic state practices regulating citizens' bodies. Finally, in order to go beyond a black-and-white picture of the relationship between the state and its citizens, the workshop will address the roles and statuses of guards, police officers, medical workers, and the clergy in formally acting on behalf of the state while having to negotiate practically between legal institutions' formal regulations and the informal practices taking place in prisons.

Tuesday October 9, National Library, event space 305

13.00 Welcome & Introduction

13.30–15.00 **Prisons as Business Incubators**

Felix Ackermann (Warsaw): Criminal networks? The former Brigittine convent in Lwów / Lviv as communication hotspot

Oleh Razyhraiev (Luts'k): Prisons as hotspots of political activities: the case of OUN in the eastern territories of interwar Poland

Comment: Andrei Vaškevič (Hrodna)

Coffee Break

15.30–17.00 **The Temporal Dimension of Liminality**

Olga Drenda (Cracow), Liminality and hauntology

Matthias Kaltenbrunner (Vienna), Liminality and the periodization of transformation

Comment: Kristina Šliavaitė (Vilnius), Almira Ousmanova (Minsk/Vilnius)

Coffee Break

18.00 **Public Keynote Lecture**

Bernd Belina (Frankfurt/Main): Urban spaces of exception: policing public space, law and social justice

Wednesday October 10, National Library, Lab room 535

9.30–11.00 **Camps as Zones of Transition**

Keely Stauter-Halsted (Chicago): Violence by other means: Citizen denunciations and internment camps in Post World War I Poland, 1918–1924

Ilona Strumickienė (Kaunas): DP-Camps as space of intersection: Lithuanian émigrés and their networks as displaced persons

Comment: Tomas Balkelis (Vilnius)

Coffee Break

11.30–13.00 **Borders as Practice**

Ruth Leiserowitz (Warsaw), No Man's Land in transition. The spatial dimension of the Russian (Lithuanian)–Prussian border in 19th–20th centuries

Chiara Dorbolo (Amsterdam), The seven follies of Lampedusa

Comment: Darius Staliūnas (Vilnius)

14.30–16.00 **Beyond Total Institutions**

Kęstutis Kilinskas (Vilnius), In and outside of Military Barracks: Social Behavior of Military Personal in Towns of Interwar Lithuania

Tomas Vaiseta (Vilnius) Beyond the idea of total institutions: Lessons from the history of Soviet Lithuanian psychiatry

Comment: Bernd Belina (Frankfurt/Main)

16.00–17.00 **Final Discussion**

How to work further on liminal spaces?