

## Deep Transformations: Emotional Experiences in the Post-Communist Change

Recently, liberal democratic governance has been challenged in various ways, populism being one of the most serious of them. More eagerly than ever, politicians reuse and recreate the emotional narratives of historical events to advance their political agenda. Considering that these narratives are powerful tools to mobilize voters and supporters, we need to understand the emotions people had and still have towards these historical processes. In this conference, we focus on **the post-communist transformation of the 1990s**. During the celebrations of 30 years of the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, much attention has been dedicated to the past revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe. Studies of the political, economic and social post-communist transformation provided extremely interesting and valuable research on history and memory of socialist life and post-socialist change. However, the **emotional dimension** of this transformation has so far not been sufficiently explored. This entails both the fervour of feelings during the very events of the revolution as well as long-term changes of personal and collective affective lives. For some, the transformation period brought excitement and enthusiasm, for others, it triggered scepticism and anxiety. For many, it was also a long-lasting process of adaptation and redefinition of personal as well as social and political identities. Societal cleavages formed at that time affect attitudes towards democracy and political institutions up to today.

The conference aims at presenting state-of-the-art research on the emotional dimension of post-communist change, bringing together scholars working on these subjects and developing a theoretical conceptualization of the transformation in terms of emotions. We welcome researchers in every stage of their academic career, working in different countries, disciplines and with different perspectives on emotions. We accept papers from the history of emotions, memory or regional studies, emotion sociology, political psychology, affect and discourse theory, political science, social anthropology and political ethnography. Comparative research, as well as case studies, qualitative and quantitative methodologies, are of interest. Various approaches to the subject are welcome: individual emotions and their influence on attitudes; emotional narratives prevailing in societies and their public life; collective and group emotions; emotional communities and their formation in discourse; the change of emotion practices and emotion norms before, during or after the transformation; emotion role in social change as well as changing emotion regimes. The geographic focus of the conference is Central and Eastern Europe; however, works on post-soviet countries or other post-socialist societies will also be considered.

**Dates:** May 21-22 (Thursday - Friday) 2020

**Venue:** [Institute of International Relations and Political Science](#), Vilnius University

**Deadline:** Please send the abstracts up to 250 words to [tspmi@tspmi.vu.lt](mailto:tspmi@tspmi.vu.lt) by March 1. Authors of the selected papers will be informed by March 15. For other information and questions, contact the organizers.

**Keynote:** Helena Flam, Professor of Sociology at the University of Leipzig, Germany, author of *Mosaic of Fear: Poland and East Germany before 1989*, *The Emotional Man and the Problem of Collective Action* as well as co-editor of *Emotions and Social Movements*, *Theorizing Emotions: Sociological Explorations and Applications*, *Methods for Exploring Emotions*.

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