

Social Sciences East-West

If we look at this and the past issues of JEEMs, the process of internationalization the scientific community underwent in the last decade is well documented. This issue assembles researchers from Slovenia, from Germany, the Netherlands and even Albania, a country not often represented in scientific journals, devoted to cross borders with its publication policy. Past issues have given a platform for scientists from the whole region and for those dealing with the region: Russians and Ukrainians, Germans and US-Americans, Poles and Czechs, Georgians and Englishman, Estonians and Moldavians, Serbs and Croats etc. Past issues have dealt with nearly all Central and Eastern European countries. But they have not only given accounts on countries, but they covered cross-border research results, tackled the enlarged Europe, the changes covered by the Europeanization of the region, its internationalization and globalization. The topics can't be summed up here if one doesn't want to become boring for the reader.

When we started our journal we were devoted to bridging borders between Eastern and Western Europe, between the eastern and the western world being separated for such a long time also in respect of the philosophy of science and the institutional forms for the production of knowledge. We intended - so to say - to realize the fall of the Berlin wall in the field of social sciences. That we have survived for more than 15 years now can be seen as a success that reflects the wider process of internationalization of science in a globalizing world of which we became part when founding the journal. Internationalization and globalization are meanwhile an existing reality also in the eastern European region: their scientific institutions and their scientists have become part of it. The UNESCO „Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge“ of 1999 sums up: „Scientific knowledge has led to remarkable innovations that have been of great benefit to humankind“. Free access to it is therefore of utmost importance and internationalization a great benefit. After the fall of the wall, the European Union, single nations in the region and non-governmental organizations as well all have made major contributions to this. But: „As in other sectors such as the economy, finance, politics, technology etc., the obviousness of this internationalization or globalization of science actually ignores enormous differences and contentions between world regions. It ignores also the latent or open conflicts between political powers, such as states, or profound asymmetries between participants in the process“ (Simo, 11).

In the region, our journal deals with, some nations belong to the core of the scientific production worldwide, others to the periphery or semi-periphery, to use the differentiation of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 1979). And as the quoted Simo and others have relentlessly pointed out, periphery and semi-periphery structurally depend on the core countries with their dominating economic, financial, social, political and cultural resources. Also for the countries in the

region, this implies that they rely on the core not only in funding of their scientific knowledge systems but they “borrow from them the agendas, the methods and even the goals of their scientific research. Most of the time, they have to struggle to exist, to be accepted as partners in the production of knowledge” (Simo 2010, 11). Part of Eastern Europe is hardly visible on the landscape of knowledge production, their agendas to enhance scientific knowledge are widely unknown to the international scientific community. And this is not only true for some countries outside of the European Union but also for some within.

The overall marginalization in economic, financial, political, social and cultural terms of many countries of the region has often created a precarious situation. The researchers themselves are often confronted with poor salaries making their business as scientists not the only one to survive decently. Unstable political constellations favour short-term orientations and force upon them the neglect of basic research. Some – under authoritarian conditions – don’t have a choice at all concerning their work. Research agendas sometimes don’t follow the needs of the population and neglected groups but foster the position of ruling elites. In search of national identity, many researchers in social sciences feel much pressure on them concerning the legitimation of current powers. Freedom of research is not prevailing everywhere in the region as is equal access to the institutions of academic work.

In the light of this situation it seems necessary –also against the background of the current economic and financial crisis – to overcome the different gaps that characterize the science production in the region. A major common developmental effort is needed in order to better the chances for equal participation in the system of knowledge production. To cite again from the UNESCO declaration: “The essence of scientific thinking is the ability to examine problems from different perspectives and seek explanations of natural and social phenomena, constantly submitted to critical analysis. Science thus relies on critical and free thinking, which is essential in a democratic world. The scientific community, sharing a long-standing tradition that transcends nations, religions and ethnicity, should promote as stated in the Constitution of UNESCO, the ‘intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’, which is the basis of a culture of peace. Worldwide cooperation among scientists makes a valuable contribution to global security and the development of peaceful interactions between different nations, societies and cultures ...” (UNESCO, 1999, 6 f).

On its tiny field also in the years to come, this journal will go on working in the sense of such an orientation.

Eckhard Dittrich

Important announcements

First, we would like to congratulate **Zoltán Buzády**, member of our Editorial Board, on winning the first prize in the 17th CEEMAN case-writing competition. A record number of 59 cases were submitted this year by a total of 109 authors and coauthors from 60 institutions in 26 countries.

“Teaching Farmers to Hunt – Developing Commercial Skills at BDO Hungary,” addresses a recent human-resources dilemma faced by BDO Hungary, an international audit and tax consulting partnership operating in Hungary since 1989.

See a brief video interview here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkgDjfeg-x4>.

Secondly, we have to say goodbye to three highly appreciated members of our Editorial Board, namely **Margit Enke**, **Wolfgang Dorow** and **Ingo Winkler**. We want to thank them for their significant contribution over years to the success of JEEMS and wish them all the best for their professional and private future.

References

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