

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

For a workshop and an edited volume on

“UNRAVELING TIES? THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF INTERREGIONALISM”

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: **December 4th 2017**



PART I – RESEARCH AGENDA

In the context of growing interactions between regional actors, organisations, projects and institutions, the study of Interregional relations is increasingly appearing on the agenda of Regionalism studies. The scheduled workshop and the edited volume will contribute to this agenda while providing a new analytical angle as a complement to the usual topics of interests in Regionalism studies, such as: the causal determinant of regionalism, the dynamics of norm diffusion between regional actors, or the relative efficiency and capacity of regional organisations. One of the sources of originality will come from the research's distinctive focus on the unintended consequences of interregional dynamics.

All external interventions, ranging from democratization to peacebuilding by way of region-building, imply high normative expectations couched with good intentions. However, more often than not, processes of fundamental change do not easily lend themselves to more or less simple impulses from abroad. A more critical look at the empirics and practices involved in these interventions, highlights how these well-intended assumptions can often be considered naïve at best, and hubristic and Eurocentric at worst. As a result, interventions often produce completely unplanned effects or, even at times the exact opposite effect than the one which was intended by the actors launching them - *e.g. disempowering actors instead of empowering them; reinforcing the state's authority instead of furthering decentralisation and improving rural development (Ferguson 1994); peace operations contributing to illicit business activities which, in turn, contribute to peace operation goals (Andreas 2009); regional market-building efforts which end up working at cross-purposes (Stevens 2006); trade facilities that foster protectionism rather than stimulate equitable trade flows (Manrique Gil, M., Lerch, M. & Bierbrauer, E. 2015); and even encouraging competitive fracturing rather than cooperative integration (Burlyuk 2017).*

It is important to note that ‘unintended consequences’ can be linked to failure (Daase and Friesendorf 2012, 7) but, more broadly, they can be conceptualised as being different from actors’ intentions whether they reinforce, adversely affect or reorient actors’ intended objectives. Baert (1991, 201) refers to unintended consequences as ‘*a particular effect of purposive action which is different from what was wanted at the moment of carrying out the act, and the want of which was a reason for carrying it out.*’ Merton (1936, 903), the first sociologist who explicitly tried to conceptualise unintended consequences, characterises them in this way: ‘*with the complex interaction which constitutes society, action ramifies, its consequences are not restricted to the specific area in which they were initially intended to centre, they occur in interrelated fields explicitly ignored at the time of action.*’

This characterisation points to an important aspect of contemporary international relations and policies which is their complexity. Interregional relations, with their variety of actors, policy sectors and outcomes can produce a broad range of unintended effects. A focus on these effects will enable us to look at the practices of interregional relations, the struggles and conflicts at play between the actors involved, asymmetries of power and the contingency of these relations.

The research puzzles associated with said ‘unintended consequences’ have so far not yet been raised within Regionalism studies. A reason could be that the mostly positivist and deductive epistemology used in Regionalism studies might not leave the space for the more inductive research needed to study the unintended consequences of social action. This project seeks to fill this knowledge gap by challenging the prevailing ontological and methodological outlooks associated with traditional Regionalism studies, favouring more inductive and interpretative contributions.

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PART II – STRUCTURE OF THE WORKSHOP & THE EDITED VOLUME

The conveners are looking for contributions that will investigate a particular area or policy in interregional relations and inductively look at the unintended consequences of these relations. Indeed, while these relations always have a stated intent, they invariably produce an array of consequences many of them often not intended. Hence, instead of focusing on the intended outcomes of these relations and assessing whether and to which extent the actors have reached their objectives, this workshop and the edited volume will centre on their unintended effects and how the actors have acknowledged and reacted to these unintended outcomes. Unintended consequences can lead to delivery failure, stagnation, outright crisis, fragmentation, alternative region building, unforeseen knock-on effects, and even to disintegration and conflict – what we call the ‘paradox of ambitions’ or the ‘dark side’ of interregionalism.

Both the workshop and the edited volume will bring together different theoretical approaches to study a set of illustrative examples of ‘the unintended consequences of interregionalism’, in particular approaches in and outside International Relations and Regionalism studies engaging with (but not limited to) sociology, anthropology, geography or complexity theory. The workshop and the edited volume will be structured according to three directionalities of unintended consequences. When the unintended consequences first affect:

1. The object(s) of the interregional relations: **direct** unintended consequences.
2. The subject(s) of the interregional relations: **reflected** unintended consequences.
3. Third subject(s) or object(s): **knock on** unintended consequences.

The three directionalities are not mutually exclusive and one can imagine that unintended consequences can affect objects, subjects and third parties at the same time. Moreover, this classification is provisional and might change depending on the empirical contributions we will receive, and the discussions we will have during the workshop in February 2018.



PART III – FORMAT & SCHEDULE

Selected applicants will be invited to join both a workshop hosted by the Universitaet Hamburg, and to contribute to the subsequent edited volume. Both of these outcomes will conform to the following specifications

| Workshop | Edited Volume |
|--|---|
| Hosted at Universitaet Hamburg (UHAM) | Published in the Routledge – GEM Book series |
| February 21 st and 22 nd | Scheduled publication by June 2019 |
| Call for Applications from 26/10/17 till 04/12/17 | Editors: Pr. C. Jakobeit (UHAM) & Dr. E. Lopez Lucia (ULB) |
| Publication of Selection Results: 11/12/17 | Length: 10-15 chapters (7000words/chapter) |
| Submission of Draft Papers: 12/02/18 | Formats: Hardback, Paperback & E-Book |

Please send any questions, and an abstract of maximum 400 words with a short bio to pmo@gem-stones.eu with subject line “Submission: GEM-STONES Workshop & Edited Volume”. The full draft papers (around 8000 words) will be circulated among all participants min. one week prior to the workshop. Travel and accommodation costs for all invited participants will be covered.



Universität Hamburg



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PART IV – INDICATIVE REFERENCES

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