

## **Focus Caucasia 2.0**

### **Narrating, Imagining and Crafting ‘Modernities’ in the Caucasus**

An interdisciplinary student and graduates symposium  
Date: 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2016; Venue: Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena

Modernity has become a catchphrase in the scientific landscape over the last decades. It has been critically received and widely debated in order to overcome eurocentric notions and to acknowledge the diverse discourses and imaginaries of ‘multiple modernities’ around the globe. In the framework of this symposium, however, we do not aim to directly engage with theories of modernization. Instead, we emphasize a pluralistic notion of ‘modernity’ in order to set neutral ground for approaching the various socio-cultural dynamics and transformation processes in contemporary Caucasia from an emic perspective. Hence, we are interested in local ways of how different actors narrate, imagine and negotiate their social, cultural or national identities in the context of local and global developments. Urban transformations, migration processes, education, work, health care, politics and many other spheres of daily importance have experienced significant changes since independence which in turn are much influenced by the Soviet past. How do people experience and evaluate these changes? How do state-authorities, interest groups, or citizens participate in their society’s future? What are prominent conflicts between actors such as citizens and the state? These are only few questions concerning ‘modernities’ that could be addressed by young social scientists from different disciplinary backgrounds. The three panels will put further focus on the following themes:

#### **Panel 1: Experiencing and Imagining Urbanity**

How do people experience urbanity/urban space and its material, social and ideological reconfigurations? What are the repercussions in people’s understanding of urban and rural life?

#### **Panel 2: Modes of Public Protest and Everyday Resistance**

The multiple politically, economically and socially induced changes give also rise to conflicts and discomfort among local groups. What are collective or individual ways of expression?

#### **Panel 3: Mobility Revisited**

Here, contributions should address questions on mobility in all its facets: spatial mobility, migration, transportation, infrastructure as well as social and economic mobility.

The symposium aims to provide a framework for interdisciplinary cross-fertilization between young scholars on the basis of their prospective, ongoing and recently completed projects. We invite scholars, professionals and others with theoretical and/or applied engagement in the region. Each contribution is scheduled for 30 minutes (20 minutes presentation and 10 minutes of feedback). At the end of each panel there will be additional 30 minutes time for general discussion.

**The official language of the symposium is English.**

Please submit your abstract (not exceeding 300 words) until the 20<sup>th</sup> of March to the following address: [caucasussymposium@gmail.com](mailto:caucasussymposium@gmail.com)

We kindly ask you to also send a short CV (approx. 1 page) that provides information on your disciplinary background, theoretical and/or practical engagement with the region. In case of sufficient funding, we plan to subsidize travel expenses and accommodation costs. However, at this stage we cannot guarantee for reimbursement. If possible, please indicate in your application if you are in need of accommodation.

**In case of any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us!**