



European
University
Institute

ROBERT
SCHUMAN
CENTRE FOR
ADVANCED
STUDIES

DEPARTMENT
OF POLITICAL
AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES



Workshop Structural Power in International and Comparative Politics

18 October 2014

Seminar Room 2, Badia Fiesolana

Convened by Pepper Culpepper

Please register with Anne Leinonen (anne.leinonen@eui.eu)

This workshop will promote the consideration of two streams of cutting-edge research that have seldom been in conversation. Both streams deal with the concept of structural power, though from different sub-field vantage points. Structural power in international relations was, in the 1990s and early 2000s, a story of decline – that of the loss of hegemony of the United States, and its consequences for the international system, particularly with the rising economic power of the European Union and new competitors in Asia. Yet, as the work of Susan Strange was always iconoclastically quick to point out, the sources of US structural power are durable, given the role of the dollar as the international currency.

Structural power was also a defining feature of the way in which political scientists debated the role and limits of business influence in politics through the 1980s. Discussions around structural power at that time appeared to lose empirical traction, even as the triumph of neoliberal policies at the domestic and international levels, the rise of trade and financial liberalization, and the financialization of the richest economies raised the prospect for the structural power of business to increase.

In recent years scholars in both international and comparative political economy have reintroduced structural power into the study of politics,

both with respect to the power of companies (vis-à-vis states) and of states (vis-à-vis companies and other states). This workshop will promote a conversation across this divide between international and comparative political economy. Individual papers will bring together a conceptual consideration of the relevance of structural power with the concrete study of an empirical instance of its role in politics and policy, at either the domestic or international level. Papers will consider such cross-cutting issues as how the markets of European energy companies influence the shape of European foreign policy, or how the EU and the US are differentially able to influence the actions of international banks.

The workshop is open to SPS students for workshop credit. Those taking the workshop for credit will be assigned a set of prior readings and asked to attend a preliminary session the week before the workshop. The receipt of workshop credit requires the completion of an approximately 2000-word commentary on one of the papers presented at the workshop.

Participants:

Rawi Abdelal, Harvard Business School

Pepper Culpepper, European University Institute

Patrick Emmenegger, University of St. Gallen

Tasha Fairfield, London School of Economics

Henry Farrell, George Washington University