



MAX WEBER MULTIDISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP

“When Institutions Fail: An interdisciplinary Perspective on Institutional Change, Outcome Diversity and Unintended Consequences”

15 March 2017 – Badia, Emeroteca

Organiser: Aris Trantidis, MW Fellow

Institutions play a key role in reducing uncertainty, supposedly contributing to more predictable behavioural patterns and leading to path-dependent developments in society, politics and the economy. Yet institutions evolve in dynamic and unexpected ways. While human action is constrained by the normative and institutional environment in which it unfolds, social actors largely shape and modify environmental factors, prompting institutional change. Nothing is static. The interaction between human action and the institutional environment (broadly stated, between agency and structure) generates change, diversity of outcomes and, quite frequently if not always - unanticipated and/or unintended effects. Institutional theory tends to see these outcomes either as resulting from re-alignments in the strategic moves of rational actors or from an exogenous shock that disturbs existing institutional arrangements.

The workshop's presentations emphasize that unintended consequences and the diversity of outcomes have origins in the adaptive behavioural capacity of social actors and the network-like structure of interactions. The behaviour of one agent affects the behaviour of another, and the resulting dynamics produce novel and powerful self-organizing patterns. The purpose of the workshop is to prompt a critical exploration of the complex processes by which institutions evolve from an interdisciplinary perspective which involves political science, political economy, law, legal and political theory and historiography.

Programme

09:00-10:15: Welcome – Aris Trantidis

10:15-11:35: Panel 1 – Crisis and Agency: Opposition and Creativity

Gary Winslet: “Arousing Skepticism: Explaining Political Opposition to International Trade”

Jose Juan Perez Melendez: “Immigration Policy and Institutional Failure: the United States and Brazil during the 19th century”

Mate Rigo: “A Peace Treaty and Its Institutional Legacies: the Versailles System and the European Economy One Hundred Years After”

12:00-13:00: Panel 2 – Complexity, Institutional Failure and Learning

Aris Trantidis: “Learning from failure: Epistemic limitations, Policy Failure and the Promise of a New Analytic Framework

Philipp Hacker: “Learning and the Law: An Account of a Missing Variable in Behavioral Law and Economics”

13:00- 14:15 Lunch - upon invitation – Sala Rossa

14:00-15:30: Panel 3 – Institutional Drift, Creative Agency and Informal Networks

David Lebow: “Inside-Out Constitutional Reconstruction? A Developmental View of Congressional Dysfunction, Administrative Discretion and Statutory Interpretation”

Clara Raucheegger: “Constitutional and Ordinary Courts as Fundamental Rights Institutions

Robert Johann Basedow : “From Informal Cooperation in Daily Policy-making to Formal Integration – A Historical Institutionalist Model of Commission Entrepreneurship”

15:30 – 15: 45: Coffee Break

15:45-: 16:45: Panel 4 – Multi-level Interactions and Strategic Choice

Paul Alexander van Hoof: “What explains the Enduring Post-1945 International Consensus in US Foreign Policy?”

Amuitz Garmendia Madariaga: “Units versus Units: Analyzing the Effects of Institutional Change within Federations and Quasi-Federations”

16:45-17:00: Short Break

17:00-18:30: Hilton Root, Institutions and Institutional Change in Complex Adaptive Systems

Chair: Aris Trantidis