

Remembering (De)industrialisation: Moral Emotions in the Memory of Post-Socialist Transformation in Lithuania and Poland (MEPOST)

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The idea of the MEPOST project originates from differences in public discourses on deindustrialization in the post-socialist transition processes in Lithuania and Poland. Generally, it is believed that both Poland and Lithuania experienced similar processes of democratization, transition to a market economy, collapse of the USSR and "return to Europe." In both countries, the dominant political discourse of the transition period viewed post-socialist factories as symbols of an undesirable political and economic order from the past. However, the narratives of (de)industrialization entangled in the transition discourses are much more different than they might appear at first glance. In Lithuania, which was a republic of the USSR, the industrialization process is primarily associated with the occupation and colonial policies of the USSR, making the memory of socialist modernization and post-socialist deindustrialization both complicated and rarely present in public discourse. On the other hand, in Poland, a satellite state of the USSR, industry was seen as her own, but exploited by Moscow. Moreover, Solidarity, the largest anti-communist social movement in the Soviet bloc, was both a national and workers' movement. In effect, Solidarity is not only present in the cultural memory of Polish society, but has become one of the most widely studied social movements in the world, with a rich literature examining the strategies, attitudes, values and emotions of industrial workers from the 1980s to the present day.

The MEPOST project addresses the complex nature of collective memory of transformation and the related memory of (de)industrialization in both countries. The project proposes a new approach that focuses on moral emotions in the communicative memory of former industrial workers and in the cultural memory conveyed by museums and other institutions dedicated to preserving the socialist industrial heritage. Anthropology and sociology have extensively studied social attitudes and clashes of values within the post-socialist transition during the first two decades after 1990. However, recent interdisciplinary research has expanded to include new areas of interest, such as the study of the "long transformation" from the 1970s to the present. In addition, there has been a growing interest in comparative analyses of the social consequences of post-socialist transformation, its emotional dimensions, as well as in biographical approaches and the perspective of memory studies. We contribute to this growing field of research by proposing a new multidisciplinary approach that combines the perspectives of the sociology of emotions, memory studies and comparative studies of deindustrialization processes. **We achieve this by introducing a new concept, named the mnemonic emotion narrative, as a tool for identifying moral emotions in memory narratives. We argue that these narratives make it possible to determine what social norms are evoked when individuals and institutions refer to past experiences. We define a mnemonic emotion narrative as a narrative that expresses moral emotions in relation to past processes or events.**

In order to conduct a comparative study of **the communicative memory** of former industrial workers in Poland and Lithuania, **we will analyze two large collections of biographical interviews** combined for the purposes of the MEPOST project, which come from research conducted at Warsaw University and Vilnius University over the past 15 years. The analysis of **cultural memory will be conducted through field research at museums and other sites involved in the preservation of industrial heritage, and through in-depth interviews with curators, heritage specialists and activists of industrial memory.** Both parts of the research will uncover mnemonic narratives of emotions regarding the time of transformation. These narratives will be compared and interpreted in the broader context of transnational, national and local dimensions of memory. The results will be published in international peer-reviewed journals, consulted with museum professionals, presented at international scientific conferences and used in academic classes. In this way, MEPOST will contribute to a broader discussion of the complex memory deindustrialization of the past in Lithuanian and Polish societies.