

Call for Contributions for an Edited Volume and Research Workshop,  
Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden, June 2014

**Parental Movements:**

**The Politicization of Motherhood and Fatherhood in Central and Eastern Europe and  
the Post-Soviet Region**

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We invite submissions for the edited volume on parental activism in Central and Eastern Europe and post-Soviet region. The principal author of each accepted research paper will be invited to take part in a workshop that will further develop the book's common analytical framework, and lead to the main findings and lessons. This workshop will take place at Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden in mid-June 2014.

**The Focus of the Workshop and the Edited Volume:**

The last twenty years of political, economic and ideological transformations in post-communist countries encouraged and in numerous cases, forced groups of citizens to reformulate their practices, ideologies and identities concerning parenting. In some of the Central and Eastern European and post-Soviet countries social movements based on parental identities emerged which have reinterpreted motherhood, fatherhood, gender relations, rights and responsibilities using often highly political arguments, and strengthened or challenged existing cultural norms. Our collection of essays sets out to investigate the various forms, demands and processes of parental activism in the postcommunist region. We aim to analyze case studies of activism and social movements both in specific country settings and comparatively in a transnational context.

**Rationale:**

While existing scholarship focuses on mothers' mobilizations in other geographic and socio-political contexts, especially in Latin America (Jacquette 1994, Molyneux 1985, Werbner and Yuval-Davis 1999) the question of how women, men, and transgendered persons in Central and Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet countries organize as parents has seldom been

discussed. So far, scholars working on the post-communist/post-Soviet context discussed either the general trends in the development of civil society and social movements in the region (e.g., Flam ed. 2001, Howard 2003, Jacobsson and Saxonberg eds. 2013) or the results which social, economic and political changes brought for the policies as well as practices and ideologies of parenting (e.g., Gerber 2011, Glass and Fodor 2007, Smidova 2008). There is also a significant body of scholarship on women's and feminist activism/movements in the region (Fuszara et al. 2008, Haskova 2005, Roth 2008). However, the intersection of social activism and motherhood/parenthood has not been sufficiently explored (some of the exceptions are Hrycak 2002, Hryciuk and Korolczuk 2013, Fabian 2013, Jagudina 2009). This is the gap that we aim to fill by publishing an edited volume that focuses on these six questions:

1. How do parents or those who wish to become parents respond to political, social and economic challenges on a collective level in Central and Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet region?
2. Under what conditions do parental movements emerge in this region?
3. Which strategies do activists in parental movements use and what are the effects of these movements?
4. How do local and transnational ideas travel regarding parental norms, rights and responsibilities?
5. How do the legacies of various types of communist/state socialist and contemporary neoliberal influences affect the emergence, trajectory and outcome of parental movements in the region?
6. How can we critically analyze the effects of transnational influences, such as neoliberal policies of the EU, the World Bank, and the IMF on parental movements that emerge in the context of strengthening nationalism, populism, and pro-natalism?

Our aim is to synthesize the outcomes of the last twenty years of change in the ideologies, practices and policies concerning parenthood in Central and Eastern Europe and post-Soviet region using the lens of social movement theory. We are interested in scholarship which connects empirical research with theoretical insights by analyzing the interactions between the political sphere, everyday lives and practices, and social activism of mothers and fathers in the region. The process of politicization of issues that had been perceived as “private” as well as privatization of issues that have been perceived as “public” has taken place in various

forms and relations in the postcommunist region, allowing us to reach conclusions as to how these case-specific dimensions relate to and influence one another nationally, regionally and transnationally.

We welcome participants from a wide range of social sciences and those who apply interdisciplinary approach. We invite papers which analyze social activism, movements and mobilizations based on claims, identities and framing strategies concerning parenthood. We also encourage participants to use (apply and/or challenge) the following three conceptual frames:

1. Negotiating/questioning **belonging and citizenship**, e.g., the interpretation of the “good” parent, legitimization of claims, nationalist discourses, state v. private maternalism/parenthood.
2. Negotiations of **gender**, e.g., re-traditionalization, changing the shape of the public-private divide, “new masculinity” and “femininity”, challenging heteronormativity, and LGBT discourses on parenting.
3. Applications of and challenges to the **neocolonial/trans-national** context, e.g., multiple marginalizations (class, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, etc.), demographic changes, globalization, and neoliberalism.

#### **Format and Important Dates:**

- We invite scholars to submit their research paper and short biography by **15<sup>th</sup> of January 2014**. The biography should provide information about the authors’ general research interests within this field, as well as relevant earlier publications. The research paper would need to be minimum 15 pages and maximum 25 pages of double spaced text.

- Decisions of acceptance: **15<sup>th</sup> of February**.

- First round of comments from editors: mid-April.

- Second round of comments from co-participants: end of May, 2014.

- Workshop will take place at Södertörns University, southern Stockholm in mid-June, 2014. Each presenter is expected to comment on another participants' papers. Conference organizers will inform each participant in advance about which paper they will discuss. The costs of research workshop including travel and accommodation of participants is covered by the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES), a multidisciplinary research centre focusing on the Baltic Sea region and Eastern Europe at Södertörn University.

- Final versions of essays need to be completed by the end of August 2014.

Please send inquiries and submissions to: [parentalmovements@gmail.com](mailto:parentalmovements@gmail.com)