Open Interdisciplinary Seminar
«Scientific Environment»

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Networks and creativity

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Faculty of Sociology St Petersburg State University, room 229
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Leipzig's visual artists as actors of urban change: Articulating the intersection between place attachment, professional development and urban pioneering

The city of Leipzig has a very strong and active visual arts scene partly sustained by students and graduates from the *Leipzig Academy of Visual Arts*, paired with artistic talent coming to Leipzig because of the city's character as an open field of opportunities. After German Reunification, Leipzig experienced a dramatic loss of population due to large-scale unemployment, outmigration and suburbanisation. As a result, vast amounts of newly refurbished inner-city property became vacant. Recent research, however, indicates a trend of re-urbanisation as young demographics move back to the inner city to be in close proximity to social networks, higher education and cultural infrastructure. Previous survey-based research on the attractiveness of the city and retaining factors for creative professionals has enunciated specific hard and soft location factors, which determine rootedness of creative professionals in the city. Some of the most important retaining factors for creative professionals are personal relationships and networks, the city's cultural offer and the availability of high quality and cheap accommodation and workspace. This research paper analyses the specific role of *visual artists* as actors of urban change in Leipzig in relation to the city's unique post-socialist urban form and cultural character. By employing qualitative research methods in form of in-depth semi-structured interviews with Leipzig-based visual artists and Academy of Visual Arts representatives, the research will investigate the causal relationship between creative higher education, place attachment and urban change.

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Creative networks: Opportunities and limitations of social network analysis in creative industries research

This paper discusses the opportunities and constraints of social network analysis for the research of artistic production and focuses on some methodological problems that inevitably arise at the stages of research design development and data interpretation. We shall begin our presentation with a brief

overview of contemporary researches of creative production conducted with the use of social network analysis and trace their key methodical devices. We shall proceed with a discussion of empirical findings which these devices reveal such as the effects of high clusterization in creative networks, the role of structural holes for obtaining higher status on artistic scenes and building a successful career, the benefits of semi-peripheral positions in the network structure of creative industries, etc. Then we shall focus on the limitations of data interpretation that the methods of social network analysis engender. Particular attention with be drawn to the issues of sampling and the challenges of defining the boundaries of networks under research. In the concluding part of the paper, we shall show how the problem of lacking natural boundary of the creative network can be solved by the example of the data collected by our research team (field materials obtained in 2013-2014 that trace ties between the creative institutions of St. Petersburg). We shall also demonstrate the network properties of the sphere of cultural production in St. Petersburg that the sample constructed by the team has allowed to discover.

Artyom Antoniuk (St. Petersburg State University)
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Networks of Creativity: Recent Developments in Sociosemantic Analysis of Artistic Groups

Network analysis has been widely applied to study creativity and social relations between artists. Most of these applications are conducted in frames of cultural production perspective rooted in the works by P. Bourdieu and H. Becker (Crane 1989, de Nooy 1999, Uzzi & Spiro, 2005, Flemming & Marx 2006, Bottero & Crossley 2011). Consequently, structuring of artworld networks is investigated primarily at organizational and market levels (Crane 1989, DiMaggio 1992, Pacey et al. 2011), while creativity is seen as a dependent of an individual's (Hargadon & Sutton 1997, Cattani & Ferriani 2008) or of a group's (Guimera et al. 2005) position in a broader network of various external relations. The question how internal networks of artistic groups operate appears to be out of scope. Meanwhile, it is those structures that bring to life shared artistic visions and enable joint artistic styles many groups strive for (Farrell 2001), so without considering internal networks collective creativity of artists remains underinvestigated. An important issue here is that very few techniques have been developed to jointly consider communication and semantic network data revealing how group interaction is involved with artistic meanings generation and sharing.

Dealing with the existing gaps, we introduce the techniques of sociosemantic network analysis of ties within and between two sets (modes) of nodes – concepts and individual actors – in groups. Using textual, ethnographic and sociometric data on 4 art groups located in St. Petersburg: "What is to be done?", "Parazit", "Kitchen", and "Nepokorennye" we suggest how this data can be processed, optimized, visually inspected and measured. We will demonstrate how mixed quantitative and qualitative analysis of semantic and communication networks as well as of links between them allows to compare different discourses of subgroups in communities, to distinguish between different roles of actors who speak on behalf of the community, and to investigate the peculiarities of their intellectual integration with other group members – individually and when such discourse spanners share some conceptual constructs. Application of the approach to our dataset reveals, for example, that most central communicators are not necessarily able to share knowledge with others. It also shows that, while the members developing most original and complex ideas are not always able to introduce those to the group, the members whose constructs are less elaborate often achieve semantic resonance with others. Requirements to data for successful analysis and limitations of the approach will be discussed as well.