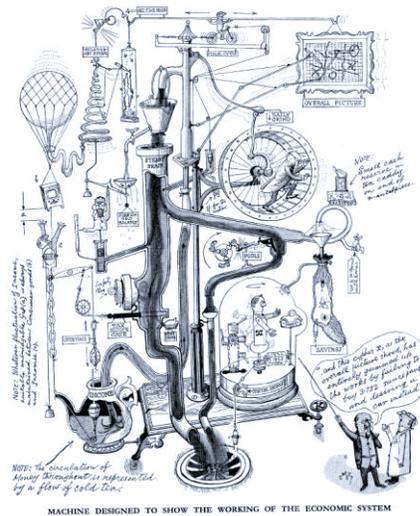
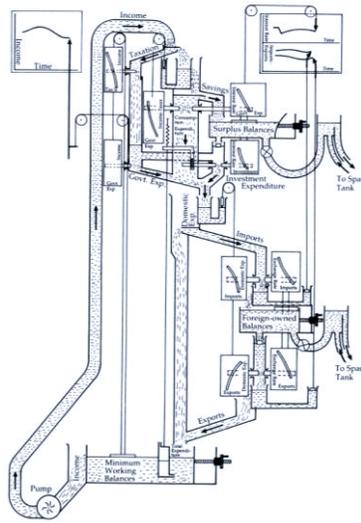
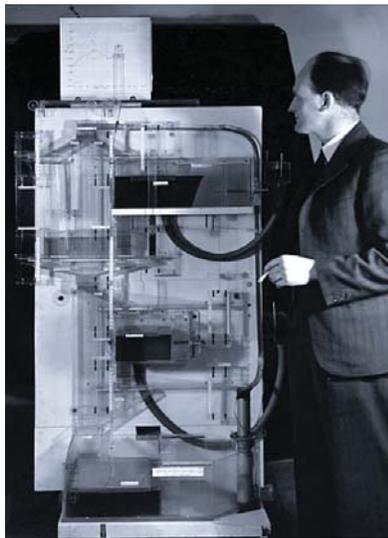


Inaugural “Riva Meeting” on the Political Economy of Regional Resilience

“Critical Perspectives on Post-Crisis Resilience”

12 July – 15 July 2015

At Virginia Tech’s [Steger Center for International Scholarship](#) in Riva San Vitale, Switzerland



Notes: William Phillips’ (1914-1975) pioneering efforts to demonstrate the role of circuits of flows and their corresponding economic stocks culminated in the construction of a fully-working, mechanical model of the macroeconomy, the MONIAC (Monetary National Income Analogue Computer), assembled from the spare parts of WWII fighter airplanes (left and middle). Cartoon of the “Phillips Machine” (right). Sources: Punch Magazine (1953); Barr, N. (1988) “The Phillips Machine”, *LSE Quarterly* 2(2): 322–335.

In the wake of the recent financial crisis, the notion of “resilience” has become firmly established in a wide range of academic and political discourses as well as in contemporary practice. Despite such an embedding of resilience in the conceptual framework and analytical toolkit of urban and regional research, there remains considerable ambiguity about what precisely is meant by regional resilience, what its components are, how it is measured, how it relates to the long-term trajectory of a region’s development, and what does it offer as a means of understanding inter and intra-regional social disparities. Moving beyond the conventional dichotomy of notions of resilience as adaptive complex systems that is rooted in ecosystems thinking or adjustment to equilibrium prevalent in engineering methodology, this workshop brings together a select group of academics with the aim to discuss, evaluate, and map out a broad research agenda on regional resilience that is anchored in the political economy tradition and is evident in emerging discourse on critical social science theory and resilience.

One core set of questions in this regard is how the discourse on resilience relates to the traditional foci of political economy – the relationships between markets, institutions and the state – and how these relationships are challenged by the scale and complexity of contemporary socio-economic processes that are spatially highly uneven. From the process of urbanization to regional imbalances in the flow of goods, labor and capital, the path-dependent trajectories of regional resilience are inextricably linked to an increasingly financialized character of the global economy. In such a conceptualization of regional development, institutional, network and political dimensions of resilience are converging to answer questions that range from the organizational transformation of industrial clusters to the adaptation of governance in the context of instability be it financial markets, in ecological change, or social disenfranchisement.

From a methodological and ontological perspective, emerging analytical paradigms around “computational social science” and “big data” seem to offer opportunities to expand the traditional remit of research on the political space-economy in important ways. Distinctively geographical approaches to modeling processes of regional growth and change might offer important complements to the conventional abstractions of agent-based models, offering opportunities for pushing the boundaries for resilience-based work on the regional political economy.

Objectives and Publication Outcome

The inaugural “Riva Meeting” brings together a small, select group of academic experts plus GFURR’s core academic staff in a workshop setting at Virginia Tech’s European conference facilities at the Steger Center for International Scholarship in Riva San Vitale in Switzerland.

The main objective for this event is to develop a broad outline for future such events that will be held under the aegis of the GFURR at Virginia Tech’s European hub at regular intervals. In addition to identifying key perspectives on the political economy of resilience, the initial meeting will also help provide key inputs that will guide the course of GFURR’s emergent research agenda and its strategic alliances over the next five years. Subsequent meetings might develop into a more formal steering mechanism for shaping GFURR’s scientific direction.

In addition to a conference summary (“Riva Manifesto on Resilience”), we are currently exploring the possibility of using individual seminar contributions as a starting point for a more formal academic publication, in the form of a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal or an edited volume (details to be circulated separately).

Confirmed Participants

- Dr. Gillian **Bristow**, Professor of Economic Geography, Cardiff School of Planning and Geography, Cardiff University, UK
- Dr. David **Chandler**, Professor of International Relations, Director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Westminster, London, UK;
- Dr. Olivier **Crevoisier**, Professor of Sociology, Institut de Sociologie, Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland;
- Dr. Shaun **French**, Associate Professor, School of Geography, University of Nottingham;
- Dr. Robert **Hassink**, Professor of Economic Geography, Department of Geography, Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Germany;
- Dr. Britta **Klagge**, Professor, Geographisches Institut der Universität Bonn, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Germany;
- Dr. Heike **Mayer**, Professor of Economic Geography, Institute of Geography, Universität Bern, Switzerland;
- Dr. Thilo **Lang**, Department Head, Department for Regional Geography of Europe, Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde, Jena, Germany;
- Dr. Andy **Pike**, Professor of Local and Regional Development; Director of CURDS, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University, UK;
- Dr. Peter **Rogers**, Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia;
- Dr. Alain **Thierstein**, Professor and Chair of Urban Development, Technische Universität München, Germany;
- Dr. Pete **Tyler**, Professor, Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge, UK;
- Dr. Chris **Zebrowski**, Lecturer, Politics and International Relations, School of Business and Economics, Loughborough University, UK.

Session Format

Each of the participants will be asked to take the discussion lead for one of the ten sessions, preparing a short framing presentation (ca. 15-20 mins) to start the conversation. Additional details on individual sessions will be communicated closer to the date of the conference.

For each session, a member of the GFURR staff will protocol the general discussion which will provide the basis for a formal report.

Tentative Agenda

Sunday, 12 July 2015

Arrival and welcome dinner (in Lugano).

Monday, 13 July 2015

9:00am – 10:30am:	<i>Morning session 1</i>	Welcome and overview
10:45am – 12:00pm:	<i>Morning session 2</i>	GFURR perspectives on resilience
12:00pm – 1:30pm:	Lunch break (at Villa Maderni in Riva)	
13:30pm – 3:00pm:	<i>Afternoon session 1</i>	Critical perspectives: Resilience after the crisis
3:30pm – 4:30pm:	<i>Afternoon session 2</i>	Regional resilience and the space-economy
5:30pm – 6pm:	Garden conversations	

Dinner (at Villa Maderni in Riva)

Tuesday, 14 July 2015

9:00am – 10:30am:	<i>Morning session 1</i>	Industry, networks and institutions
10:45am – 12:00pm:	<i>Morning session 2</i>	Conceptualizing financial resilience

12:00pm – 1:30pm: Lunch break (at Villa Maderni)

13:30pm – 3:00pm: *Afternoon session 1* The quantitative turn in regional analysis
(big data and the limits of agent-based
modeling)

3:30pm – 4:30pm: *Afternoon session 2* Emerging topics on resilience

Dinner excursion (off location)

Wednesday, 15 July 2015

9:00am – 10:30am: *Morning session 1* Final discussion and summary report

10:45am – 11:30pm: *Morning session 2* Wrap-up and adjournment

11:45pm – 12:30pm: Light lunch and farewell (at Villa Maderni)

Conference Venue and Lodging

The workshop will take place at Virginia Tech's Steger Center for International Scholarship (Steger Center) in Riva San Vitale in southern Switzerland. The Steger Center is the university's European campus center and base for operations and support of its programs in the region, located on Lake Lugano – approximately 15 km south of the city of Lugano – in Ticino, the Italian-speaking canton of Switzerland.



Conference address:

Steger Center for International Scholarship,
Virginia Tech,
Villa Maderni, Via Settala 8,
CH-6826 Riva S. Vitale, Switzerland

Conference contact in Switzerland:

Ms Daniela Doninelli, Managing Director of the Steger Center
Tel: +41 91 648 36 52
Email: daniela@vt.edu

Hotel for participants:

Hotel Walter au Lac,
Piazza Rezzonico 7
CH-6900 Lugano, Switzerland
Tel: +41 91 922 74 25

Workshop participants will stay in Lugano at the Hotel Walter au Lac (www.walteraulac.ch), where individual rooms have been booked for arrival on July 12th, 2015 and departure on July 15th, 2015. All lodging (room and tax) and meals will be directly billed to the conference. Participants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements from and to Lugano and will be reimbursed for their travel cost (separate communication to follow). Transportation from the hotel to the Steger Center will be arranged.

Mission of GFURR

The Global Forum on Urban and Regional Resilience (GFURR) and brings together faculty from Virginia Tech and partner organizations to expand our knowledge base on resilience. Resilience has become an important concept in planning and policy globally in response to new vulnerabilities resulting from climate change; economic, social and political instabilities; and population expansion into places where the potential for human disruptions from natural events is heightened. The conceptual complexity of resilience and its relevance to constructing places that enhance the social well-being of citizens in a future of increase uncertainty and vulnerability, requires integrating physical, social and behavioral perspectives in ways that put fresh lens on and new critiques in order to increase our knowledge base on the concept.

The GFURR adds to the knowledge base on resilience by:

- Facilitating global conversations by scholars and practitioners with significantly different perspectives and responsibilities on resilience through co-sponsorship of workshops and conferences designed to explore new conceptual and methodology dimensions.
- Facilitating multi-disciplinary research on under- and unexplored dimensions of resilience for the purpose of expanding our understanding of resilience in a global context.
- Encouraging the establishment of trans-disciplinary educational and training curriculum in resilience to ensure that future practitioners and researchers have a wide-reaching viewpoint of resilience.
- Connecting research and practitioner communities through the establishment of living lab environments in both urban and rural settings in ways that define new approaches to the mission of Land Grant universities in the United States.
- Encouraging new theoretical and analytical approaches to the study of resilience and its translation to practice globally.

The Forum's attention is global with foci on urban places and the complex relationships between cities and regions in this era of increased uncertainty and vulnerability. Accelerate growth of very large, mega-cities, places raises serious resilience issues for both cities and the surrounding rural environments across the globe. GFURR is particularly increase in whether resilience policies and practices over time will enhance the well-being of residents in cities and their regions. To that end, GFURR believes a resilience research and practice focus should include address the following questions:

- What are the normative and ethical issues associated with creating socially equitable resilient environments?

- What are the major barriers to creating socially equitable resilient places given differences in socio-cultural contexts across the globe?
- How might new analytics, big data approaches, contribute to building socially equitable resilient places?
- What are the appropriate roles for technology in constructing socially equitable resilient places?
- What are the appropriate roles for governments, on-profits and the private sector in constructing socially equitable resilient places?

Read more about the GFURR here:

<https://secure.hosting.vt.edu/www.gfurr.vt.edu/index.php/about/>