



# THE SHADOW SIDE OF ROOTEDNESS

How Geographic Stability Across Generations Increases Populist, Ethnic Nationalist, Authoritarian, and Chauvinist Attitudes

26 (Thu)

September

13:30-15:00

Mid-sized Meeting Room (No.332)

3rd Floor, Inamori Foundation Memorial Building, CSEAS, Kyoto University

No  
Reservation  
required



## Andreas Wimmer

CSEAS Guest Scholar  
Professor of Sociology, Columbia University

Andreas Wimmer's research assumes a long term historical and globally comparative perspective. It asks how states are built and nations formed, how ethno-racial boundaries and hierarchies form or dissolve in the process, and when these inequalities will lead to armed conflict and war. Most recently, he is trying to understand how ideas and institutions travel across the world and with what long term consequences. Educated at the University of Zurich where he received a PhD in anthropology, Wimmer has taught at the Universities of Zurich, Bonn, UCLA, Princeton, and Columbia, where he holds joint appointments in sociology and political science. His most recent book was *Nation Building: Why Some Countries Come together While Others Fall Apart* (Princeton 2018).

This talk introduces a new argument to explain radical right political attitudes. It argues that individuals who live where many of their ancestors were born are more prone to support populism, authoritarianism, ethnic nationalism, and chauvinism. Intergenerational geographic stability produces a milieu composed of many family members and live-long friends, with densely woven network structures that are highly localized, and subjects individuals to parental authority throughout their life course. These characteristics of the local social milieu are then projected at the national level by assuming that the national community should mirror the nature of these local milieus. This argument is supported with survey data from 22 countries from four Continents and with a novel measure of intergenerational rootedness. The association between rootedness and radical right attitudes holds across the social class spectrum, is found in urban as much as in rural areas, and is largely linear, with higher numbers of ancestors born in the place where respondents live leading to higher scores on attitudinal scales for populism, authoritarianism, ethnic nationalism, and chauvinism. It thus introduces an intergenerational perspective and a focus on geographic stability and the ideas about the legitimate social order that it generates into a literature largely pre-occupied with economic or cultural threats as the main drivers of support for radical right wing parties.