



PERPETUAL MOTION ?

Transformation and Transition in
Central and Eastern Europe & Russia

Edited by Tul'si Bhambry, Clare Griffin,
Titus Hjelm, Christopher Nicholson
and Olga G. Voronina

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TUL'SI BHAMBRY, CLARE GRIFFIN, TITUS HJELM,
CHRISTOPHER NICHOLSON AND
OLGA G. VORONINA

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UCL*

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PERPETUAL MOTION? TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSITION IN
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE & RUSSIA

EDITED BY TUL'SI BHAMBRY, CLARE GRIFFIN, TITUS HJELM,
CHRISTOPHER NICHOLSON AND OLGA G. VORONINA

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The Editors

Introduction

Perpetual Motion?

Tul'si Bhambry, Clare Griffin, Titus Hjelm, Christopher Nicholson and Olga G. Voronina

Given Communist Party states' conscious efforts to transform the very meanings of these fundamental terms [state, nation, citizenship, property, democracy, identity] [...] this region provides us with fundamentally different bases for engaging both the phenomena associated with globalization and the literature about it (Verdery 1998, 291).

With the former Soviet stranglehold on Eastern Europe lifted, people within the former Soviet satellites were now competitors for a share of the world accumulation of surplus. Rather than contributing to order and stability, Eastern Europe, like numerous other regions, saw a resurgence of ethnic and religious hatreds once held in check, leading to widespread uncertainty and instability when contrasted with the 1945-89 order (Reifer and Sudler 1996, 34).

An interest in 'transformation' and 'transition' has marked Western scholarship on the subject of modern Russia and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. However, discussions that present the region in a state of flux must not fail to consider that notions of 'transformation' and 'transition' are necessarily predicated on the existence of their antithesis. No movement, no change, can be defined without reference to a point of former, or theoretical, stability. The contributors to this volume share the premise that both poles – stability and transformation – are open to be reassessed. By focussing on specific situations in their local contexts, the authors challenge the assumption that transformations and adaptations in the region could be imagined in terms of 'perpetual motion', implying either random change or repetitive patterns. In Russia and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, just as in any other region, transformations engage notions of permanence and flexibility. The changes discussed in this volume comprise evolving discourses, the reorganising of social structures, and the negotiating of emerging political problems. All these transformations engage the human capacity to react to change. The question remains of how to conceptualise the different reactions in a way that helps us determine how a situation of change expresses human creativity, and to what extent any adaptation to change is socially progressive.

We, the editors of this volume, share with the authors a keen interest in the conceptualisation of Central and Eastern Europe. Space, as our contributors discuss, is not only geographical and physical, but fundamentally cultural. The construction of regions in the minds of Europeans is something that historians have devoted attention to in the last few decades. Larry Wolff shows how the Western educated elite began to define 'Eastern Europe' in the eighteenth century (Wolff 1994). He argues that the region is not so much an existing geographical entity as an intellectual invention of a cultural zone constructed during the Enlightenment through travel diaries and maps, imaginary travelogues, and armchair philosophising. Similarly, our volume presents Eastern Europe not merely as a place, but also as a *process*. Our aim, however, is to show that this process continues to evolve, and that rather than undergoing change passively, the region articulates its own voices, establishing intellectual boundaries and reinventing tradition.

The wake of the revolutions of 1989 saw a notable surge in international scholarship on experiences of transition in Central and Eastern Europe. Today there is a critical need not only to assess the two decades of post-soviet development in the region, but also to create spaces of exchange between scholars representing different disciplines and a variety of institutional, national, and linguistic backgrounds. It was the aim of the organisers of the 9th International Postgraduate Conference on Central and Eastern Europe to provide such a space at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, in February 2009. The three-day conference aimed to provide a congenial atmosphere in which young scholars not only presented their research in formal panels, but where they could also discuss their work informally during the evening receptions. Thanks to generous support from our sponsors, more than 100 young scholars from twenty-five countries across Europe and North America contributed to this lively and productive exchange of ideas and perspectives.

We are pleased to share some of the wide range of research presented at the conference. Presenting in print those papers that were most inventive in their discussion of ‘transformation’ in the region, this volume foregrounds the interests and perspectives of the first truly post-soviet generation of researchers on Central and Eastern Europe. We hope to reach a wider international audience, both within and beyond academia.

While some of the contributions deal with historical events, others discuss contemporary, evolving issues. All of them explore the effects of transformations in the region, and are pertinent to current debates. It is our particular pleasure as editors to present these ten original and peer-reviewed articles by young researchers from such a wide spectrum of disciplines. The volume covers a broad range of topics pertaining to three thematic groups: ‘Minorities and Human Rights’, ‘Spaces, Regions, Borders’ and ‘Cultures of Politics and Business’.

Minorities and Human Rights

Susanne Schatral’s article looks at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a provider of expertise that has shaped the language, and thus the reality, of human trafficking in the Russian Federation. Schatral argues that the IOM’s need to cooperate with national governments partly determines their scope and aims, and that this has led to a conceptualisation of migration more in terms of the needs of nations than those of migrants. Schatral shows how the IOM’s method of migration management is geared towards the needs of the nation-state: eliminating illegal migration and encouraging the migration of skilled labour. In the discourse that emerges from the IOM’s activities, individuals who are trafficked become passive objects. This paper raises questions not only about the co-existence of NGOs and national governments, but also about the relationship of experts and their audiences, and how this relationship can affect the production of expert knowledge.

The contribution by Andreea Carstocea also addresses the tension between the necessity of running a bureaucracy that must operate at the national and international level, and the danger that a neat administration may take priority over the needs of the people whose interests the organisation is meant to protect. Carstocea looks at the manipulation of minority rights regulations by leaders of ethnic minorities in Romania and Hungary. Often their heritage is not of the ethnic group they represent, a situation Carstocea describes as the ‘cuckoo phenomenon’. Minority rights regulations have been a key part of many countries’ bids to enter the EU. But in a number of cases ethnic minorities have not benefited from representation, while their representatives

have exploited such legislation for their own gain. While the post-Socialist development of Eastern Europe, and the practical ramifications of EU membership directives are among the larger concerns, Carstocea focuses on how minorities exist as political entities in a nation state, and problematises how ethnic or cultural groups can be defined for the purpose of political representation and legislation.

Spaces, Regions, Borders

This section opens with Raluca Musat's article on rural experts and the 'agrarian question' in the Romanian Principalities between 1864 and 1914. Examining the work of three important scholars in the field, she argues that the manner of studying the countryside transformed 'the agrarian question' from an economic to a social one. These three experts travelled around the country in different ways, which either gave them a broad view of a large area (train travel), or a detailed view of a smaller area (carriage and on foot). These differences were then further developed in the format in which they presented their works. Musat historicises the development of social science, and emphasises the mutual dependency between the object of study, the investigator, and their epoch. Her approach also contributes to the debate on the challenges inherent in the concept of objectivity in the social sciences.

Ian Innerhofer's study also problematises the study of the rural landscape and its inhabitants in his account of the role of 'agrarian overpopulation' in German spatial and economic planning before the Second World War. Innerhofer examines how the concept of 'overpopulation' was developed in the early twentieth century, and shows that the construct can easily be harnessed to political demands. Southeastern Europe, which German leaders had long considered to be in their nation's sphere of influence, was particularly important to their development of the concept of 'overpopulation'. A notable feature of this process was the use of terms indicating the inferiority of Southeastern Europe, such as 'backward' and 'underdeveloped'. Thus the idea of 'overpopulation' was part of a justification of political goals for Germany, and was taken up eagerly during the Nazi era to justify expansionism, racism, and, eventually, genocide. Although Innerhofer's discussion is restricted to Germany, his work participates in a wider contemporary discourse concerning the conceptualisation of countries and regions in terms of 'progress'. Moreover, like Schatral, who discusses the interdependence of experts and governments, Innerhofer also highlights an important co-dependency, namely that of social science and politics.

Siarhei Liubimau deals with changes in the built environment for social, political and economic ends. His analysis focuses on the impact of Europeanisation on the city Goerlitz-Zgorzelec that spans the German-Polish border. Liubimau combines theories of social production and theories concerning geographical scales, and integrates both with interviews. Thus he contributes to discussions on the built environment as a manifestation of border politics. The notion of scale – local (urban), national (nation-state), transnational (EU) – is the key to his work, which takes the Old Town Bridge of the city as a case study. Here, the EU had a set of political and economic goals, which were met through the realisation of a particular built environment: the reconstruction of the Old Town Bridge. Liubimau demonstrates how the built environment is moulded, changed, and revitalised to enhance the economic prospects of the Polish side of this border city, and the Neisse suburb in particular.

The final article in this section, Kapitolina Fedorova's discussion of language contacts on the Russian-Chinese border, describes the Russian-Chinese Trade Pidgin from a sociolinguistic perspective. This trade pidgin first evolved in the early

eighteenth century, fell into disuse when the Russo-Chinese border was closed in the 1930s, and was then 'reborn' after the fall of the Soviet Union. Presenting the realities of migrant workers and cross-border trading and language, Fedorova is able to discredit a popular Russian conception: she demonstrates that it is, in fact, the Russians who currently dominate in terms of both trade and language, while the Chinese strive to shape their trading language to deal with Russians. Fedorova also makes suggestions for the possible future development of this pidgin, which, she argues, expresses the dynamics of social power.

Cultures of Politics and Business

Maya Atwal connects to this volume's central theme by suggesting that transformation can go hand in hand with continuity. The dialectic between these two forces is manifest in the development of the pro-regime Russian youth organisation *Nashi*. While there is a tension between *Nashi*'s own aims and the uses the government has for it, *Nashi*'s objectives can also be seen as partly self-contradictory. The organisation endeavoured to prevent the Orange Revolution, but also desired a significant political shift, namely the empowerment of the youth. Atwal problematises youth participation in politics as both vital and dangerous, and challenges the idea that an active state is harmful for civil society, given that state sponsorship has been a key part of *Nashi*'s success.

The following paper also deals with Russian political culture: Rasmus Nilsson untangles the cluster of Russian perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty in the years 2004-2008. This article presents a detailed discussion of the relative importance of three paradigms – Law, Nation, and Power – that Nilsson sees as characterising Russian discourses on Russia's proposed spheres of influence. The modern-day nations of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine are linked historically, geographically, culturally and linguistically. Due to the Russian centre's dominance during the Soviet period, Russia has been reluctant to see Belarus and Ukraine as truly independent. Nilsson's work sheds light on the manner in which Russian political discourse continues to shape this relationship.

Vit Simral takes an integrative approach to the transition in Czechoslovakia in 1989. He applies game theory to the Velvet Revolution in order to explain the choices made by various political figures. Simral examines various attempts to liberalise Socialist Czechoslovakia, asking why several such attempts failed and one was successful. A key point of his analysis is the tension between structural determiners and individuals' ideas and plans of action. Simral explicitly positions his article as both a contribution to the study of Czech history, and to game theory as an analytical method. Emphasising that a number of different options would have been available, Simral problematises teleological concepts of 'progress' towards democracy.

In the final article of this volume, Anca Simonica and Norbert Petrovici apply social network analysis to business studies, undertaking an analysis of productive informality and economic ties in the emerging economy of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. They build on the idea that post-socialist economies are often characterised by high levels of informal ties between businesses, but they do not see this as symptomatic of a desire to evade fiscal and legal liability. Rather, they explain it by the fact that individual businessmen, as they strive to create a diverse 'portfolio', become involved in large numbers of specialised firms. Their key conclusion is that informality should not unquestioningly be interpreted as 'bad for business', but should rather be seen as a strength of Cluj's local economy. Simonica and Petrovici thus counter the

stereotypical idea of Eastern European business practices as economically suspect.

This volume, proceeding from the 9th International Postgraduate Conference on Central and Eastern Europe at SSEES, UCL, is timely not only as a productive encounter of various disciplines and perspectives on transformation in the region, but also as a means to assemble and disseminate the work of young scholars from across the region along with perspectives from the West. The endeavour of several generations of postgraduate students in London and abroad to foster this form of exchange was initiated in 1999 and resulted in five publications before this one. Proceedings from the 1999 conference were published in a special issue of the journal *Slovo* in 2000, as *A collection of papers from the conference 'Between the Bloc and the Hard Place: Moving Towards Europe in Post-Communist States?' held at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies on 5th, 6th and 7th November 1999*. A special issue of the *Polish Sociological Review* presented, in 2000, papers from the conference that took place in Warsaw that year. SSEES published the following conference proceedings: *Harmony and Discord: Moving Towards a New Europe* (edited by Elizabeth Skomp and Roman Žyla) in 2003 (also based on the 1999 conference); *Nation in Formation: Inclusion and Exclusion in Central and Eastern Europe* (edited by Catherine Baker, Christopher J. Gerry, Barbara Madaj, Liz Mellish and Jana Nahodilová) in 2007; and *Four Empires and an Enlargement: States, Societies and Individuals in Central and Eastern Europe* (edited by Daniel Brett, Claire Jarvis, Irina Marin) in 2008. The conference series continues, with the 11th to be held at UCL SSEES in February 2012.

We hope that you find these contributions as informative as we did, and that they encourage the continuation of the ongoing dialogue among scholars of all disciplines interested in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia.

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Minorities and Human Rights

Categorisation and Instruction: The IOM's Role in Preventing Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation

Susanne Schatral

Since 1994 the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been a major player in the field of combating human trafficking worldwide. From then on the organisation has provided approximately 15,000 instances of direct assistance to persons affected by trafficking, and implemented around 500 counter-trafficking projects worldwide (Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation a). The IOM's power and influence are based on material as well as intersubjective factors - namely their ability to classify the world (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). The IOM shapes perceptions and knowledge of, and political strategies for, combating trafficking in human beings. It frequently holds sway over the definitions and subsequent development of solutions to the problem.

To meet these demands the resources most required are knowledge and expertise. I will scrutinize the ways the IOM exercises its power 'to create social reality and to set parameters [of] how to act in it' (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 6). Beginning with a specification of migration management, the organisation's fundamental concept and programmatic framework on which political strategies to fight irregular migration and human trafficking are based, I will look at the IOM-led project 'Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation'. I shall explore project practices that aim to define 'at-risk groups' and to identify and process the so-called 'Victim of Trafficking' (VoT). Studying these patterns shows how IOM creates its anti-trafficking interventions through establishing victim identities and simultaneously establishing understandings of appropriate anti-trafficking policies. This will allow me also to examine what these policies mean for potential migrants and VoTs.

In conclusion, I shall confront the assumptions and classifications made by IOM with the organisation's commitment to manage migration comprehensively through balancing reactive and proactive tools of migration management. I will argue that victim ascriptions allow for restrictive and control-oriented rather than for proactive anti-trafficking measures.

Migration Management, Trafficking and Security

IOM's anti-trafficking-approach is intrinsically tied to the concept of migration management. This has significant consequences for both defining the problem and for the solutions to be implemented.

In the early 1990s various factors such as the asylum crisis in Western Europe, East-West migration, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a growing South-North migration (see Georgi 2007, 11; International Centre for Migration Policy Development 2008) triggered a crisis in the Western European systems of migration policy. In response to these ongoing changes, migration mastermind Jonas Widgren, former director of the Vienna-based think tank International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and long-standing consultant for the IOM, promoted the development of a new concept to steer migration: migration management. At the eleventh IOM seminar on 'International Response to Trafficking in Migrants and Safeguarding of Migrants Rights' in October 1994 he called for a paradigm shift from an international migration regime, originating from the early 1920s (Widgren 1994),

to an approach that accepts the realities of (im)migration and regulating migration in a reasonable and beneficial way. According to Widgren, a new migration world order had to meet two policy objectives: a) 'preventing mass movements from occurring'; and b) 'creation of orderly migration channels between continents and nations' (Widgren 1994, 17).

The IOM, the 'leading organization on migration' (International Organization for Migration 2003), is mandated by its 125 member states to transport migrants and to follow elaborate guidelines to steer migration (Constitution of the International Organization for Migration, art. 1). It strives to put Widgren's ideas into practice. The organisation pursues a management approach in order to regulate migration when it is impossible to restrict it: 'The IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants' (International Organization for Migration 2003). Bimal Gosh, a senior advisor at the IOM, points out that migration management addresses migration with proactive and reactive measures (Ghosh 2003; International Organization for Migration 2003). For example, proactive migration management includes creating opportunities for legal migration and setting up programmes to address the 'root causes' of migration. Reactive measures of migration management include intensifying border controls and encouraging so-called voluntary return.

Migration management appears to be an alternative to more conservative restrictive strategies by putting forward a model for 'regulated openness' (Ghosh 2003, 25), seemingly including the interests of all parties involved in migration: migrants as well as the sending and destination countries (International Organization for Migration). Yet the model does primarily promote criteria for migration policies oriented towards the 'usefulness' of migrants, i.e. the benefits they offer national economies (Düvell 2002, 159). Thus migration management doesn't necessarily aim to increase migration. It is rather geared to improve the allocation of workforce and assure its quality (Düvell 2002, 159).

Foucault's concept of governmentality is a useful tool to discover what might be the underlying motivations of migration management. In his study on the ICMPD, Fabian Georgi scrutinizes the political rationality¹ of migration management through the lens of 'governmentality' in order to break away from its supposedly 'apolitical and technical character' (Georgi 2007, 62 [translation S. Sch.]) and to reveal its nature as a technique of power and domination. The intrinsic elements that constitute its political rationality are strategic nationalism, stability of utilisation and economic utilitarianism (Georgi 2007, 103f). Each of these elements contributes in a different way to its rationality of control. From this point of view, migration management turns out to be an effective tool of control that is geared against migration that takes place autonomously, rendering all self-ordained interests of migrants 'illegitimate' (see Georgi 2007, 102f).

From a migration management perspective, trafficking in migrants is seen as one of the main threats to 'international efforts in the direction of a new international migration order' (Widgren 1994, 18). The IOM considers trafficking as an extreme form of irregular migration and a severe violation of human rights (Ducasse-Rogier 2001). Following the logic of migration management, combating trafficking can mean facilitating legal migration so that people do not have to rely on traffickers or

¹ Fabian Georgi explains political rationality as the element of *mentalité* in Foucault's concept of governmentality. In summation, political rationality is the guideline for an organisation's actions in calculating possible pitfalls and resistance (Georgi 2007: 62f).

smugglers, such as preparing potential migrants to migrate through legal channels by providing skills and language training. Conversely, counter-trafficking measures could imply reactive measures against irregular migration such as the stricter handling of visas and border crossings and applying new technologies to reduce the number of those migrating (International Organization for Migration and the Federal Office for Migration 2005, 42).

Though a migration management approach recognises that migration constitutes an essential component of human trafficking and promises a more holistic approach than prevailing ‘stop organised crime models’, it does not seem to be the panacea it promises to be. Experts like Liz Kelly doubt that a migration management approach is capable of combating trafficking. According to Kelly, migration management does not target the root causes of trafficking (Kelly 2005): the social, political and economical marginalisation of women and girls from socially devalued groups and the social construction of these women ‘as the natural or ideal occupants of the lowliest positions in domestic or sex work’ (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003).

The IOM’s reactive measures of migration management meet the security concerns of states and societies (International Organization for Migration and the Federal Office for Migration 2005: 46). In particular, since 11 September, trafficking which is deemed to be a form of irregular migration that intersects simultaneously with other control and security issues such as prostitution, illegal work, organised crime or terrorism is considered to be not only a menace to potential migrants, but even more a problem which has subversive effects on societal and state security. On this highly ideological issue, the ‘IOM’s contributions have tended to emphasise the organisation’s public concerns with the links between migration and organised crime, drug-running and prostitution’ (Black 2003, 43) instead of elucidating the circumstances for various kinds of ‘irregular’ migration or flight.

Security cooperation is another general theme of the project ‘Prevention of human trafficking in the Russian Federation’. The project is implemented as a part of the agenda for ‘Four Common Spaces’ between the EU and Russia. As an activity of the second space, the Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice, it comes with mutual commitments against terrorism, so-called illegal migration, and cross-border crime. The project is funded under the EU Programme of Technical Assistance to CIS Countries (TACIS). It has a total budget of 4.5 million euro and is co-financed by the governments of the US and Switzerland. Launched in April 2006, the project ran until January 2009. Its main components include policy advice in order to ‘upgrade’ Russian legislation on trafficking, the implementation of preventive campaigns and information services, the establishment of referral mechanisms between different actors and assistance for victims in a rehabilitation centre in Moscow, run by the IOM.

The political rationality of migration management is the red thread, which the organisation follows in order to steer and control migration. The IOM is combating human trafficking against this background. But how does this conceptual framework translate into practice? In order to study the tools and techniques the IOM uses to define and specify the social problem of trafficking and to implement corresponding solutions, I focus on the following activities on the project level:

- Defining of at-risk-groups
- Identifying victims of trafficking (VoTs)
- Assisting VoTs
- Teaching local actors these models of identification and assistance

The Making of At-Risk Groups

As for almost all anti-trafficking interventions, the categorizing of at-risk groups is the basis for the Russian project (Aradau 2008). The project started with conducting a large-scale baseline study (Office of the International Organization for Migration in the Russian Federation 2008b), which specified the indicators and parameters of the problem. This commissioned work, carried out by independent Russian researchers, presents the main causes and risk factors for becoming affected by human trafficking, and therefore assesses social and economic consequences of the phenomenon in the Russian Federation. According to these scientific insights, individual and structural factors account for the level of risk of being trafficked. Potential victims come from socially vulnerable and marginal groups. They are discriminated against on the basis of gender, ethnicity or age. Children, teenagers and young adults of both genders, in particular from problematic families with a low level of education, are identified as specific risk groups.

An excerpt from the study is presented on IOM-Moscow's website, suggesting that a crucial prerequisite for becoming a victim is the decision to migrate in order to overcome unfortunate living conditions, or as IOM calls it, 'to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty'. The text further states that 'due to the fact that the behavioural patterns of potential victims were deformed under the degrading social conditions they are prone to find themselves in slavery-like or exploitative situations' (Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation b).

Including men and boys into the circle of people at risk may be perceived as IOM's response to the gender blindness of previous anti-trafficking interventions. For years women were generally conceptualised as vulnerable to trafficking, whereas men were mostly considered as smuggled. Adding men as a higher-risk group impeded sexualised representation strategies in IOM's awareness-raising campaigns. In the Russian Federation the organisation abstains from showing eroticised pictures of naked, mistreated women as it did in previous campaigns in the Baltic States or in Southeastern Europe. The new promotional material does not automatically equate trafficking in women with forced prostitution. It no longer fixes stereotypes of beautiful but naïve Eastern European women and thus prevailing gender asymmetries and (re-)traditionalised gender orders in the public space.² Yet the campaign's focus on both genders disguises the fact that it is primarily women and girls who are trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation. It obscures the fact that 'trafficking in women is part of a gender specific and gender hierarchic political, economical, and social order' (Locher 2002, 62 [translation S. Sch.]). Correspondingly, the majority of VoTs assisted in the TACIS-project are female (70 percent). 57 per cent of them were trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation (Office of the International Organization for Migration in the Russian Federation 2008a).

The decision to migrate in order to overcome unfortunate living conditions and poverty seems to be crucial to becoming a victim. Due to the fact that the behavioural patterns of potential migrants who come from at-risk-groups are distorted under degrading social conditions, they are prone to find themselves in slavery-like or exploitative situations: 'Gradually the at-risk behaviour becomes their normal behaviour pattern and the rational behaviour categories become distorted, which is manifested by, so-called, 'consent to exploitation' or 'voluntary slavery'. Their

² For a comprehensive analysis of the IOM's anti-trafficking 'representation regime' see Andrijasevic 2007.

perception of the normal social behaviour pattern expands beyond the limits acceptable to the human rights opinion and the level of humankind development' (Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation b).

These suppositions present potential migrants of both genders as backward and irrational subjects—in short as potential victims. They take risky and unreasonable decisions because they are supposedly one-dimensionally driven by push and pull factors. In contrast, “(p)ush-pull” factoring, which sounds like something that happens to less-than-“civilised” people, is not usually mentioned when Euramericans are the migrants; these are more likely to be described as modern selves searching actively for better situations in which to realise their identities’ (Agustin 2003, 3).

Altogether these assumptions about at-risk groups invoke images of the ‘Other’ (Yuval-Davis 1997) in terms of class, ethnicity and sexuality. The behavioural patterns of at-risk groups are presented as differing from forms of ‘normal’ social behaviour. Thus, these potential victims need to be normalised and (re-)educated as prudent subjects (O’Malley 1996)—those who are careful and who avoid unnecessary risks. As in many other countries before, the Russian project’s awareness-raising campaigns and information programmes call on people to make rational choices on the basis of the organisation’s expert knowledge. For example, in the course of the Russian project two rock music concerts were organised. IOM-Moscow distributed information leaflets and bandleaders urged young people ‘to make the right choices about their future’ (International Organization for Migration Moscow 2007). To a certain degree these fliers pointed out the structural dimensions of human trafficking. But simultaneously, as Claudia Aradau argues, these calls for rational choices shift migration risks from the structural to the individual level (Aradau 2008, 99).

I do not intend to question whether push-and-pull factors have real impacts on becoming affected by trafficking, but rather to question the oversimplificating tendencies involved in such discourse, and the predominance of the explanatory power of push-and-pull factors. The pictures that have been drawn by the IOM and many other anti-trafficking campaigns systematically disregard individual migration strategies that temporarily tolerate coercive and exploitative circumstances (Andrijasevic 2004; Sharma 2003). ‘Assumptions about “risk groups” and “risk cultures” [...] miss the details of individuals’ actual practice, their constraints, resources, and capacity to innovate and change’ (Shore and Wright 1997, 23). Constructing at-risk groups and potential victims demarcates visible dividing lines within a space of what Badiou calls ‘indiscernibility of knowledge’ (Badiou quoted in Aradau 2008, 115). These representations ignore the fact that migration strategies may include temporarily exploitative working conditions, but turn out to be successful in the end. They ascribe to women and men an incapacitation, which provides the basis for the IOM’s (preventive) interventions and simultaneously justifies them. Therewith these prevention campaigns have to be considered as part of reactive measures of migration management.

The Label VoT

Another attribution crucial for the IOM’s work is the label ‘victim of trafficking’ (VoT). Generally speaking, the category VoT tends to be a very ambiguous notion that is accompanied by many problematic aspects. The meaning of the phrase ‘victim of trafficking’ depends highly on who is using it. States and international bureaucracies like the IOM apply VoT normally as ‘an administrative category entailing state protections and obligation towards individuals’ (Anderson 2007, 6).

The term VoT acts as a ‘filter into support’, (Kelly 2005, 234) such as temporary housing and medical and psychological support.

Other anti-trafficking actors like NGOs consider VoT as a descriptive category, composed of ‘certain sets of experiences’ (Anderson 2007, 6). But persons who fit into the descriptive category might not necessarily be considered as a victim in the administrative sense (Anderson 2007). These persons will be liable for prosecution as ‘irregular’ migrants and could be returned ‘home’ as smuggled, without states being obliged to protect their human rights (Gallagher 2001).

Labelling persons as ‘victims of trafficking’ often tends to reduce complex real-life situations and at the same time to essentialise a broad spectre of distinct experiences. To be considered a VoT frequently means to be fixed with an ‘unequivocal victim identity’ (Sanghera 2007). A VoT then is subjected to prescriptive strategies, which, despite well-meaning intentions of assisting organisations, hinder an affected person ‘to realise his/her life’s full potential’ (Sanghera 2007, iiv).

As a consequence, certain NGOs try to avoid paternalistic strategies in their treatment of trafficking victims. They frequently employ the term ‘affected by trafficking’ in order to voice their concern with victimisation and to stress the person’s capacity to act. The category VoT then refers, if anything, to a temporary condition or a legal status in a crime case (Goodey 2004). This allows persons affected by trafficking to speak about violations of their human rights and about individual suffering. A VoT may claim protection and compensation for physical and psychological damage. However, instead of being granted rights, frequently the individual has to cope with gendered protectionist interventions of states (Kapur 2002) that often pursue simple policies of ‘no-prostitution’ or ‘no-migration’ (Popova 2006). In Nepal, for example, women under 30 years of age are not allowed to leave the country without the permission of their husbands (Kapur 2002).

The IOM further developed a standard procedure to identify persons supposedly affected by trafficking as VoTs. In order to obtain this status, which entitles them to take up the organisation’s assistance services, these persons must first undergo a so-called screening interview arranged by IOM or their partner NGOs. The questionnaire is based on the definitions given by the UN’s Palermo protocols.³ Thus the IOM asks about recruitment, transportation, and exploitation, drawing upon the legitimacy of the international agreement. Leaving aside the problem of ‘internal trafficking’,⁴ which the IOM considers in its reports as well as in its operational work, many experts and practitioners argue that the supposedly watertight definitions of the protocol prove to be problematic on an operational level. In practice a clear distinction between trafficking⁵ and smuggling⁶ is nearly impossible. Many migrants

³ The two Palermo protocols—the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air supplement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted 2000 by the United Nations in Palermo (United Nations 2000).

⁴ Internal trafficking means that a person has not necessarily to be transported across state borders in order to be exploited. Internal trafficking occurs within the territory of a state. Among the VoTs assisted in the TACIS project around 40 per cent lived in the territory of the Russian Federation (Office of the International Organization for Migration in the Russian Federation 2008).

⁵ “‘Trafficking in persons’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having

who use the services of smugglers later on end up in exploitative circumstances. Then there are affected persons, escaping trafficking situations by their own means, who do not consider themselves a VoT and prefer to stay illegally in the country (Pearson 2005).

Standards for exploitation, as Anderson and O’Connell Davidson indicate, strongly depend on political and moral values. The authors emphasise that in the absence of globally approved minimum employment rights, it proves impossible to measure exploitation from a neutral viewpoint. Thus exploitation may be considered at best a ‘continuum of experiences’ with abuses of varying degree (Anderson and O’Connell Davidson 2003, 8).

The IOM utilises categories based on the definitions of the Palermo protocols in developing methods to identify migrants in need of protection. This strongly legitimates identification processes through international law. Likewise, the deficits, ambiguities and gaps of these definitions, due to which the protocols’ effectiveness as an instrument protecting human rights of migrants is doubted by many experts, are transferred.⁷ However, the general problem is the separation of migrants into the categories of ‘in need of protection’ and ‘not in need of protection’. This selection poses a challenge to the universal validity of human rights for migrants. The identification processes are to be taken seriously into question because the ‘identifiers’ are prone to make incorrect and arbitrary decisions due to imprecise and ambiguous definitions. Additionally, these procedures possess an inherent logic of control as a tool of migration management, thereby neglecting the protection of human rights of, at least, certain groups of migrants.

Rehabilitation

Once an affected person is identified as a VoT and gives his/her voluntary written consent to be ‘restored’, the person enters a system of control and supervision in order to ensure his or her rehabilitation and return to ‘normal life’. The rehabilitation starts with a 21-day long recovery period in a specialised centre run by the IOM, situated in a private hospital on the outskirts of southwest Moscow. Shortly after arrival, the victim undergoes a medical screening, where he/she is tested for HIV, hepatitis, and STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections). Once a week a victim is provided with a session of individual therapy and several times a week sessions of group therapy take place. During the three weeks of treatment victims are not supposed to leave the hospital alone. Social workers organise leisure activities.

Meanwhile IOM staff prepares the client’s reintegration. The standard reintegration

control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs’ (Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, art. 3a).

⁶ “Smuggling of migrants” shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent Resident’ (Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, art. 3 a).

⁷ Analyses of the Palermo protocols’ inadequate qualities as an instrument to protect the human rights of trafficked migrants are numerous, e.g. Gallagher 2001; Jordan 2002; Pearson 2005.

assistance covers a predetermined spectrum of possibilities: the IOM organises and pays for the repatriation of victims into their home countries/regions. Additionally, victims are provided with so-called reinstallation grants: 150 euros for Russian nationals and 50 euros for Non-Russians. The person may also be eligible for additional grants—in cases of resettlement, housing expenses, basic needs, food and transportation are covered up to a period of 6 months, and professional training, paid classes and other income generating activities are supported. Moreover, medical care and legal counselling are provided in the early stages of rehabilitation. Other IOM missions or partner-NGOs are contacted in order to monitor the victim's reintegration and to avoid re-trafficking. After discharge from the hospital, the victim's reintegration will be supervised for up to one year.

This short description illustrates how a person is constructed as a VoT irrespective of their need for support. A person undergoes a bureaucratic procedure beginning with the screening interview and ending with the reintegration report. Due to ample paperwork directed at assigning their status and the subsequent treatment the person receives, they turn into a VoT, regardless of their former experiences and subjectivities, or of their future plans. These short descriptions give an idea of how bureaucratic procedures make the social construction VoT effective. An affected person is turned through categorisations and standardised treatment into a 'victim of trafficking'. The 'victims' experiences, subjectivities and plans for the future are taken into consideration only to a certain degree. That is to say, interests of migrants are dealt with only as far as they comply with the spectrum of possibilities offered by the IOM.

In order to restore VoTs to their former lives, they are admitted temporarily to premises that Erving Goffman described as a 'total institution'. The term 'total institution' applies above all to the physical attributes of the hospital building,⁸ but also to its inner structure and organisation. In a 'total institution' all spheres of life are concentrated in one place and under one authority, and the freedom of inmates/patients to make decisions and interact with others is limited (Goffman 1968). To put it in Goffman's words, the nature of the centre resembles 'a forcing house to change persons, as a natural experiment that can be done to the self' (Goffman 1968, 12). Reading the conditions of rehabilitation according to Goffman reveals the compulsory character of the IOM-Moscow's assistance framework that remains far from conditions of a 'normal life'⁹ and reiterates issues and patterns which have been criticised already in projects the IOM implemented in other countries (Bernström, Jalakas, and Jeffmar 2006; Limanowska 2007).

An obligatory component of IOM's support package is the practice of bringing the persons back to their countries of origin after the treatment. These so-called voluntary returns explicitly show the tensions laid out in the IOM's motto 'Managing migration for the benefit of all' (International Organization for Migration 2003). The term obscures the fact that interests of migrants and nation-states are often diametrically opposed and always negotiated within the power structures of the state. Although the IOM pretends to serve the interests of 'all', it primarily serves to uphold the asylum and immigration policies of European states, which 'would not function without a strong return policy component' (Widgren 2002, 2).

⁸ Controlled entrances/exits, fences, and barred windows that symbolise 'the barrier to social intercourse with the outside' (Goffman 1968, 15).

⁹ Opposed to the characteristics of a total institution a 'normal life' may be characterised by the separation of working, living, and leisure sphere. In a normal life a person is able to decide and to act autonomously.

Two attributes are meant to make the ‘cheaper variant of deportation’ (Berthold 2005) socially acceptable: The term ‘voluntary’ suggests that he/she could choose between different options whereas virtually there is no choice, because the person always picks removal (Düvell 2005). Most EU member states bluntly acknowledge the fact that ‘even voluntary return assistance programmes need some elements of enforcement or force’ (Widgren 2002, 4) in order to make the concept of ‘voluntary return’ work and to guarantee its ‘success’. Thus a big percentage of voluntary returns, which the IOM exercises on behalf of many Western European¹⁰ states, may be accurately referred to as prescribed or mandatory return.¹¹

As one of the most important (reactive) tools of migration management the political rationality of voluntary return draws on strategic nationalism (Georgi 2007). According to Jacqueline Berman, the term ‘return’ implies that the person goes back to where she/he naturally belongs, where she/he gets back the orderly status as citizen held before (Berman 2003). The gendered and symbolic character of return policies becomes manifest when sending trafficking victims back ‘home’. After an arranged return trip women may be confronted by traditional and patriarchal ways of living and taking up their roles as proper daughters or wives (Berman 2003)—a form of life that female migrants often try to flee.

Return as a suitable solution and an obligatory component of anti-trafficking policies is deeply rooted in the IOM’s bureaucratic culture.¹² The IOM staff in Moscow repeatedly affirmed that the only wish of a victim would be to return back home (Interview with IOM project assistant in Moscow, September 23, 2008). This suggestion, which exploits the victim’s desire for trust and protection, justifies policies of migration management as ‘voluntary’ return being the most natural organising principle. Return policies, on the contrary, often entail stigmatisation once affected people come back to their ‘home’ countries: returnees will be exposed as victims of sex-trafficking or at best labelled a failed migrant (Pearson 2002).

Teaching the ‘Model’

As an international organisation, the IOM is associated with being a rational-legal bureaucracy legitimated through a mandate delegated by its member states, through its outstanding expertise and through an image of impartiality and neutrality (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). The EU Commission relies on the IOM to implement its external migration policies. In its 2001 communication ‘On a Common Policy on Illegal Immigration’ the Commission highlights the organisation’s competences to guarantee EU protection standards for migrants and to facilitate cooperation with third countries (European Commission 2001).

In IOM-led projects such as the EU-financed project in the Russian Federation, the organisation teaches local governmental organisations and NGOs ‘best practices’.¹³

¹⁰ e.g. Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom, Switzerland (International Organization for Migration 2002).

¹¹ For a taxonomy of return policies see Dünnwald 2008.

¹² Vaughan defines bureaucratic culture as: ‘the solutions that are produced by groups of people to meet specific problems they face in common. These solutions become institutionalised, remembered, and passed on as the rules, rituals, and values of a group’ (Vaughan 1996, 64).

¹³ The term ‘best practices’ originates from EU terminology. It is an objective common to all EU-financed projects to collect, analyse, and refine best or at least good practices. IOM staff highlights IOM’s strength to impart ‘best practice’—knowledge generated from a multiplicity

The IOM ‘shows the model’ (Interview with Sergey Trepikhin, assistant of the Resident Legal Adviser of the Embassy of the US to Russia in Moscow, 15 September, 2008) in order to develop local actors’ capacity to combat human trafficking and to orient their actions. They are trained to perform, replicate, and finally institutionalise practices that take their cues from EU standards and strategies. Almost all of these cooperation projects are accompanied by conflicts of communication, cooptation, and coordination. It is extremely worthwhile to study these disagreements. Equally interesting is an attempt to answer the question of what is connoted in the term ‘best practice’. If scrutinised from a critical stance, questioning important categories of migration policies like nation, citizenship, and illegal migration, such an effort may provide useful insights; not only because the fact that the dimensions and varieties of human rights for migrants are intrinsically linked to these categories, but also about the political interests which determine EU anti-trafficking policies.

The political interests motivating victim protections are evidently reflected by the term ‘useful victim’. In EU states granting protection to persons affected by trafficking highly depends on the migrant helpfulness as a witness in lawsuits. Thus far, in the TACIS-project, ‘usability’ in criminal proceedings is more or less irrelevant, because shelter and support is not dependent upon giving evidence. Heli Askola describes what the strict application of the European model means to VoTs when she criticises the European Council Directive on Victims Protection¹⁴: ‘It is thus not a measure aimed at the protection of trafficking victims, but at squeezing out of any relevant information that could be used against the “real criminals”, that is, those who assist and organize irregular migration. After that even the “useful” victims are discarded’ (Askola 2007, 212).

EU patterns of victim protection are concerned only in a limited way with the migrants’ welfare. These measures are primarily concerned with effectiveness and improvement of law enforcement. This calls into question the IOM’s commitment that all measures to combat trafficking in human beings aim at the wellbeing and human rights of migrants (United Nations 2008, 7).

Conclusions

The capability to ascribe migrants an identity as a victim rather as a potential victim or ex post facto is one of IOM’s key instruments to exercise power. Attribution includes activities on different levels, which are interrelated and are reinforcing each other:

- 1) To produce knowledge about at-risk groups and their behavioural patterns
- 2) To assign affected persons an identity as a VoT and to subject him/her to a predefined treatment: rehabilitation, return, and eventually reintegration support
- 3) To teach societal and state actors a ‘model’ of how to assist victims

of IOM anti-trafficking projects, implemented all over the world (Interview with IOM project assistant in Moscow, October 2, 2008).

¹⁴ The proper name reads: European Council Directive on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subjects of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities, Council Directive 2004/81/EC.

What does the ascription of a victim-identity mean for migrants then? Notions of 'potential' and 'real' victims constitute a sine qua non for the IOM's anti-trafficking interventions. Affected persons are supposed to accept the status of VoT and behave accordingly to it. Experiences other than falling victim will be discarded, negotiable only in the very narrow parameters set for support. A VoT's refusal of assistance may be read as pathology (Aradau 2008). Altogether VoTs have to cope with the limited and restricted facilities provided (Limanowska 2005).

Reading these practices against the background of the IOM's migration management approach, which claims to combine reactive and proactive instruments, neither the Russian project nor completed or ongoing anti-trafficking projects of the IOM in Central and Eastern Europe focus on proactive strategies to facilitate large-scale 'legal' (female) migration. This can be explained through the utilitarian, selective conception of migration management: to facilitate canalised beneficial migration and to restrict irregular forms of migration. An alignment of the categories 'victim' and 'irregular migrant' turns out to be the lynchpin. The construction of victim/irregular migrant, either as a potential victim, who is driven by push and pull factors, or as VoT, who is in need for assistance, provides the basis for various types of (preventive) education measures in order to avoid future or re-trafficking. To consider potential and actual migrants as people who use their mobility as a resource and as a vital dimension of their social capital (Morokvasic 2003) would suggest extensive projects to empower migrants. In the course of the Russian project initiatives such as the establishment of information centres throughout the Russian Federation, of an information telephone hotline, and the distribution of comprehensive migration manuals demonstrate important steps taken in this direction. However, several pressing questions remain: How can state and IGOs enable migrants to use the given information in practice? How can they tackle legal exclusion due to irregular employment? How can the 'social working of law'¹⁵ be integrated (Popova 2007)? Leaving these questions unanswered suggests that these activities are a matter of reactive prevention once again.

¹⁵ People do not follow legal norms, because these norms do not consider their specific situation. As a consequence, they do not claim their rights, because this might impair their situation.

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Ethno-business – the Manipulation of Minority Rights in Romania and Hungary

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Before setting out, a clarification of the concept at the heart of this research should be made. For the purposes of this study, ‘ethno-business’ will refer to any practice that seeks to take unfair advantage of the existing legal framework for the protection of national minorities in order to obtain material, financial or political gain. Other terms used to describe the phenomenon include ‘ethno-corruption’, defined as ‘the abuse of remedial measures for private gain in a manner contrary to the legislators’ intentions’ (Pap 2008, 114), and ‘minority business’, emphasising the misuse of people’s – sometimes only alleged – minority identity for the sake of political or economic ambitions (Hungarian Helsinki Committee 1999, 27).

The phenomenon emerged recently, as an unintended consequence of minority policies developed after 1993. The first occurrence was reported in Hungary after the implementation of the law on the rights of national and ethnic minorities (Minority Law) in 1993. In Romania the phenomenon also emerged as a result of minority policies set up after the fall of the communist regime. Here, however, ethno-business was much less reported than in Hungary.

Given the relative novelty of the phenomenon, there is very limited literature concerning ethno-business. To this, one should add the general mindset of researchers and human rights advocates, who understandably – in the context of the Yugoslav conflicts, and later of the European enlargement – analysed minority policies in Central and Eastern Europe from a completely different angle, i.e. the extent to which states complied with their international commitments. This left under-researched the second element of the nexus of rights and obligations represented by law: although it is essential that the state guarantees the enjoyment of rights bestowed on its citizens through law, it is equally important that citizens abide by the obligations arising from it.

To complicate matters further, states have had very limited interest in researching or financing research into this issue. For both Romania and Hungary, demonstrating a strong commitment to ensuring generous minority policies was a very important asset in the negotiations for accession to the European Union, and it was deemed unnecessary, indeed counterproductive, to point out deficiencies in these policies. As for minority-sponsored research into this practice, one would hardly expect it to occur, since it might entail unwanted attention from the state, press or other civil society bodies.

As a result, to date there is no comprehensive research attempting to solve the many puzzles raised by this phenomenon. In terms of data, its scope is quasi-unidentified – one estimate put forward by a former Ombudsman for National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary set the figure to one third of all self-governments in this country being cases of ethno-business (Gandul 2007). The figure is, however, not based on solid data. For Romania, no estimate whatsoever is available. Qualitative research is equally absent for both countries; all that has been written on this topic is reduced to reports of various cases of corruption, wherein no theoretical framework or methodology was applied.

What I will argue in this paper is that the new, emerging minority elites seized the opportunities created by the new institutional and legal frameworks after 1990 and used

their influence to construct identities – allowing them to take advantage of the new, generous minority policies.

Minority Rights after 1990 in Hungary and Romania

After the regime change of 1989, both countries wished to become members of prestige organisations such as the Council of Europe and the European Union. In the context of the Yugoslav wars, candidature for EU accession by Central and Eastern European countries brought fears of importing inter-ethnic conflict in the enlarged European Union. To counteract such developments, the criteria for membership included a provision whereby candidate countries were required to ensure stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities (Copenhagen European Council 1993).

The negotiation process was characterised by a marked power asymmetry: Central and Eastern European states were much more motivated to join the EU than their predecessors, which, according to very many observers, led to a lack of genuine choice in the adoption of European norms, with the result that minority rights protections were put in place without a process of genuine domestic negotiation and consultation between minorities and the majority (Pentassuglia 2001, Hughes and Sasse 2003). Arguably, candidate states accepted these norms not as ends in themselves, but simply as binding conditions for membership.

Moreover, questions have been raised as to the way the European Union pursued its monitoring exercise in the absence of any specialised EU institution to deal with minority issues. It is also significant that there is no European regulation concerning national minorities. Generally speaking, monitoring reports have been assessed by various researchers as being inconsistent and *ad hoc* (Sasse 2004, 69) and as being conducted on a case-by-case basis and lacking established, objective evaluation criteria (Pentassuglia 2001, 23).

All these issues have determined many researchers to conclude that both candidate countries and the EU have been reluctant to go beyond the rhetorical or formal legal and institutional change. Passing minority protections only as a response to pressures imposed by external conditionality, without the necessary social support, has - according to some views - resulted in a purely instrumental attitude towards minority rights (Tesser 2003, 493).

In Hungary, with the coming to office of Prime Minister Jozsef Antall in 1990, a new approach to the issue of Hungarians abroad became very visible, the fate of the Hungarian communities living in the neighbouring states becoming a top issue on the government's agenda, much to the alarm of the countries concerned (Schopflin 2000, 371). The Office for National and Ethnic Minorities was set up in the same year, with the mandate of implementing the government's minority policies. One of its first tasks was to contribute to the drafting of the Minorities Act. According to some researchers (Kardos 2001, 349), one of the main – though unacknowledged – considerations in the drafting of the law was establishing a 'moral right' allowing the Hungarian state to demand fair treatment of the Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring states. The law had as an important point of departure the right for national and ethnic self-identification as a fundamental human right (Csaba 2005, 208). This point was the one that sparked most

debates during the preparation of the law and, as will be shown later, in its subsequent implementation.

Unlike minority acts in the majority of European states, the Hungarian law offers a detailed definition of what a national or ethnic minority is: 'every national group that has been native on the territory of the Republic of Hungary for at least a century, that has been in numerical minority within the population of the state, whose members are Hungarian citizens, who are differentiated in their own language, culture and traditions from the rest of the population, who exhibit a spirit of togetherness in order to preserve all of these and in order to express and protect the interests of their historically developed communities' (see Csaba 2005, 209). The law also provides a list of the thirteen ethnic groups that qualify as national minorities, leaving open the possibility for any other ethnic group to claim the status of ethnic or national minority, once it fulfilled a number of prerequisites.

As to the right to parliamentary participation, this follows directly from the Constitution. However, to date, the law required to regulate this issue has not been adopted. Rather, protection of national minorities is performed through local self-governments, which are bodies endowed with a separate budget from that of the local government, and which can be set up by any of the thirteen minorities recognised by the Hungarian state. These are entitled to establish and maintain educational and media institutions, have the right to define their own organisational and operational rules, and are entitled to use a separate head office within the property of the local government.

After three consecutive self-government elections, more than 1,800 local self-governments have been established (Csaba 2005, 213). Deficiencies in the Minorities Act started to become obvious in the elections of 1998, with the first occurrences of ethno-business cases. In June 2005, the Hungarian Parliament passed a series of amendments to the Minorities Act. According to the modified Act, both the right to vote for, and run as, candidates in the minority elections require prior registration as a member of the respective minority. The first minority self-government elections under the new regulations were held in autumn 2006.

In the case of Romania, the new constitution of 1991 provides a fairly extensive set of minority rights. The principle at the core of minority provisions in Romania is, as in the case of Hungary, the free choice of national identity. However, unlike in Hungary, neither the Constitution nor any subsequent law state clearly what are the characteristics that would describe an ethno-cultural community as a national minority. Neither are national minorities recognised by the state listed in the legislation. In 1993 the Council of National Minorities was created, as a consultative body of the Government bringing together all recognised national minorities. Initially the Council brought together representatives of sixteen minorities. The number has recently increased to nineteen members, representing twenty minorities recognized as national minorities by the Romanian state (the Czech and Slovak minorities chose to be represented by one joint association – the Association of Czechs and Slovaks in Romania). The council operates on the principle of equality among minorities – each minority, regardless of its size or socio-economic necessities, is represented by one representative association in the council.

The treatment of national minorities on an equal basis raises the most difficult questions of parliamentary representation. Romanian law provides that all recognised national

minorities can send one representative to the Lower Chamber of Parliament, provided that in the national elections they receive at least 5 per cent of the average number of votes received by an MP standing for election on a regular party list. The difficulty lies in the fact that only one MP per minority is allowed. The association the MP represents will then receive the whole funding for the respective minority, thus creating a 'winner takes all' situation (Horvath and Scacco 2001, 258). This is particularly true for the Roma minority, notorious for the myriad of associations attempting to gain a seat in Parliament, but has proved to be an issue in the case of other minorities as well, such as Italians, Bulgarians and Albanians.

From ethnic Representation to Ethno-Business

The first mention of this phenomenon occurred in Hungary as a direct result of the 1993 Minorities Act and the subsequent secondary legislation. Stephen Deets (2002) wrote one of the first articles discussing the phenomenon, without, however, using the term 'ethno-business'. Deets' analysis relates to a 1998 European Roma Rights Center report of an incident that took place in an ethnically-mixed village in southern Hungary. There, to take advantage of the state-funded subsidies for mother-tongue lessons, the school board encouraged all 220 pupils to declare themselves of German origin, even if at the beginning of the school year 185 pupils declared themselves Hungarian, 25 Roma and only 10 German. The school thus received increased subsidies, enabling all students to study German. The ones left out of the scheme were the Roma, who were left without the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue.

This was by no means an isolated case. In the same article, Deets cites Hungarian government statistics according to which 45,000 primary school pupils were enrolled in German-minority programmes. This number exceeded the total number of the German population living in Hungary by 8,000 (Deets 2002, 39). Deets' conclusion is that the government has an interest in developing programmes that offer incentives to local governments to 'create' minority children. Thus minorities are helped to recreate their culture as a way to pressure neighbouring states, so that the demand for minority rights is 'fuelled by supply' (Deets 2002, 41).

The 'Cuckoo' Phenomenon

The 'Cuckoo' Phenomenon – a term coined mainly by the mass media, is used to describe the cases where political entrepreneurs not belonging to a minority stand for election to a minority self-government. This seemed to occur with greater frequency before the 2005 modification of the Minority Act. However, reports of such occurrences have emerged even after that. As noted by the 1999 Helsinki Committee report on the situation of minorities in Hungary, the phenomenon is a direct consequence of the principle of free choice on which the provisions of the 1993 Minority Act are based. Added to this, the fact that at the time the majority population could vote on the minority council representatives should also be considered.

In a very comprehensive and documented study, Andras L. Pap (2008) calls to attention several instances of the phenomenon. Thus he gives the example of a very vocal Roma politician in Jászladány – a village renowned for segregating Roma children in schools –

who was in a permanent dispute with the local authorities. He was sidelined in the elections by the Hungarian majority, who voted a non-Roma to the minority self-government. To further demonstrate the scope of the phenomenon, Pap mentions repeated cases of candidates running for office as Roma in one election and later as Germans in the following term, as well as the fact that in several municipalities where, according to the census results there was no person belonging to a national minority, numerous minority candidates were registered for election to a minority self-government. Possibly the most absurd example of misuse of minority policies is the case of a small village football team which registered as German minority candidates for the elections to express their admiration of German football (Pap 2008, 115). Because of the possibility of the majority to vote in the minority self-government elections, often the majority population decided the board of the minority self-government, as demonstrated by the Jászladány case.

Judging from the number of journalistic reports and of public complaints, the minority most affected by the 'cuckoo' phenomenon was the Romanian minority in Hungary. A document released by the Cultural Union of Romanians in Hungary approximated that almost forty percent of the Romanian self-governments were headed by non-Romanians. As a result, the functioning of the national self-government was blocked as well, since its functioning depends on the presence of seventy five per cent of the electors. The Romanian minority issued an open letter in 2002 to request the support of the Romanian Minister of Justice, resulting in a request by the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs to his Hungarian counterpart to investigate and remedy the matter (Divers Bulletin 2008). The situation was solved by Parliament, that later reduced the threshold to fifty per cent.

Comparable phenomena have occurred in Romania in the past few years. They were however not identified in public opinion or the mass media either as ethno-business or by any other descriptor. Several instances that resemble the 'cuckoo' cases in Hungary, such as the case of Oana Manolescu, elected to Parliament as deputy representing the Albanian minority in the 2000 elections, who, it was later claimed, was an ethnic Romanian with no link to the Albanian community. Another case is that of Gheorghe Firczak, whom we find in 1996 as an unsuccessful candidate on the list of the Free-Democrat Hungarian Party of Romania. After a short period in the ranks of a Romanian mainstream party (the Social Democrat Party) he founded the Cultural Union of Ruthenians in Romania whose interests he has represented in Parliament since 2004 (Alionescu 2004, 68-69). Maybe the most contested and reported case is that of the MP representing the Macedonian minority. A former leader of the coal miners syndicate, he set up the Association of Slav-Macedonians several months before the 2000 elections. Despite the fact that he had admitted he had no links whatsoever with the Macedonian language or culture, he managed to secure a place in Parliament (Alionescu 2004, 69). The minority status of all these individuals was heavily contested by their constituencies after they were elected and took office.

Inflation in the Number of Ethnic Parties not sustained by Demographic Data

The confusion surrounding the election of the Italian deputy in the 2000 general elections in Romania seems to point to another type of development, not encountered in the Hungarian ethno-business instances. The electoral law restricts the number of minority

MPs entering Parliament to one per minority, namely the candidate receiving most votes in a district. Ms. Ileana Stana-Ionescu was elected to Parliament and her organisation appointed to the Council for National Minorities after receiving less than 3,000 votes in a single district (which was more than any other Italian candidate in any one district), whereas a competing organisation failed to send its representative to Parliament in spite of their collecting a total of over 16,000 votes in several districts. This example, provided by Alionescu, is reinforced by the competition among parties claiming to represent the Italian minority in the 2004 elections: no less than seven such parties competed for a constituency of less than 3,500 people. Marian Chiriac (2005) discusses the occurrence of over-competition in the case of several minorities, without however offering an explanation or policy recommendation to improve the situation.

Trying to address the question of how these incidents were possible, Alionescu (2004, 69) concludes that the answer lies in the voting behaviour of the parliamentary group of national minorities. As they have constantly voted according to the wishes of the ruling party of the day, all governments preferred to turn a blind eye to the deficiencies in the system and maintain the electoral process without any adjustments. However, if this explains how the system survived without structural changes for so many years, it does not explain the number of votes obtained by the individuals claiming to represent a minority they did not belong to.

Another deficiency in the system that allowed for the phenomena of unusually high competition for a seat in Parliament as representative of a minority is the fact that the law allows for any three persons to set up an NGO, to assert that it represents the interests of a national minority, after which it can stand for election. This has allowed for various manipulations to the detriment of genuine minority associations (Pambuccian 2000, 100).

Dan Oprescu (2000), the former head of the Romanian National Agency for the Roma, was the first to compare the abuses of the minority policies in Romania with the ethno-business phenomenon in Hungary. For him, the main cause behind these abuses is the funding system for minority associations represented in Parliament. There is very little accountability as to how these funds are spent and funding is not made conditional on anything, i.e. once a minority association enters the Council for National Minorities and sends a representative to Parliament, the state releases the money automatically. This is the reason why Oprescu considers this funding to be a veritable 'alimony' for minority associations, who, according to him, have developed a real dependency on state funding (Oprescu 2000, 75).

Theoretical approaches concerning the Relationship between Entrepreneurs and their Constituencies

I will argue that minority leaders – the community elite – used an instrumentalist approach to national identification, employing a number of techniques to construct or enhance a sense of identification with ethnic values they promoted. Their success was made possible either by the psychological needs of the community, or in some cases by the material, pragmatic inducements they offered.

Political elites are loosely defined in the literature, an aspect which according to many researchers has created a lot of conceptual and theoretical confusion. Indeed, the difficulty of creating a definition that can help researchers to identify correctly political

elites relevant to their study becomes apparent in the multitude of definitions and theoretical approaches available. I will follow John Higley and Richard Gunther's (1992) understanding of the elite as made up of holders of high positions in powerful organisations and who can regularly and substantially influence political outcomes – in this case, the leadership of the minority organisations (in the Romanian case) and the leadership of minority self-governments (in the Hungarian case).

Higley and Gunther distinguish among three types of elites, based on their structural integration which they define as the relative inclusiveness of formal and informal networks of communication and influence among elite persons, groups, factions, and the value consensus, i.e. the relative agreement among elites on formal and informal rules and codes of political conduct and on the legitimacy of political institutions. Thus they identify the disunited elite (Higley and Gunther 1992, 10), in which structural integration and value consensus are minimal. Communication and influence networks do not cross faction lines, and opposing factions disagree on the structuring and value of political institutions. Within such an elite type, political outcomes are perceived in terms of 'politics as war' or as zero-sum. They engage in unrestricted, often violent struggles for dominance. A second type would be the consensually unified elite, wherein structural integration and value consensus are relatively inclusive, with communication and influence networks encompassing all or most elite factions. Since no single faction dominates these networks, most elites have access to government decision-making. A final type would be the ideologically unified elite, in which structural integration and value consensus are seemingly monolithic, such as that encountered under totalitarian regimes (Higley and Gunther 1992, 11).

This categorisation sheds some light into the third phenomenon I identified relating to ethno-business – the excessive fragmentation of the political environment in the case of several minorities. Whether this is due to competition for (political, financial) resources or due to disagreements as to the best direction for political action, the large number of leaders claiming political representation seems to point in the direction of a disunited elite, albeit in a slightly more moderate understanding of the term.

Many elite theorists hold that, in practice, it is the ruling elite that moulds people's consent to itself and its policies, so that the growing political participation of the public becomes offset by growing (or more effective) political manipulation. Eva Etzioni Halevy in her study on political manipulation concludes that 'the extension of democratic rights merely implies that the political elites have had to modify the devices for the struggle for power to include, to a greater extent than before, the manipulation of public opinion' (Etzioni Halevy 1979, 7). Among the techniques through which elites manufacture the consent of the public, Etzioni Halevy identifies the selective distribution of information, the production of symbolic cues that define or interpret states of affairs for the public, and through ritualistic and evocative rhetoric and emotionally laden linguistic symbols which, in themselves, contain predefinitions of the situation (Etzioni Halevy 1979, 7).

Construction of Identity

The constructivist approach to nationalism holds that nations, nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols and histories are a social construct, a result of ‘social engineering (...) often deliberate and always innovative’ (Hobsbawm 1992, 13). This study considers the success of ethno-business entrepreneurs as partially the result of a process of identity construction and will attempt to shed some light on the mechanisms at play in the relationship between entrepreneurs and their constituencies. The constructivist approach to identity formation is relevant to the research concerning the emergence and success of ethno-business. In certain ethnic communities in Romania and Hungary a sometimes dramatic surge in the number of people casting ethnic votes and requesting to benefit from minority rights has occurred, despite not being sustained by any demographic data.

Most constructivist researchers concur with Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s (1967, 173) assertion that identities are formed by social processes and that once formed, they are maintained, modified or even reshaped by social relations – the corollary being that in their turn identities produced in this way maintain, modify or even reshape the same social structure that contributed to their production. A similar approach to national identity is apparent in Max Weber’s work, for whom the nation was fundamentally a construct. Thus he acknowledged the impossibility of identifying any kind of ‘empirical qualities common to those who count as members of the nation’ (Weber 2004, 146). From this he deduces that ‘nation’ therefore refers to an expected solidarity on the part of certain groups in the face of other groups, without any possibility of determining the limits of the membership or the community-oriented course of action arising from this solidarity (Weber 2004, 146). Weber chooses to analyse the role of the agents that might benefit from popularising this doctrine of the nation. He remarks that the idea of the nation stands in close relationship to ‘prestige’ interests, as all manifestations of this idea contain, in one form or another, the legend of a providential mission, which the members of the nation were encouraged to fulfil. In addition, this mission could only be accomplished through the cultivation of a certain peculiarity of the nation, usually seen as culturally superior and irreplaceable as compared to other nations. Weber concludes that it is the elites ‘the intellectuals, as we shall tentatively call those who usurp leadership in a *Kulturgemeinschaft* (that is, within a group of people who by virtue of their peculiarity have access to certain products that are considered “culture goods”)’ (Weber 2004, 149) that are most susceptible to spreading the ‘national’ idea.

One fundamental question that constructivist theory has yet to answer is why people allow themselves to be ‘manipulated’ into identifying with the symbols, culture and traditions crafted by elites. Most writers in the constructivist tradition seem to take for granted the fact that if leaders use the right cues at the right time, the population will readily follow the ideas presented to them. For G. Lowell Field and John Higley, the attitude of the public has little bearing on the unity among elites, which they perceive as a crucial factor in achieving socio-political stability (cf. Etzioni Halevy, 1979, 5). In C. Wright Mills’s work, the emphasis is also on the prevailing influence of the elites. He dismisses the role of ‘the masses’, which he characterises as apathetic (Wright Mills 1957, 324).

The understanding of ethnic mobilisation through elite manipulation is very well complemented by the theory developed by David Laitin (1998), based on his research on

ethnic identities in Estonia. His starting point is the assimilationist policies of the newly independent Estonian state after 1991, and the consequent efforts made by ethnic Russians to accommodate the linguistic requirements attached to obtaining Estonian citizenship. Learning the Estonian language is a pragmatic choice that Russians make in order to obtain citizenship and have access to better jobs. This is in Laitin's theory the first step towards assimilation. The next generation will have less trouble learning Estonian and will accommodate more easily to the majority culture, as '[c]ultural assimilation is like religious conversion – what one generation considers simple pragmatism the next considers natural' (Laitin 1998, 2).

Laitin defines identities as categories of membership that are based on various typologies, such as gender, race, class, etc., which ultimately limit the choice of personal identity. Thus a person who sees himself as both Estonian and Russian (say, a second-generation Russian who has become partially assimilated to Estonian culture) may one day – due to some political or social constraint – have to choose which is his dominant identity. Laitin's novel perspective resides in proposing a tipping model to determine how this change of identity occurs at the level of a community. His argument is that the choice of a dominant identity will ultimately be affected by the number of people who have already chosen it, resulting in a cascading effect (Laitin 1998, 23). I believe Laitin's approach, although focusing on the process of assimilation of minority populations to the majority, which is the opposite of the phenomenon this research attempts to unravel – that of reversing the process of assimilation begun during communism – is of great value in understanding part of the workings of ethno-business. In the case of communities affected by ethno-business practices, my assumption is that most people still speak (however incorrectly or rarely) the minority language, and still carry with them at least two identities: the majority and the minority one. In cases where a political entrepreneur came up with a discourse incorporating ethnic cues and emphasising the positive value of the diminishing minority identity, he essentially encouraged the members of his constituency to choose that identity as the dominant one. Judging by the success of the ethno-business entrepreneurs, it is most probable that a cascading process took place whereby an increasing number of people decided on their minority identity as the dominant identity.

Social Identity Theory

Another possible answer for the appeal of nationalist rhetoric is to be found in the theory of psychological identification developed by Henri Tajfel. His definition of social identity is 'that part of the individuals' self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership' (Tajfel 1982, 24). Tajfel's observations led him to the conclusion that individuals that are part of a group (even where this particular group finds itself in no conflict with any other groups) display a marked tendency toward favouring their fellow group members as opposed to members of other groups (ingroup-favouring behaviour). To this, Tajfel adds the observation that people need to preserve (or achieve) a positive, distinctive image of the group they identify with as a means of enhancing their self-esteem, so that they are prone to creating a positive social identity for all group members (Tajfel 1982, 24).

Thus the positive response of people to stimuli that attempt to induce them to identify with a certain group becomes clearer – being part of a prestigious group can confer a positive image of oneself. The notion that ethno-business entrepreneurs undertook a process of identity construction in the communities they have come to represent appears to have firm foundations, and will become one of the main arguments of this research. Ethnic communities where the most prominent cases of ethno-business emerged were characterised by a relatively high degree of assimilation. However, by transforming the diminishing minority identities still present into the dominant identity of the group, entrepreneurs managed to boost ethnic allegiances to the minority culture and consequently benefit (materially and politically) from attaining the status of a minority leader.

Group Theory

Mancur Olson's theory provides another approach that I believe helps explain the favourable response on the part of minority communities to entrepreneurs seeking to coagulate these communities around them. Olson's view is that, contrary to classical theories of groups and organisations, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve group interests. This is because, in the case of large organisations, the public good these offer or facilitate are available to all potential members of the group, whether or not they have paid the price for such. Thus the individual will have no incentive to act, as especially in larger groups his lack of action (i.e. his not paying for the public good) will not have any effects on the availability of that good. This is Olson's explanation for the reason why states cannot depend on the voluntary donations of its citizens. For this reason, large organisations wishing to mobilise a latent group will have to resort to 'selective incentives' (Olson 1971, 133), either in the shape of sanctions or of attractions (distinct from the public good itself) in order to encourage individuals to help bear the burden. Sanctions can take various forms, such as withdrawing support from an individual (Olson's example relates to the practice of the American Medical Association (AMA) members of usually not testifying for non-member physicians in cases of malpractice) (Olson 1971, 138-139). Selective incentives, meaning benefits that can be withheld from non-members, are, according to Olson's research, much more common. To use the same example, AMA offers access to a prestigious academic journal for its members only, so that physicians are given an incentive to join the Association (Olson 1971, 140).

Although Olson's theory is based on economic organisations it might prove helpful in explaining the success of (non)minority entrepreneurs in mobilising the local community. The use of material incentives (to use Olson's terminology) by minority entrepreneurs has been reported in the Romanian media. The most famous example is that of the Croat minority leader who allegedly facilitated double citizenship and Croat passports in exchange for votes – this might explain the soar in electoral votes for the Union of Croats from 486 votes in 1996 to 14,472 in 2000 and 18,100 in the 2004 elections (Divers Bulletin, 2004).

This approach also offers an explanation for the cases where non-minority entrepreneurs obtain a seat in Parliament on an ethnic vote. By offering selective incentives to the potential constituency they can downplay the ethnic element and focus on the other

(material, social, political) advantages they can bring to the community.

In selecting the theory of social identification and the theory of groups as potentially facilitating explanations of community responses in the interaction between entrepreneur and constituency, I would not consider these approaches as competing but complementary explanations. It may well be that in the same community a process of identity construction based on the community response (along the lines of the social identification theory) co-exists with selective incentives offered to potential voters.

Conclusions

With regard to the minority legal and institutional developments after 1990, several things should be mentioned. Firstly, most research has focused on assessing the state's (non)fulfilment of its international and domestic commitments towards minority groups. This perspective has set aside the second component of the junction between rights of obligations represented by law. Secondly, academic investigations specifically on the subject of ethno-business are very recent and underdeveloped. To my knowledge, no consistent study of the phenomenon has previously been undertaken. Generally speaking, the studies discussing ethno-business do not focus exclusively on it; rather, ethno-business is mentioned in the context of a wider analysis of minority policies. Thirdly, the literature available on the subject falls mostly in the category of policy recommendations, concerning itself with ways in which the legal and institutional setting should be reshaped as to prevent further abuse.

These analyses fail to take into account that the relation between the state and the minority community involves a mediator, the minority entrepreneur. The relationship that the various authors attempt to reshape through their policy recommendations is thus the one between the state and the minority entrepreneur.

This leaves the floor open for researching the second element of the triad state – mediator – community, i.e. the interaction between the minority entrepreneur and his constituency. I have attempted in this study to identify the most relevant theoretical approaches to clarify the relationship of (non)minority entrepreneurs to their communities, looking at debates concerning the definition and potential avenues for action of political elites, and the potential explanations for the favourable response on the part of ethnic communities where ethno-business practices have emerged. In my opinion, these are the main issues at stake in clarifying the interaction between entrepreneurs and the community. A close analysis of these issues reveals that entrepreneurs' actions in terms of identity construction and use of selective incentives find their reflection in the positive response of the community, as explained by the theory of social identification and by the theory of groups and organisations.

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Spaces, Regions, Borders

Working the Field: Rural Experts and the ‘Agrarian Question’ in the Romanian Principalities 1864-1914

Raluca Muşat

This paper deals with the birth of the ‘rural expert’ and the rise of a sociological way of seeing the countryside in the Romanian Principalities between the land reform of 1864 and the First World War. My main argument is that direct social investigation of the countryside contributed to the transformation of the ‘agrarian question’, as seen by those charged with studying it, from an economic into a social issue. To demonstrate this, I will concentrate on the development and evolution of two fieldwork practices – travel and writing – as they appear in the works of three Romanian rural specialists, relating them to the country’s socio-economic context. In particular, I set their work against the background of the 1864 land reform and the 1888-9 and 1907 peasant uprisings. Firstly, I use these examples to illustrate how scholars theorised and justified the way they travelled to and inside the countryside as part of their profession and to understand how changes in the means of transport and attitudes to travel affected their writings. Secondly, I relate this to the style of writing produced by these scholars with a view to exploring how the experience of the field was articulated in a particular style and form. I argue that the trajectory of these studies went from extensive travels and broad surveys of agricultural production to intensive local monographs that scrutinised all intimate aspects of peasant life, thus extending the scope of the research from the economic to the social in all its manifestations. Thirdly, I relate my findings to the agrarian question and discuss the way these scholars tackled it in their works.

I start with a short historical overview of the Romanian agrarian question (*chestiunea agrară*) from the mid-nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, followed by a few theoretical clarifications about the role of social sciences in modern governance and the place of fieldwork as a method of producing knowledge about the peasantry. The main body of the paper will then discuss the rise of the rural expert through three examples: Ion Ionescu de la Brad, George Maior, and Vasile Gîdei, focusing on their travel experiences and the different styles of writing about the peasantry.

The Agrarian Question

The context in which the development of rural fieldwork occurred was one of modernisation and state building. The de facto unification of the two Romanian Principalities, Moldova and Wallachia, in 1859 marked the country’s official opening to European political and cultural models (and institutions). This was preceded by the area’s entry into the global economic market (the Treaty of Adrianople)¹ that had already led to radical socio-economic changes particularly in agricultural production. In a short period of time Romania moved from an agriculture based predominantly on

¹ Concluding the Russo-Turkish War, 1828-1829 between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, the Peace Treaty of Adrianople forced the Ottoman Empire to open navigation on the Danube and the Black Sea through the Dardanelles, thus liberating commerce for cereals, live stock and timber. This impacted on Romanian agriculture by transforming a predominantly small-scale animal raising country into an extensive cereal farming one that, by the First World War, became one of the greatest wheat and maize exporters in the world (Stahl 1980, 95).

small-scale animal husbandry to one based on extensive cereal farming, becoming one of the greatest exporters of corn and wheat in the world (Roberts 1951, 9). This shift, coupled with other cultural and political factors had a dramatic impact on the country's social structure, opening up a gulf between the rural lower classes and the landowners, as well as between the countryside and the city.

Two moments were decisive in the transformation of agrarian relations in Romania. Firstly, the 1864 land reform that sealed a new agricultural arrangement, and secondly, the 1907 peasant revolts that signaled the crisis of this socio-economic system. The land reform was initially meant to free the Romanian peasantry from its feudal burdens and transform them into efficient small agricultural producers through a substantial transfer of land. After great political struggles, the law formally abolished serfdom and gave an average of thirty per cent of the lands to the peasantry, with the landowners receiving compensation. Yet, in reality the boyars were the actual beneficiaries, with the reform pushing the peasantry into a new regime of dependency (Chirot 1976, 125).² As David Turnock suggests, the reform was 'a cynical device to hold the peasantry on their small plots and keep them available as labourers on the *latifundia*; in this way more wheat could be pushed onto the foreign world markets' (Turnock 1986, 18). Despite the apparent democratisation of the state, seemingly finalised by the crowning of Carol I as Prince of Romania in 1866 and by the adoption of a liberal constitution modeled on that of Belgium, the life of the peasantry deteriorated, entering what some scholars have called a 'new serfdom' (Anderson 1974, 390-1; Dobrogeanu-Gherea 1910; Stahl 1980). Romanian agriculture relied on the work, animals and tools of a semi-serf peasantry managed by *arendași* (estate managers) who ran the estates for the absentee boyars. The pressures of exporting for the global capitalist market did not lead to a modernisation of agricultural production and machinery. Instead, it made the Romanian peasants doubly dependent – not only on the boyar, but also on the price of grain on the European commodity markets (Chirot 1989; Stahl 1980).³ As time passed, the average plot size held by individual peasants decreased through inheritance, leading to even greater poverty in the countryside.

By the late nineteenth century the term 'agrarian question' was widely used to describe the crisis and the heated debates about the need to reform the system (Turnock 1986, 23). The catalysts of this *prise de conscience* were the 1888-9 and the 1907 peasant revolts (Chirot and Ragin 1975, 428-444; Eidelberg 1974).⁴ These large-scale bloody uprisings brought a violent and enraged peasant to the centre of

² 'The terms of the reform ended the corveé and tithe obligations and finally established full private property rights over land. Former corveé peasants (*clăcați*) received title over their houses or garden plots and to varying amounts of farming land, according to the number of oxen they had' (Chirot 1976, 125).

³ Chirot and Stahl have shown that Ottoman domination meant that feudal relations were never fully instituted in the Romanian states. The peasantry was never totally enserfed either by the local boyars (because they did not have ownership of the land) or by the Ottomans directly (as they did not have direct control on the ground). Instead, the rural population was controlled by local boyars who had to supply Istanbul with the tithe collected from the agricultural producers (Chirot 1976; Stahl 1980).

⁴ After smaller local uprisings in 1888-9, the peasant masses joined in a great rebellion that spread rapidly, menacing landowners and estate managers (*arendași*) across the country. As the revolt grew in proportion, the Conservative government in Bucharest resigned giving way for the Liberals to step in. The new government sent the army into the villages who bloodily put down the rebellion (Eidelberg 1974, Chirot and Ragin 1975).

intellectual debates, leading to a wave of investigations of and positions relative to the causes of the revolts and the measures to be taken in the future. It was not until the First World War that King Ferdinand promised the long-awaited further redistribution of land to his peasant troops. After a long debate and several draft versions, the reform was passed in 1921, in a form that, yet again, was not in the peasants' best interest. These two historical moments, combined with other shifts in the academic world, in the villages and in the economic markets, brought the rural into the centre of public attention and facilitated the birth of specialised knowledge about the countryside through the sustained investigation of the peasantry by scholars of different disciplines.

Social Sciences, the State and the Agrarian Question

The agrarian question is essential to the understanding of the rise of social sciences in the Romanian Principalities. Eric Wolf has usefully suggested that the terms 'society' and 'social' only appear within and refer to a certain world order, a particular political system of thought, and to a specific state of economic development (Wolf 1988, 759).⁵ Thus, the Romanian concern with 'the social' is bound to the particular context of a modernising agrarian state and to the debates over the future of the peasantry that constituted the agrarian question. This context included a major contradiction: although the Romanian state created a regime of neo-serfdom in the countryside and continued to rule through old-style coercive practices, modern ideas about governance made their entry into the public sphere - in particular after the 1848 revolutions. Many of these ideas came with intellectuals trained abroad who either joined in the state apparatuses and administration or formed a public sphere from which they criticised the state. Either way, they became the producers of a great deal of specific knowledge about the country's population, the majority of which was formed by the peasantry: in 1899, 81 per cent of the Romanian population was rural (Chirot and Ragin 1975, 432). Thus, unlike in Western countries where academic disciplines such as statistics, demography, sociology and other social sciences came out of the need for states to know their subjects in order to govern them efficiently (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 137), in Romania, the academic interest in social issues and especially in the countryside appeared out of the negotiation between the façade of modern state politics, the reality of neo-serfdom and the pressure of the new intellectual elites that criticised the state and tried to propose models for change. In what follows, I will analyse the writing and research practices of three scholars who, unlike many of their contemporaries, engaged with the agrarian question and proposed direct fieldwork-based investigation of the countryside as the most reliable way to know and reform Romanian agriculture and its peasant population. My argument is that the socio-political context coupled with their experience of the field transformed the way these scholars looked at the countryside and the agrarian question from an economic to a social gaze.

Many of the different positions towards the countryside have been studied in depth (e.g. the *poporanism*, *sămănătorism*, *țărâanism* movements), but little or no attention has been given to the research methods that underlie these positions.⁶ Contemporary

⁵ Eric Wolf writes that 'it is important, therefore, to recognize that the concept of Society has a history, a historical function within a determinate context, in a particular part of the world' (Wolf 1988, 759).

⁶ For works on *sămănătorism* see Ornea 1971 and Hitchins 1994, 292-334; for *poporanism* see Alexandrescu 1999, 91-124. On sociology in the field see Stahl 2001 and Bădina 1966.

to the rise of Western social sciences and social work practices, the Romanian scholars mentioned in this paper went to the countryside, spoke to people, stayed in their homes and wrote accounts of their travels that incorporated and made sense of these experiences within a scientific framework. The authors discussed here illustrate the rise of a specific style of writing about the peasantry in Romania – the village monograph – and its variants from the regional to the national survey to the intensive study of a specific site.

In what follows, I will deal with the subtle changes in the mode of travel and in the writing of three Romanian social scientists: Ion Ionescu de la Brad, George Maior and Vasile Gîdei. They do not represent clear phases in the evolution of social research, but presences in a changing rural ‘field’ that actively demanded description and interpretation.

In the difficult task of selecting the most relevant examples for this paper, my main criterion was the use of direct means of investigation, which ruled out all other writers who preferred to use secondary sources in discussing the agrarian question. Related to this, I looked for a description of the fieldwork experience itself, preferably complete with an assessment of the methods used. Thus, Ionescu de la Brad, the pioneer of field research and of the rural monograph in Romania, was a simple choice. His work was also a generous source on methodology, travel and the experience of fieldwork in 1860s Romania. Unlike him, Maior is a less known and less researched scholar who was overshadowed by his more famous contemporary, P.S. Aurelian. I chose Maior because, unlike Aurelian,⁷ he conducted fieldwork and thus provided much greater insight into what it meant to undertake such research. Thus, in his *România agricolă*, Maior offers an overall account of the Romanian countryside that preserves the emotions of travel writing and discusses at length the experiences of his direct study. Finally, A.V. Gîdei was chosen to represent a trend of village monograph writing that first appeared in the early 1900s, in response to the state initiative of improving knowledge about the peasantry. Amongst many others, Gîdei stood out for producing a set-questionnaire for his research that was used as a model by other writers for all their own village monographs. His work allowed me to see behind the scenes of his research and to compare his questions to the end-result of the investigation.

Ion Ionescu de la Brad - the Pioneer of Field Research

Pioneering the use of statistics coupled with direct observation, Ion Ionescu de la Brad made one of the first scientific attempts to research the social changes that affected the Romanian peasantry and agriculture before and after the 1864 land reform. Financed by the Moldovan prince Mihai Sturza, he studied agronomy in France, where he honed his research techniques (Stahl 2001, 163-8). Throughout his entire life, Ionescu travelled extensively. Born in Moldova, he was forced to cross into Wallachia to escape possible arrest by the Russians after the 1848 revolution. Later he fled to Transylvania, but was afterwards exiled to Constantinople (Ionescu-Sisești 1943, ix-x). This mobility helped him adapt to different people and places, and trained his gaze for scientific travel. On his return to Wallachia, Ionescu was co-opted into the discussions about land reform and later became an agricultural inspector, a position that allowed him to travel to and study the countryside.

Before studying Romanian agriculture, Ionescu travelled within the Ottoman Empire. In the introduction to his *Excursiune agricolă în Dobrogea 1850* written for

⁷ See Aurelian, 1880.

the *Journal de Constantinople* during his exile in the Ottoman capital, Ionescu noted:

There are different ways to travel; I tried them all. The first trip, to the Vosgs, while I was studying agriculture in Roville, lasted 10 days and it was very difficult, as I walked carrying a rucksack on my back. (...) The best agricultural trips are conducted in this way, since, following the example of all famous agronomists, travel is the best way to study and improve agriculture. Thus, the French have never hesitated to designate inspectors who journey through France and even abroad and produce reports for the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture. They travel by coach, crossing the lands at great speed, stopping only in the most important ones, at the most famous agriculturists and best-known farms. I travelled like this in France, Germany, England, but I am not a partisan of this type of excursion. (...) In the case of Turkey, I think it is best to imitate the British Arthur Young, who is known as the king of farmers, and who used to travel in a jaunting cart though France during the Revolution; this way you can stop wherever you find interesting things and also you can go quickly through the places that are not worth great attention (Ionescu de la Brad n.d., 114-5).⁸

The quote reveals not only the importance of travel as a knowledge experience, but also the different modes of travel and their implication for the type of knowledge produced. Throughout his career, Ionescu opted for the middle way between the slow pace of the wanderer and the velocity of the coach. In this we can read that the scientist did not seek the picturesque in his travels, but true and relevant data. This is also the case for the village monographs Ionescu produced while he worked as an agricultural inspector in Romania.

The three in-depth regional studies, later known as his monographs, described two border counties and an inner one, Dorohoiu, Putna and Mehedinți.⁹ These writings were the product of extensive expedition-like travel, (*'din sat în sat'*), undertaken as a requirement of the new position with the state administration. There is nothing exotic or adventurous about his travels, which he called 'investigations'. His style is scientific and rational, like his choice of transport. They deal with the state of Romanian agriculture after the 1864 land reform, seen as the main branch of the national economy (Biji 1969, 45). Their scope is clearly enunciated:

To record what is and to suggest what should be (...) is the two-fold scope of the investigations that we are presenting in this book whilst having in sight the higher aim of improving of our agriculture, which in turn will raise the degree of civilisation of the Romanian people (Ionescu de la Brad 1866, vii).

Although he hoped that his work would be the start of an extensive survey that covered the entire country, Ionescu instead proposed a reduced geographic scale as that he was able to manage himself. His ambition that the Dorohoiu county monograph would be the first of thirty-two other volumes was never realised.

Unlike travel writing and amateur collecting, his monographs were based on previous specialised training and stressed the importance of objectivity in the encounter with the field, combining what Talal Asad calls the 'hard' language of statistics with the 'soft' language of ethnographic description (Asad 1994, 15). The format of his monographs revealed nevertheless a distrust of pure statistics, which

⁸ All translations are mine.

⁹ Ionescu 1866, 1868, 1869.

only provided an overview and a basis for his in-depth field analyses. The Dorohoiu county monograph contains two larger chapters - one dedicated to statistics and one to agriculture - complemented by two much shorter chapters on industry and trade respectively.

Of the entire work, the study of agriculture (Chapter II) represents the minute transcription of Ionescu's travels, where he described the country's main farming estates area by area, replicating the route of his journey. The author analysed agriculture as a socio-economic relationship between the landlords, estate managers and peasants. His gaze designated all rural dwellers as economic agents, cultivators engaged in a productive activity, assessing their efficiency in working the land. The author did not judge their life style, culture or morals, but only considered their contributions to the country's economic progress. Therefore, in his effort to reveal the ways the 1864 reform had been implemented in the field, Ionescu understood the rising agrarian question primarily in economic terms, subordinating social relations to his main objective. Nevertheless, he was very critical of the abuses and greed of the large estate owners, the poor results of the land reform, and the poverty in which the peasantry was living (Ionescu de la Brad 1868, 289-293).

To conclude, Ionescu set the trend in travelling and writing about Romanian agriculture and country life, both through the format of his work, the monograph, and through the problematic addressed (Stahl 2001, 152). A pioneer of fieldwork and experimentation in farming and education, Ionescu's enthusiasm was curtailed by the state and by politics. If his writings were stimulated by the land reform and the promise of positive change in the countryside, those of his followers responded to the emergency of the agrarian question and to the waves of peasant revolts that announced it. His relationship to the state was different from that in countries where knowledge about the economy and society was actively used to raise the productivity and welfare of the population alongside governing and policing it more tightly.

George Maior - the Exploration of Agrarian Romania

About thirty years later, in 1895, the Transylvanian agronomist George Maior, one of Ionescu's many admirers, published the first edition of his *România agricolă*, an economic survey of rural Romania, aimed at understanding the causes of the 1888-9 peasant revolts.¹⁰ This work, based on his extensive experience of and travel through the countryside as an agricultural inspector, combined his direct observations presented under the heading *O excursiune economică și darea de seamă* (An economic journey and its account) with an analysis of the causes and potential solutions of the 'agrarian problem' in the Romanian Kingdom. Maior's initiative responded to a different need than that of in-depth regional monographs, the need for a bird's eye view of Romanian economy (especially agriculture). In competition with his more famous colleague P.S.Aurelian, who worked on the presentation of the Romanian economy at the 1867 World Fair, Maior covered the same extensive geography, but used direct observation as his main method of study and addressed a Romanian public, rather than a foreign one.

The account of his travels is particularly interesting when contrasted with Ionescu's investigations. Travelling by train, a much faster modern vehicle and using the coach only when needed, Maior also went systematically 'from station to station' following the example of his predecessor.

¹⁰ A revised and added second edition of the book was reissued in 1911.

I got on and off at each station, visiting estates right and left along the railway lines from București-Călărași-Fetești, from Mizil to Focșani, from Buzău to Brăila, Galați, Tecuci and Bârlad (Maior 1911, 101).

This new means of transport points towards the advent of a professional travel-for-research. It also brings about a new set of embodied practices of reaching, connecting and experiencing places that sets the other modes of travel in a different light. Maior portrayed the coach alternative as more dangerous and exposed to the forces of nature, also separating the near-countryside from the remote one. From a social perspective, the train journey itself functioned as a meeting place. For example, on his way back from the Bărăgan estates, he had to listen to the complaints of a Greek estate manager about his disillusion with agriculture (Maior 1911, 162).

Maior's travels translated into a constructed geography of Romanian social reality. By visiting all social categories of the Romanian countryside – *proprietari* (landowners), *arendași* (estate managers), *mocani* (Transylvanian shepherds), *răzeși* (free peasants), *țărani* (land-bound peasants) and *târлаși* (landless manual workers), the professional agronomist dealt with each social category in turn, thus creating a distinct hierarchy according to their wealth and social status. His visits have a Dantesque quality, as they reorganise space according to social categories. Thus, multiple geographical locations correspond to a specific social group, creating certain microclimates where the impressions of the traveller dictate a general mood and even weather. For example, it is not by chance that in the section about estate managers, who Maior strongly dislikes, the analysis is interrupted by the description of a snowstorm in the Bărăgan field. (Maior 1911, 160-1).

Maior recorded change in more moralistic terms than Ionescu, who saw hard work and entrepreneurship as the mainstay of economic progress, and praised all diligent agriculturists regardless of their social background. Like many of those who wrote after the peasant revolts, Maior viewed change as decline and could not avoid recording the wretched living conditions of the peasantry. Although he did not ignore the fatal flaws of the 1864 land reform, his travels to the boyars' estates conveyed a sense of loss, the waning of the great landed aristocracy and the rise of a class of *parvenus* – the estate managers – whose ascendance on the social ladder was an unfortunate but irreparable tendency. Within the peasantry, Maior identified the layering of this social group, drawing a sharp distinction between the free peasants (*răzeși*) and the rest of the peasantry (*țărani*). He glorified the *răzeși* as the 'backbone of the Romanian population', in contrast with the amorphous land-bound masses of peasants living in a state of in 'moral and physical decay' (Maior 1911, 175). This analysis brings forth two important categories which would later become an essential in analysing the state of this social group: the distinction between different categories of peasantry and the alarming degeneration of the land-bound peasants (*clăcași*) especially. Struggling with why 'a peaceful and long-suffering creature' like the Romanian peasant could turn so violent and fierce, the agronomist portrayed them as the victim of their social and material conditions (Maior 1911, 3-4). This analysis of the different social strata in relation to land ownership and its interpretation in moral terms illustrates the rise of a sociological gaze of the Romanian countryside.

Unlike Ionescu, who was a pioneer investigator of the countryside, Maior wrote in a time of fierce intellectual competition over knowledge about the 'rural question'. Therefore, he felt the need to clarify his approach against all those who 'write and write a lot about things they have never seen, or copy from some one else's work

(...)' (possibly referring to P.S. Aurelian). His travels allowed him to write about what he *saw* (Maior 1911, 103). In his view, travel provided authenticity, which led to the truth (*scrutarea adevărului*) that lay bare in front of a trained observer's eye. Maior's constant reference to another 'home' – Transylvania – that he often took as a model in his comparisons also shows his use of the half-native, half-foreigner point of view as a proof of objectivity and distance from a familiar object of study.

His type of travel, that of the lonesome professional exploring the social structure of the countryside with its complex layering, allowed a comparison both between different geographical areas and between Romania and the adjacent Romanian-inhabited territories.¹¹ Yet, unlike Ionescu who understood the need for detailed studies of manageable geographical units, Maior remained very much on the surface, unable to go into much greater depth. Less systematic than Ionescu's and more impregnated with the fictional elements Maior wanted to avoid, the latter's work also reveals the struggle between specialised sociological writing and travel writing, somehow also announcing the rise of the realist novel in Romanian literature. Despite these shortcomings, *România agricolă* focuses clearly on the social classes present in the countryside, also relating them to the past social organisation (*stările agrare din trecut*). With this, Maior took a step away from Ionescu's monographs, adding a quasi-sociological interpretation of the agrarian question directly related to the social structure of agrarian Romania.

A.V.Gîdei's Village Monograph - the Micro-Vision

Apart from the specialised travel to the countryside, Ionescu's influence was felt in a particular style of writing about the peasantry – the monograph. Monographic writing as a tool for social research became widespread as a result of the peasant revolts that started in 1888 and climaxed in 1907. The fear of social unrest led the Minister of Interior, Vasile Lascăr, to initiate a large data collection project focused on rural life in 1903 (Stahl 2001, 168; Lascăr 1912, 817). Instead of trained statisticians, he planned to use the village intellectuals as informants and data collectors. Focused not on a region, but on a single village, the monograph was to provide the ground-data and details for a macro-analysis of the generalised 'peasant problem'. The format was standard, containing separate sections with respective sets of questions. Although it centred on the peasant as a *homo oeconomicus*, crucially it also included information about morality, culture and hygiene.

Vasile Gîdei's monograph of the village of Bragadiru was part of this project, but offered a particularly interesting addition: a section on how to teach-yourself-to-write-a-monograph 'for all those who come in contact with the peasantry and were interested in its welfare' (Gîdei 1904). Much like the apodemic texts produced by humanist travel theorists, it offered a grid for how to look at the countryside and study it (Gîdei 1905, 7-25). The monograph and its accompanying textbook show a different attitude to travel from Ionescu's or Maior's. Although Gîdei himself travelled to Bragadiru, a village near the capital, the great majority of the monographs requested by the Home Office (*Ministerul de Interne*) were to be written by people on the ground and thus required little or no travel at all. Yet, if getting to the village became unimportant and was hardly mentioned, travelling inside the village and taking a certain 'gazing' distance from the reality under scrutiny became essential. This new 'monographic gaze' isolated the peasantry and fixed them in a place and a

¹¹ See Maior 1906.

social condition of their own.

In the introduction of his own model-monograph, Gîdei provided clear indications of the time-scale of his research and his mode of travelling inside the village. His visit took eighteen days of fieldwork and seven days of archive work. Like those who travelled extensively (who went from station to station), the monograph writer travelled 'from house to house', spending about half an hour with each family, trying to get as intimate as possible with them. This is why the author added an entire section about the tactics and ethics of dealing with the 'informants', i.e. the peasantry. Explaining that a detailed survey was a delicate matter ('*o ancheta amănunțită e o cestiune delicată*'), Gîdei warned his trainee-writer that the peasant, especially the peasant woman, avoided telling the truth and taught them how to use the fear and superstitions of the villagers to convince them to be honest.

I endeavoured to make the peasants be more diligent in their statements. I therefore made use either of their shame or of their superstitious fear of jinxing, that he who falsely laments his poverty will call poverty upon himself. I took no mercy on those who I caught telling lies and I ridiculed them in front of their neighbours (...) by making jokes, which they were quite sensitive to (Gîdei 1905, 34-5).

The door-to-door fieldwork experience was not without adventures. Just like the weather could invade, torment and harm the travelling body, entering people's homes could be equally painful. Since these monographs recorded not only statistical or economic data, but also issues about peasant life, hygiene, food, education and morals, the encounter with the real peasant opened a dazzling sensorium for the outside researcher. Gîdei noted:

In 40-45 of the 58 houses I noted down as dirty it was impossible to linger for more than a minute. As soon as I opened the door, a stench similar to that of a dead body would arrest me in the doorway, so I had to retreat, despite my determination to enter and look everywhere. I stayed for longer only in one house to note down what I needed; but I didn't have the courage to repeat this experience (Gîdei 1905, 166).

A few points are worth mentioning about the structure and style of monographic writing. In the same way as Ionescu's regional monograph, the structure follows the same pattern, combining an overview of the history, geography, and population of the area with a systematic presentation of the economic situation (agriculture, industry, trade, road infrastructure). Another similarity to Ionescu lies in the emphasis on objectivity and accuracy in recording facts and numbers, as well as on the central role of the peasant budget, and the importance of the agricultural contractual arrangements.

The main difference appears in the scope of the study. Unlike Ionescu (and even Maior) who focused on agriculture and the agents of agricultural production, Gîdei dealt with a corpus of social issues that covered various aspects of peasant life, ranging from the material conditions to morals, culture and spirituality. The plan as such gives more weight to the material life of the peasantry, subordinating the other aspects to it (Gîdei 1905, 3). Yet, the monograph approached the peasant not only as an economic producer, but also as a social category. For the author, the ills of the countryside sprung from the interconnection of many factors – material, historic, political, social, spiritual, etc – and the relationship amongst peasants as well as

between them and other social groups. Highlighting the similarities between Gîdei's project and the interwar Monographic School of Bucharest, Henri H. Stahl noted that the Bragadiru monograph tackled more than just the agrarian question: 'it was trying to understand a sociological problem, namely the laws that governed people's lives' (Stahl 2001, 178).

To sum up, the village monograph as exemplified in Gîdei's project systematised the 'rural sociological gaze', introducing a new element into ethnographic fieldwork, what Asad called 'a preoccupation with local conditions as an experiential whole' (Asad 1994, 1). This holistic view of the peasantry as social was shaped by the immediacy of the agrarian question that in time had become the peasant question – snowballing to include all aspects of village life. These aspects of the problem, expressed in a descriptive and at times narrative way, did not harden into statistical data despite the main scope of the monographic project. Although it contributed to a *prise de conscience* about the ills of the countryside pointing to their material source, this localised approach resisted generalisation and, more importantly, was not used by the government as a basis for action or reform. Instead, it contributed to the formation of amateur and professional practices of investigating rural life that impacted on the development of Romanian society.

A Short Comparative Analysis

In comparing the three authors in relation to the agrarian question, one can see some consistency that can be attributed to their direct methods of investigation. Going into the field and visiting people, villages and estates is reflected in the details and depth these scholars added to their studies of the Romanian countryside. Their travels problematised the great differences between regions and social groups, while allowing some degree of generalisation. The geographical range they proposed (regional, national and local) also indicates the different levels on which the agrarian problem was addressed by intellectuals, but not truly by the state – Ionescu attempted the manageable size of the region, Maior adopted a more generalised approach, while Gîdei limited his scope to one single village. In both the first and the last of cases there existed an underlying unfulfilled promise for the state to designate more scholars to compile similar monographs for the entire country. This in turn shows the ambiguous position of these writers in between the state apparatus and the object of their academic studies, the countryside. It is clear now that the agrarian question was not to be solved by these studies alone, but it is also clear that the Romanian state made uneven and almost insignificant efforts to use social science to improve its governance or the wellbeing of the peasantry.

Beyond their similar point of view and shared methods, Ionescu, Maior and Gîdei produced individual visions of rural Romania that differed on topics such as the agrarian question and its resolution. In relation to the first point, Ionescu's monographs coincide with the rise of the agrarian question after the 1864 land reform. They centre on agriculture, but also discuss the social outcomes that the implementation of this new law had had. Unlike Ionescu, Maior and Gîdei grappled with the agrarian question at its height, responding to the crisis created by the peasant revolts. Thus, the social side of the question becomes more visible, as the social structure of the countryside becomes meaningful. As mentioned above, Maior proposed a socioscape of the countryside instead of a regional treatment of Romanian agriculture, thus pointing to the social changes that had led to the current situation – the dawn of the great (aristocratic) landlords, the appearance of the rapacious and

ignorant estate manager, and the impoverishment of the enserfed peasantry. In his critique Maior showed how this social structure acted as a vicious circle and blocked the progress of Romanian agriculture. Overall, for him, the 'agrarian question' appeared as a socio-economic issue.

Gîdei's monograph introduces many more dimensions to the study of the countryside than those of Maior and Ionescu. Getting much closer to the peasants than the other two scholars, he proposed a site-specific investigation of all aspects of village life based on a standardised all-inclusive questionnaire. His writings were not a traveller's observation notes jotted down while passing through different places, like Maior and Ionescu, but the minute scrutiny of the social microcosm of the village. This holistic view differs from the previous research and comes closer to the sociological investigations undertaken in the interwar period by the Monographic School of Bucharest.

With regards to their conclusions and solutions for the future, the three scholars also held different views. Ionescu believed that organised scholarly education of the peasantry and of all other agricultural agents was one of the keys to overcoming the difficult situation in the countryside. A few decades later, Maior was disillusioned with the attempts to use formal education to enlighten the countryside. Instead, he believed the best way to improve Romanian agriculture and wellbeing in the countryside was through colonisation and cultural exchange, criticising the regime for its closed-mindedness and disinterest in models for progress (Maior 1911, 35-43). By the first decade of the twentieth century, Gîdei's conclusions indicate that the regime as such was to blame for the poverty and its diverse manifestations in the village he described – the fragmentation of land, the harsh work arrangements, the lack of cattle, the cost of land, the peasants' lack of initiative correlated to that of education, and the low standards of health and hygiene.

Conclusions

This chapter has dealt with the two main issues: the development of rural research and the transformation of the agrarian question from an economic into a social issue in pre-war Romania. By concentrating on fieldwork as a type of research involving specific practices such as travel and writing, I have explored how direct interaction with the countryside contributed to the development of a specific discourse about it. In the three examples presented above I have looked at two main practices: travel and writing as the opposite ends of the research process. The examples showed how the spatial relationship between the centres of knowledge and the countryside saw a tendency to get closer to the peasant, to reach into their intimacy, to scrutinise not only the economic relations, but also all aspects of peoples' lives. In terms of writing, this translated into a shift from extensive travel to intensive and detailed monographs, which in turn corresponded to the transformation of the economic gaze into a social gaze that progressively bound material conditions with morality, health and culture. As explained above, this last change related to the impact of the social and economic reality on the researchers. If the first wave of studies was triggered by the land reform - promise of progress in agriculture and consequently in the welfare of the agricultural producers - the second was linked to the peasant uprisings and reflected the failure of the reform and the degenerating effect on the rural population.

In a regime of neo-serfdom, knowledge about the population did not end coercive governing practices, but neither was it suppressed by the state. In the public sphere, it led to fierce intellectual debates, while in practical politics it supported or had little

influence over a biased and corrupt legislation. Nevertheless, an overall transformation of the ideas and knowledge about the countryside had occurred by the first decade of the twentieth century, leading to the development of a sociological way of seeing the countryside that would shape the development of Romanian social sciences in the interwar period.

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The Role of ‘Agrarian Overpopulation’ in German Spatial and Economic Planning for Southeastern Europe before and during the Second World War

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Although concerns about the global threat of ‘overpopulation’, especially in less developed countries, diminished after the 1994 World Population Conference in Cairo (Connelly 2008, 381), ‘population problems’ continue to attract attention from researchers and politicians. Discourses on so-called ‘excess populations’ have enjoyed great popularity in times of crises, as demonstrated by recent debates over ‘the superfluous’ in the socioeconomic systems of even the most developed countries (see Forrester 1999, Bauman 2004).

Population sciences have traditionally played a crucial role connecting expert knowledge and policy making. The production of scientific knowledge about human population dynamics and control has functioned as a tool of economic and social planning aimed at achieving specific objectives, as with birth control campaigns of the 1960s (see Connelly 2008). On the one hand, scientists diagnose ‘population problems’, on the other, they propose economic or political ‘solutions’, which they then implement as ‘experts’ in state administrative positions (Lausecker 2006, 134). Politics and science have continually relied on one another to promote their respective interests (Ash 2002, 32-3). Recent historical studies have demonstrated that since their emergence, normative terms such as ‘overpopulation’ and ‘underpopulation’ have been used to naturalise and legitimate economic and population planning.

Susanne Heim and Götz Aly have pointed out that the widespread assumption of ‘agrarian overpopulation’ in Eastern Europe among German experts played an essential role in all deportation and resettlement plans during the Second World War. The scientific concept of overpopulation provided National Socialist spatial and economic planners with a means of legitimating the starvation of ‘many tens of millions of the superfluous’ in the occupied Soviet Union, lest they live off Europe’s food supplies (Aly and Heim 1991, 372-373).

In the following pages I analyse the role played by the scientific concept of ‘agrarian overpopulation’ in German spatial and economic plans for Southeastern Europe before and during the Second World War (for the ideologically loaded terms ‘Balkans’ and ‘Southeastern Europe’ see Ristović 1995 and Todorova 1997. Here they refer mainly to Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria). First I will present a short history of the concept of ‘agrarian overpopulation’ and explain what it meant to German economists. Then I discuss the degree to which this concept was used to measure economic development and to justify German economic objectives in Southeastern Europe. Finally, I analyse how the debate unfolded and how contemporaneous discourses (e.g. about ‘race’) influenced it. The material used for this paper originates primarily from German research and surveys from before and during the Second World War. All translations are the author’s own if not stated otherwise.

Constructing the ‘Population Problem’ in Southeastern Europe

The term ‘overpopulation’ has a long tradition in the social, political and economic sciences. It was coined by the Anglican clergyman and political economist Thomas R. Malthus. In 1798, he published his *Essay on the Principle of Population*, in which he expressed his fears that the rate of human reproduction (especially of the poor) would constantly overstretch that of food production for subsistence. Subsequently, the concept of overpopulation has been subject to academic controversy – a famous opponent of Malthus being Karl Marx – and was developed further by Malthus’s supporters (for a documentary history of the population discourse see, Simons 1998, Tobin 2004). At the turn to the twentieth century, economists in

Russia used the term 'agrarian overpopulation' to explain the low productivity and 'backwardness' of Russian agriculture (Postnikov 1891). Economists elsewhere were influenced by this debate as well as the theory of 'optimum population', which was widely discussed during the interwar period (Bashford 2007, 180-3). They began using the term 'agrarian overpopulation' to address alleged or actual grievances in the Southeastern European economies (especially Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria), and it became widely known as the region's socioeconomic 'problem number one'. Population scientists no longer used the relationship between population growth and food production as a decisive criterion for 'overpopulation'. The term 'agrarian overpopulation' referred to 'excess eaters' who lived off agriculture without producing significant surpluses (Heim and Schaz 1996, 48), and with this relative term, even 'under populated countries' could be locally 'overpopulated' in rural areas.

Historically, experts have tended to pose population questions dramatically and with a grave sense of urgency. This helps explain why economists did not merely study straightforwardly economic problems in interwar Southeastern Europe, e.g. lack of capital and skilled workers, extensive land use, endemic poverty, and land fragmentation. Rather, every political or economic crisis could ultimately be redefined as a 'population problem' (Heim and Schaz 1996, 10). For economists engaged with and promoting the concept of 'agricultural overpopulation', the 'problem' was clear: too many people lived off the land. Nearly 80 % of the working population in Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria made their living in agriculture, but agricultural output was very low in comparison with western, northern, and central Europe. Farmers' children stayed on the land, but their work was not needed for agricultural production. When economists compared the economic systems of agriculture, traditional family farming and subsistence production in Southeastern Europe rated poorly next to the mechanised agricultural sector of the industrial West. Hence, economists obtained numbers that deviated from the standard they had defined for their purported 'population problem'.

Numerous publications blamed rapid population growth for 'agrarian overpopulation' in Southeastern Europe without any further explanation. In contrast to population scientists, the peasant population considered children to be an asset, rather than a liability. What the former called 'surplus population' could, for the latter, soon begin to contribute economically to the household unit (Christ 1940, 390). In fact, the Balkan states had experienced rapid population growth during the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Migration, the most successful 'outlet' for 'overpopulation' had been restricted to emigration destinations overseas. This, and the lack of employment opportunities in industry, allegedly kept this 'surplus population' in the countryside as 'excess eaters'. Economists also blamed post-First World War land reforms for subdividing arable land into tiny, unproductive plots. They also diagnosed problems of population increase compounded by the usual practice of land splitting through inheritance, which inevitably led to land fragmentation in all Southeastern European economies.

When German scientists turned their attention to the quantitative 'population problem' in Southeastern Europe (for the qualitative 'problem', see Turda and Weindling 2007) they could rely on the concept of 'overpopulation', which was already a broadly and internationally accepted term, while keeping in mind the political economic aims of Germany in the region. In 1936, the economist Mijo Mirković from the Law Faculty in Subotica wrote in the *Slavonic and East European Review* that at that time, the greatest challenge for Yugoslavia, economically, culturally and politically, was the question of what to do about the 'surplus population' (Mirković 1936, 389).

The Relations between the Scientific Concept of Overpopulation and German Spatial and Economic Planning for Southeastern Europe

During the Great Depression, economic theory veered away from the shaky global economy and towards economic autarky via intensification and spatial expansion of local economies, e.g. the US-American ‘Grand Area’ or the Japanese ‘Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere’ (Dieterich 1990, 74-116). Such conceptualisations of greater economic areas were theoretically articulated strategic objectives, rather than concretely implemented pragmatic programmes. They envisaged the establishment of a zone of influence big enough to ensure the provision of foodstuffs and raw materials inside a united economic block. Peripheral countries in the zone had to adjust hierarchically their production structure to the needs of the centre and provide it, in a ‘complementary economic manner’ (*ergänzungswirtschaftlich*), with food and natural resources. Simultaneously, peripheral countries had to serve as an outlet for industrially produced exports emanating from the centre. Ideally, the independent development of countries would be averted in favour of a hierarchically stratified division of labour (Kahrs 1992, 9-11; Drews 2004, 193-194). Through numerous publications, the German version of this concept (*Großwirtschaftsraum*) was widely disseminated in the public discourse in Germany from 1930 onwards. It was coined by the entanglement of racist views with massive state interventions in economic life and, under the slogan *Mitteleuropa*, paved the way for economic, political and military expansion (Drews 2004, 195-197).¹

In nearly all German socioeconomic discussions of the Balkan states at the time, the predominant mode of peasant subsistence farming was criticised by experts for preventing Southeastern European economies from sufficiently integrating into the *Großwirtschaftsraum* (Gutberger 1996, 422; see Oberländer 1943, 420). In subsistence farming, the rural population produced foods and other goods mainly for local consumption and acquired other products by bartering, i.e. without the use of money. This traditional system resisted subjugation by division of labour and rationalisation; it obstructed economic exploitation and penetration (Heim and Aly 1991, 15), and was severely criticised for being unproductive and for resisting modernisation. Moreover, German experts suggested that peasants had themselves to blame for their dire economic situation, which was attributed to the peasantry’s notoriously high fertility rate. The ‘problem of the agrarian overpopulation’ in Southeastern Europe was highlighted as the region’s most pressing problem, on which solutions to all other problems hinged.

A December 1940 report issued by the *Institut für Weltwirtschaft* (World Economy Institute) in Kiel stated that agricultural ‘primitivism’ was central to the ‘question of work force abundance in Southeastern Europe’. Agrarian workers misused their abundant time to manufacture domestic commodities, which were fabricated industrially in other regions. Shoes, clothes, and farm implements were locally produced by very primitive methods on individual family farms. Traditionally, local custom had tried to remedy or conceal latent unemployment through the creation of rural feasts and festivals. According to German experts, lack of work was only partially observable; individuals were neither fully employed nor fully unemployed. Rather, as a rule, everybody worked less than they should and nobody worked enough in the economists’ opinion (Institut für Weltwirtschaft 1940, 26-27).

¹ For German plans in Central Europe, see Meyer 1955. For German economic policy in Southeastern Europe, see Mitrović 1977; Wendt 1981; Sundhaussen 1983, Schlarp 1986; Ristović 1991; Grenzbaach 1988; Seckendorf 1992, 18-101; McElligott 1994; Drews 2004. For a contemporary British perspective on German economic policy in the Balkans, see Einzig 1938.

Although ‘overpopulation’ was well concealed and not outwardly apparent, there could be no doubt about its existence (Institut für Weltwirtschaft 1941, 41).

The thorn in the side of economists, when they referred to ‘agrarian overpopulation’, was clear: the surplus of agricultural production decreased as agrarian population increased (Obradovitsch 1939, 62; Ahlgrimm 1939, 17). The predicted upshot was that Germany would not be able to import enough agricultural products from Southeastern European countries where an estimated population growth of 200,000 individuals annually would lead to a perpetually increasing local demand for wheat to feed urban and rural populations. This meant that there would be no agricultural products left for export (Rothmann 1940, 39). Grain surpluses were not only defined in terms of yield, but also in terms of the degree of local consumption by a perpetually growing population. National Socialist economic planners stressed this as a key factor on which to base units of measurement for economic policy making in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union. As Germany intended to obtain by any possible means the grain it needed, local consumption by the Soviet population had to be decreased. The anticipated famine was built into economic planning, which accorded with extermination policies (Gerlach 1999, 49).

In 1939, German economist Ernst Wagemann (for his work and life see Tooze 1999) remarked that Malthus had failed to foresee the impressive progress of technology and that Malthusian pessimism was not shared by population policy makers in the Balkans. Wagemann agreed with the prediction, that nineteenth century developments in Western and Central Europe would be re-enacted in the Balkans in the twentieth century. He also shared the view that in Southeastern Europe industrialisation represented the best remedy for ‘agrarian overpopulation’. Thus Wagemann was appreciative of Southeastern European efforts to industrialise, and supported the theory of unequal exchange between agrarian and industrial states as advanced by Mihail Manoilescu.² Nevertheless, Wagemann rejected such an industrialisation policy, for apparently apolitical reasons, as uneconomic (Wagemann 1939, 65-70). Rather, he argued – along with numerous German colleagues – for agricultural intensification and rationalisation as a way of solving the ‘problem of agrarian overpopulation’ (Wagemann 1939, 74-75; Zeck 1939, 28; Leibrock 1941, 352). If Southeastern Europe were at all to industrialise, then it should be in the form of ‘moderate industrialisation’ (Krugmann 1939, 27), i.e. via the establishment of a processing industry for agricultural products. At the same time, demographer Elisabeth Pfeil praised German industrialisation as a means of confronting Germany’s problem of population growth in the nineteenth century (Pfeil 1939, 16-17).

The economist and settlement scientist Hans-Jürgen Seraphim³ pessimistically warned that anticipated industrialisation would not necessarily reduce ‘rural excess pressure’ (*landwirtschaftlicher Bevölkerungsüberdruck*; H.-J. Seraphim 1943, 104) in Southeastern Europe. Even if maximally stimulated, the region’s industrial sector would always lag behind its agricultural sector. According to Seraphim, the solution lay in the enhancement and development of agriculture as well as in mining and processing industries. In this scheme, advantageous preconditions included the natural environment and the existence of an assiduous and undemanding population, whereas disadvantages included lack of capital, technical and economic backwardness, a dearth of qualified workers, and the antagonistic attitude of farmers toward the market (104-5). Southeastern Europe was meant to adjust its

² Manoilescu was a pro-German Romanian economist and politician who also published on ‘agrarian overpopulation’ in Southeastern Europe. For his theory of unequal exchange and its successful dissemination in Latin America, see Love 1980, 86.

³ From 1936 until 1941, Seraphim directed the *Institut für Mittel- und Südosteuropäische Wirtschaftsforschung* [Institute for Central- and Southeastern Europe Economic Research] of Leipzig University and afterwards headed the East Europe Institute in Wrocław until 1944.

industrialisation to suit the needs of Germany. Above all, Southeastern European states were meant to foster agricultural and forestry processing industries and mining (122-3). Seraphim argued that turning away from wheat and grain production and extensive livestock husbandry was in the interest of both Germany and its Southeastern trade partners. He approved of the mutual set of interests that existed - especially in the agricultural domain. If Southeastern Europe realigned its agricultural policies to accord with those of Germany, then all participants would ultimately recognise their common goals and agendas (407).

Franz Ahlgrimm, who ran the agricultural economic research department of the German *Stickstoff-Syndikat* (Nitrogen Syndicate), recommended to intensify cultivation, which would in turn demand an increased expenditure of human labour. Intensive cultivation would have more significance for the solution of the 'population problem' than enhancing knowledge about cultivation methods and facilities. The latter would increase the amount of production per day, but not the number of work days per unit area (Ahlgrimm 1939, 22, 26). The solutions proposed by Seraphim and Ahlgrimm corresponded with Germany's need for labour-intensive industrial and oil crops and raw materials.

Germany was very keen on raising the agricultural productivity of Southeastern Europe. In June 1942, Hans-Jürgen Seraphim wrote that Germany intended to raise the delivery capacity of the Balkan countries, because its need for food and raw materials would soon dramatically increase. Moreover, the general intensification and expansion of certain neglected branches of agricultural production would comply with German and Southeastern European interests. Otherwise it would not be possible to overcome the underdeveloped agrarian structure, which could not absorb countless 'unproductive eaters' (*unproduktive Esser*; H.-J. Seraphim 1942, 406). It was crucial for the region to produce those goods for which there already existed secure sales markets (406-7). In other words, Southeastern Europe should produce food and goods in accordance with Germany's will and needs.

Germany's claim to be *the* natural trade partner of Southeastern Europe was advanced within the population discourse. Countless German publications repeated that Germany was the only possible beneficial trade partner of Southeastern Europe. Amongst others, this conclusion was justified through the phenomenon of 'agricultural overpopulation' in the Balkans. In 1934, Anton Reithinger, director of the national economy department of *IG Farben*, remarked that Italy's population would grow almost as rapidly as that of Southeastern Europe's agrarian areas.⁴ The fact that Italy included those areas in its political economic sphere of interest circumscribed the set of problems and future difficulties associated with Italy's Balkan policy (Reithinger 1934a, 554). Due to its industrial economic structure, Germany's claim to include Southeastern Europe in its political economic sphere of interest was presented, by Reithinger, as more legitimate than that of Italy.

At the same time, German economists characterised the role of Germany in the Balkans as that of a 'development aid worker'. In his study, *The German Economy and Southeastern Europe*, Hans Zeck, research associate at the *Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* (Southeastern Europe Society), effusively praised Germany's role in the economic development of Southeastern Europe.⁵ For example, the economic agreement of March 1939 between Romania and Germany would effectively eliminate the possibility of future unemployment in Romania. The existing 'excessive pressure of the agricultural population' would be absorbed, offering a good living standard for everybody (Zeck 1939, 47). In accordance with this agreement, Romania would deliver a large part of its annual harvest and raw materials to

⁴ For the special interest of *IG Farben* in Southeastern Europe and its role as the driving force behind an important soya bean cultivation project in Romania, see Drews 2004.

⁵ For the *Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* and their planning for Southeastern Europe, see Orlow 1968, although the work is outdated and overstates the role of the Southeastern Europe Society.

Germany. In return, Germany assured its support for agricultural rationalization. Unsurprisingly, the first point of the agreement pertained to the 'development and control' of Romania's agrarian production (Kahrs 1992, 16-17; for the background of the agreement, see Drews 1995, 83-99).

Most German researchers were sceptical about industrialisation efforts of Southeastern European states in the interwar period and instead argued for urgent agricultural intensification of agriculture. From a present-day perspective, the gross underestimation of the agricultural sector's contribution to Southeastern European economic development on the part of Balkan politicians is not contested (see Sundhaussen 1989 and 1996; Calic 1994). In this context however, the question arises in how far German scientists were influenced by political objectives. The following can be read in the report 'Regarding Germany's future economic policy towards Southeastern Europe' (Jan. 1941) from the *Forschungsstelle für Wehrwirtschaft* (Research Center for Defense Economy):

[...] we have a strong interest in our neighbours' economies being highly productive. Beyond that, however, we must be intent on the largest possible surplus production of those countries, which is why we must not foster a development that would elevate the local standard of living at the expense of the surplus production available to us. That would amount to the exact opposite of what we must aim at for economic-political and defence-economical reasons. [...] The danger that the present export surpluses would dwindle to nothingness through generous development work seems the more realistic as the agricultural delivery capacity of the Southeast is based on an exceptionally low living standard (*Forschungsstelle für Wehrwirtschaft* 1941, 27-8).

The preparation survey to the planned 'General Report on Southeastern Europe' of the *Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* from May 1942 openly referred to the preservation of the agrarian structure of Balkan countries in the German *Großraumwirtschaft* (Greater Economic Area):

Those who choose to override the views of the Southeastern states should expect their opposition, especially when these states have reason to believe that incorporation into the *Grossraum* would result in the perpetuation of their agrarian character. The domestic political forces of this country simply imagine that given their ideology as well as their agricultural overpopulation, they ought to insist on industrialization (*Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* 1942, 126).

Hence, industrialisation should not necessarily become an integral part of the credo of Balkan countries. Rather, the *Grossraum* might offer alternative ways of absorbing 'agricultural overpopulation' in the future, e.g., through 'itinerant workers' or 'resettlement to the East, etc' (*Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* 1942, 126). When hundreds of thousands of Serbs were expelled or murdered by the *Ustaša* in the framework of a new demographic order in the Independent State of Croatia, the national economy department of *IG Farben* saw therein a constructive contribution to the solution of the 'overpopulation question' in that country (Aly and Heim 1991, 362-3).

The *Mitteuropäische Wirtschaftstag* (Central European Economic Conference, see Seckendorf 2001; Freytag 2010) considered the industrialisation of the Balkan region less of a problem than the majority of its members from German industry, who feared the loss of a sales market for their industrial products. The industrialisation of Southeastern Europe would doubtlessly entail these countries' autarkic efforts to dissolve economic ties with industrial Germany; but these dangers were minor, because new and increased needs would continue to appear on both sides (*Mitteuropäischer Wirtschaftstag* 1939, 22).

In his December 1940 report, Otto Donner from the *Forschungsstelle für Wehrwirtschaft* stated that the *Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftstag* argued for raising Southeastern Europe's purchasing power in order to increase its ability to export products and German marketing opportunities. But he asked if increased purchasing power – i.e. augmented domestic consumption – would not lead to the disappearance of available surplus for export. Hence, it would be better for Germany to draw off larger numbers of workers from Southeastern Europe, e.g. 1.5 million annually for 10 months each. This would also relieve 'excessive population pressure' in Southeastern areas. In terms of 'agrarian overpopulation' in these areas, such a withdrawal would probably result in a reduction of 'eaters', but not of work performance. Workers could be used, e.g. in the construction of highways in Germany. However, the employment of 'Balkan people' in German agriculture should be refused due to the 'danger' of 'infiltration'. An added bonus was that when 'itinerant workers' returned to their home countries, they would have been disciplined and accustomed to higher standards of work and productivity in Germany. Such a policy would protect Germany from the danger that the consumption of Southeastern Europe would increase faster than its agricultural production (Donner 1940, 20-21).

The *Institut für Weltwirtschaft* in Kiel estimated that the 'surplus workers' in Southeastern Europe accounted for roughly 40 % of all workers. In the absence of long term planning, the extraction of so many workers was a catastrophe waiting to happen for agricultural production and for the entire economy of these countries. 'Excess workers' could be extracted in the short-term, but this was merely a stopgap solution if it was not backed up by long-term measures. It could be more successful only if thousands or tens of thousands could be extracted at first. The plan could then be readjusted later after difficulties began to appear with its implementation (*Institut für Weltwirtschaft* 1940, 27, 31). In early 1941, Erich Neumann, director of the *Stabsamt des Vierjahresplans* (Office of the Four Year Plan), toyed with the idea of taking in larger numbers of 'itinerant workers' from Southeastern Europe (*Der Chef des Stabsamtes des Vierjahresplans an das Auswärtige Amt* 1941, 26).

Hence, these scientific reports paved the way for Germany's economic policy vis-à-vis Southeastern Europe during the Second World War: prevention of the establishment of viable industries, deindustrialisation, and exploitation of Balkan populations (amongst others) through the absorption of Southeastern European 'itinerant workers' (*Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* 1942, 107; Drechsler, Dress and Hass 1971, 918; Ristović 1994, 268).

In the interwar period, the main aim of the political and economic elites in Southeastern Europe consisted of nation building and industrialisation. Politicians were interested in an increase in their own nations' populations because they hoped this would simultaneously augment the power of their state, but they generally neglected the agrarian sector. Moreover, the peasantry was overburdened with taxes to finance the massive administrative apparatus and military expenses as part of the elites' 'modernization project' (Daskalov 1998, 239-40).⁶ Most economists in Southeastern Europe alluded to 'agricultural overpopulation' in order to advocate for its main remedy, i.e. the industrialisation of the region (Frangeš 1939, 29; Mirkowich 1939, 138). They argued that industrialisation would function in two ways: on the one hand, 'rural excess eaters' would be gainfully 'absorbed' by newly established industries, and on the other, fewer 'consumers' in the countryside would leave more products for export and help accumulate the capital needed for industrialisation. Two Croatian economists, Otto Frangeš and Rudolf Bićanić, proposed similar solutions, even though they came from very

⁶ For the neglect of the agrarian sector in Southeastern Europe during the interwar period on the part of politicians, see Sundhaussen 1989, 1996.

different backgrounds.⁷ Both advocated the establishment of new industries in rural areas, which would allow the ‘redundant workforce’ to remain in their peasant homes (Innerhofer 2010, 265-71, 282-3).

During and after the Second World War, the concept of agricultural overpopulation also had a prominent place in US-American and British plans for the reconstruction of Southeastern Europe. To solve the ‘problem’, in his famous 1943 article ‘Problems of Industrialization of Eastern and Southeastern Europe’, Paul Rosenstein-Rodan presented a model for complete industrialisation in the form of a ‘big push’ (Rosenstein-Rodan 1943). On behalf of the League of Nations, researchers from the Office of Population Research of Princeton University led by the influential American demographer Frank Notestein published voluminous studies on the ‘population problem’ in Eastern and Southeastern Europe (Notestein et al. 1944, Moore 1945). They argued that, instead of emigration, industrialisation of the region would solve the problem. ‘Surplus labourers’ should migrate into the urban centres of their home countries, as migration across state borders seemed unfavourable (Moore 1945, 77). This argument converged with the aim of their sponsor, the League of Nations, to avert new migratory streams after the war (Bashford 2008, 330-331). Classical immigration countries overseas had already restricted immigration following the First World War, which had, in the eyes of the population experts, aggravated the demographic situation in Southeastern Europe because it left it without an ‘outlet’ for its ‘overpopulation’.

Influences of and on Cognate Discourses

The German discussion about ‘agricultural overpopulation’ in Southeastern Europe influenced and was influenced by cognate discourses of the time, e.g., over the contrast between ‘developed’ and ‘backward’ Europe, migration, geopolitics, and ‘race’. German analyses of ‘agricultural overpopulation’ were inflected by a disdain for poverty, ‘underdevelopment’, and the assumed backwardness of ‘agrarian countries’ in Southeastern Europe. References to the primitivism of land use were central. In several works, economists advocated the ‘elimination’ of the agricultural population surplus in order to solve the problem of ‘unproductive excess eaters’. In 1931, Anton Hollmann, head of division of agriculture for Eastern and Southeastern Europe in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and one of the first German economists to address the phenomenon of ‘agricultural overpopulation’ in Southeastern Europe, offensively painted the following picture of rural life in Yugoslavia:

People seem to be stuck to their land in these areas; the holdings are divided and subdivided over and over until only scraps of fields remain; the village grows like a polyp colony; the people gradually lose all those imponderable characteristics that constitute the real sociological and eugenic value of a peasant population, they degenerate physically and spiritually to a ‘miserable’ type of man whose farmer character and ethos are consumed by the all-dominating passion of the eternal and insatiable hunger for land, and who differ in nothing from the constantly worrying and greedy petit bourgeois (Hollmann 1931, 68).

Shortly before the First World War, the fear of the ‘menace of a flooding by fecund alien people from the East’ developed into an obsession amongst researchers in Germany (Ehmer 2004, 26). In an article from 1934, Anton Reithinger expressed his worry that if the birth rate among the Germanic group did not rise, it would increasingly lose ground while the Slavic

⁷ Frangeš was a great landowner, a political opponent of the Croatian Peasant Party and an anti-communist. Bićanić was a representative of the small-holders and a member of the left wing of the Croatian Peasant Party; he later joined the communist movement of the liberation of Yugoslavia.

group would form half of Europe's population by the mid-twentieth century (Reithinger 1934b, 609).



Figure 4.1 Europe's Population [From Helmut 1933, 37.]

German researchers also worried that low fertility rates amongst German minorities in Romania and Yugoslavia would lead to a 'foreign infiltration' by neighbouring peoples with high birth rates from 'agrarian overpopulated' areas: 'In the biological battle between peoples, ultimately the one with the higher birth rate will be victorious' (Jaeger 1935, 114).

The use of the concept of agricultural overpopulation for anti-Semitic purposes is associated with the name of German economist Peter-Heinz Seraphim of the *Institut für Osteuropäische Wirtschaft* (Institute for Eastern European Economy) in Königsberg (Petersen 2007). In his article from 1941, 'Population and economic policy problems of a comprehensive European solution of the Jewish question', Peter-Heinz Seraphim (Hans-Jürgen's brother) argued that one cause of 'excessive population pressure' in rural Eastern and Southeastern Europe was that (young) people from rural areas were hindered by the urban 'Jewish element' from finding gainful employment in cities, which were 'blocked' by the Jews (P.-H. Seraphim 1941, 45). Under point five of the seven points on which to base the 'complete solution of the Jewish question', the Berlin economic adviser Alfred Maelicke stated:

5. Only the total dejudaisation of economic life will facilitate the solution of what is still the main problem in many countries, such as Southeastern Europe and elsewhere, namely overpopulation and other social questions. The elimination of the Jewish trade

mentality and profit-mindedness and the exclusion of the Jews will create space and security ('full employment') for many hitherto rootless and impoverished workers and peasants, artisans and others (Maelicke 1942, 1273; Translation from Aly 2000, 102-3).

Birth control was already regarded as the best solution to the 'overpopulation' problem and was a heavily discussed topic in interwar Germany.⁸ Overpopulation theorists identified population growth as the main cause of 'agrarian overpopulation' in Southeastern Europe, but they seldom suggested birth control as its remedy. One reason for this reservation on the German side can be traced back to the fact that most Southeastern Danube-states were allied with Germany in times of war. During the Second World War, Nazi experts even referred to the extremely advantageous age structure that resulted from high fertility rates, which meant that a vast number of people would be in the age group fit for military service in Southeastern Europe (*Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft* 1942, 103-4). The other reason is linked with the anticipated role of Southeastern Europe as a source of manpower in the new economic order under the postwar leadership of a victorious Germany.

Conclusion

Although 'agricultural overpopulation' was a problem relating to economic structure in Balkan countries, it was demographised, i.e. subsumed under the heading of 'population'. The concept was often used by all parties involved to legitimise various goals, such as the industrialisation of the Balkans, reaching autarky, or preserving the agrarian structure and increasing the agricultural output of Southeastern Europe in the interest of Germany's southeastward economic expansion. 'Agrarian overpopulation' was highlighted by experts as the crucial problem faced by Southeastern European national economies. The solution proposed on the German side would simultaneously lead to improved integration of Southeastern Europe into the *Großwirtschaftsraum*, for which it would produce agricultural goods and take over industrial production from Germany. The predominance of subsistence farming, low productivity, the dearth of agricultural rationalisation, and masses of 'unprofitable eaters' (Gutberger 1996, 422) – notions that were succinctly encapsulated by the term 'agricultural overpopulation' – stood in the way of Germany's plans. As is characteristic of population discourses, the concept of 'agrarian overpopulation' resonated with and reinforced contemporaneous racist, eugenic, geopolitical, and genocidal policies and practices.

⁸ For the debate on birth control in the Weimar Republic, see Osborne 1992; in interwar Germany, fears of 'depopulation' and complaints about 'overpopulation' co-existed.

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Europeanisation and The Built Environment: The Re-scaling Of the Border City Goerlitz-Zgorzelec

Siarhei Liubimau

This article starts with a brief outline of the conceptual assumptions which are treated here as the predecessors of, and supplements to, theories of the social production of geographical scales. This outline is intended to show that the social production of geographical space (concrete spatial configurations and the relations between them) and the social production of geographical scale are two indispensably interconnected research foci. In this perspective, basing the argument on a range of existing literature, the coordination of the term 'socio-spatial transformation' with the term 're-scaling' is presented as particularly helpful in the case of the social analyses of cities (both as bounded spatial units and in terms of the social meaning of their literal built environment) located in proximity to European state borders and, hence, lying in the core of the re-composition of hierarchies of socio-geographical scales. With regard to the present case study, this coordination helps to deal with the complex scalar position of urban units located in the vicinity of internal EU borders and encountering significant socio-spatial transformations due to EU enlargement and hence a change of regime of border functioning. Further on, this article refers to the results of qualitative field research in Goerlitz-Zgorzelec and argues that firstly, the practical meaning of built environments in trans-border urban space is related to the transformation of the EU border regime, which configures socially and spatially grounded asymmetries and opens variable possibilities of gaining surplus from trans-border conditions for agents and agendas of different levels. Secondly, the built environment and its uses are central to the scalar changes brought about by the Europeanisation process. Thirdly, it introduces the category of the 'architecture of Europeanisation' in two distinct respects.

Theoretical Framework

One of the outcomes of the growing critical sensitivity of social researchers to the term 'space' is the notion of geographical scales (from the European perspective these are urban, national, regional, EU and global) as relatively bounded geographical units that are socially produced (Brenner 2000b, Brenner 2004). This notion implies criticism of the traditional way of reading different socio-geographical units as bounded within some conflict-free primordial structure and on the contrary emphasises their processual nature (Brenner 2001, 592). In the most general perspective, it opens a new way for the analytical coordination of social processes and their spatial background. Neighbourhoods, cities, metropolitan areas, regions, nation-states, territorial blocks and the global scene are no more regarded as immutable elements of an immutable hierarchy. On the contrary, more and more researchers' attention is given to the very process of establishing this hierarchy and its driving forces. In this respect, it is possible to talk about three rough conceptual assumptions which were negotiated within this new current of scholarship in the social sciences and which have also become influential clichés in public discourse. First, is the assumption of the crisis or, rather the mutation, of the territorial nation-state (Appadurai 1996). Second, is the assumption that it is precisely urban centres and metropolitan areas, as specific types of social and geographical organisation, that become the main strategic loci of production and decision making (Sassen 2002, Scott

2005). Third, is the assumption that globalisation is a process that presupposes new ways of conceiving of and living spatiality on both micro- and macro- levels (Harvey 1990, Tsing 2000). At this stage, it would be valid to emphasise that all these assumptions can be coordinated precisely around a critical stance towards geographical scale as a pre-given container of social transformation. To put it differently, certain localities, neighbourhoods, cities, sovereign states and multi-nation blocks such as the EU are seen here as processes constituting semi-autonomous and constantly reconfigured entities, whose growing complexity and connectivity makes the procedure of singling them out more and more problematic, and thus reveals their character as constructed by the flows and unevenly disposed localisations of capital, political decisions and struggles, and cultural production and repertoires.

On the one hand, it could appear sensible to locate this new perspective on geographical scale within the epistemological shift conventionally called the 'spatial turn', a research agenda to make space visible in theories of society, culture and politics and thus replace the 'view from nowhere' (Friedland and Boden 1994, 5). As Edward Soja boldly puts it, the aim of this epistemological arrangement is to 'spatialise the historical narrative' and to look at it as if it were a geographical map (1989, 1). In many respects the initial goal of this position is to re-examine and criticise the domination of time and history as the major framework of knowledge in the social sciences. For Soja, challenging the temporal master-narrative – or making it clear that in order to make history you have to construct human geography – is the condition of possibility for a more coherent variant of critical social theory (1989, 11). The prerequisite of this innovative theoretical angle can be found in the understanding that space and time are socially grounded and can be given to social actors only contextually, whereas the context, which makes temporal rhythms and spatial configurations available to them, is always constituted by specific modes of capital accumulation, horizons and frameworks of political action and cultural forms. It involves the conceptual position that space and time are not totally divided as is assumed within Newtonian physics and its related commonsense worldview. On the contrary, it is agreed that both space and time can be conceived only in tension and are always interrelated (although we can definitely distinguish them) (Massey 1993, 141). Yet, while different concepts of history have for a long time been used by social scientists for a more nuanced analysis of society, space and geography have been rather neglected as an inevitable dimension of social relations. In this vein, both the set of theories subsumed by the label the 'spatial turn', and the critical perceptions of this label, are to reveal the ways in which the spatio-temporal structuring of social life can be used analytically for the concretisation and materialisation of social relations.

On the other hand, the issue of the social production of geographical scales cannot be limited exclusively to changing modes of knowledge in academia. This new epistemology adopted by social scientists is systematically related to the material referent of the current research agenda. It would be reasonable to say that, in the most general terms, this material referent is the increasing interrelations between the global and the local. As Anna Tsing argues with particular regard to the state of affairs in the field of anthropology, currently globalisation and globalism are the most significant horizons of social research to be dealt with. To locate this claim historically, she refers to the issue of modernisation and modernism as a similar challenge and horizon for post-Second World War scholarship. Nowadays, the global framework, crystallised from manifold connections, circulations, their channels, and the resulting landscape elements which rework global flows, makes it possible for us to focus on the 'making and remaking of geographical and historical agents and the forms of their

agency in relation to movement, interaction, and shifting, competing claims about community, culture, and scale' (Tsing 2000, 330). Various spatial configurations persist as the key variables for many theories precisely because global circulation, its logic and the mutations it causes, can be grasped by a social scientist as specific geographically organised projects, i.e. 'relatively coherent bundles of ideas and practices as realised in particular times and places' (Tsing 2000, 347). Besides, various spatial configurations, such as business districts, bridges, slums, border checkpoints or underused plazas, and their social meaning, persist as a source of metaphors for inventing new categories because they can serve as analogies necessary to unlock the complex and dynamic interconnections between the global and the local, intensively experienced in everyday life and made routine by commonsense knowledge.

The idea that certain political and social reconfigurations also imply mutations in the functioning of scalar hierarchies, or, to put it differently, a re-scaling process, involved the emergence and use of the term 'politics of scale'. This concept derives from the understanding that in the situation of the connectivity and interdependence of the different socio-geographical building blocks of cities, regions and states, the very process of scaling becomes a matter of political activities and struggles. Neil Brenner, who summarises the debates on this issue, writes about two aspects of this notion. Firstly, he sees it as the production and transformation of socio-spatial arrangements at different levels which can be easily distinguished from each other, such as the local, the urban, the regional, the national, etc. Secondly, the focus lies on the very process of scaling, or, alternatively, on the way the *relations* between diverse smaller and larger spatial units are set up, reproduced, reconfigured and contested (Brenner 2001, 599-601). In the context of this article, these notions of scale and scaling have two useful implications. They make possible a more refined analysis of urban units (or, more broadly, areas) located in proximity to state borders, which are often called laboratories of internationalisation, globalisation or, closer to the context of this paper, Europeanisation (Balibar 2003, Donnan and Wilson 1999, Wilson and Donnan 2005). They are locations where new socio-spatial configurations are crystallised. Furthermore, these notions open up a new angle on the phenomenon of the state border itself by serving as a structure for the analysis of its dynamic, uneven and selective nature (Berg and Ehin 2006), and for making conceptually visible and recognisable certain projects which emerge due to changing regimes of border functioning and produce new kinds of spaces and spatial relations.

As suggested already, it is now often noted that the urban scale should be prioritised as the locus of broader social transformations which shows the trajectories of globally induced 'projects', as understood by Anna Tsing (2000), in the most evident way. Michael Peter Smith, who chooses to use the term 'transnational urbanism' for unpacking today's conditions, does so for two reasons. Firstly, transnational social actors are connected to the cultural, political and socioeconomic domains characteristic of the urban milieu. Secondly, these actors sustain their transnational condition by practising means of communication and travel usually associated with the culture of cities. In this sense, for him 'transnational urbanism' is 'a cultural rather than a strictly geographic metaphor' (Smith 2001, 5). Moreover, if the aim of this article is to analyse the place-specific reworking of the general regime of relations between different social landscapes and their elements (Pred and Watts 1992) in the broader perspective of the enlarged and re-scaled EU, then cities as concentrations of political, economic and cultural power on the one hand (Harvey 1990, Scott 2005), and as major nodes of circulation where transnational relations are firmly established

on the other (Sassen 2002), should be the initial research focus. This intention was significantly influenced by the philosopher Henri Lefebvre, who has shown that capitalism has remained sustainable because political and economic actors under capitalism managed to turn spatiality into a set of exchange values, as well as the main medium for capital accumulation. Furthermore, it was urban centres that were the central point in this process of the social production of space (Lefebvre 1991). This insight, in many respects, makes it possible to theorize a situation where urban governance has gained more say in relation to the territorial nation-state as a result of the growing capitalisation of city space and the declining possibilities of central government to rationally and evenly plan the development of its territory (Harvey 1989). As such, the growing entrepreneurial functions of municipalities might be interpreted as further evidence of the much mooted crisis of the nation-state and modern, or nation-state centred political agency lagging behind post-modern or trans-national economic agency (Kobrin 1997). However, here it would be equally reasonable to refer to Brenner who comments on this interpretation and shows that the nation-state is still crucial, but operates (regulating and governing) more on the urban and regional than on the national scale, and applies particular policies in order to enhance the 'place-specific competitive advantage' of its most important urban centres (2000a, 2001). Besides, to shift the emphasis from the issue of governance to the issue of different kinds of movement and different kinds of trans-border conditions, it would be legitimate to say that the nation-state and trans-national practices are not mutually exclusive, but rather are constitutive of each other (Smith 2001).

Case Study

The case study of the revitalisation of the Neisse suburb on the Polish side of the German-Polish border city, Goerlitz-Zgorzelec briefly presented in this article has been conducted with a dual aim. First, it is intended to show that the discussed research optic of the social production of geographical space as the social production of geographical scales can be a fruitful conceptual framework for endeavours to study dynamic trans-border spaces. In other words, it strives to argue that any given border regime is an indispensable attribute of scale-making, and vice-versa, any scalar formation (such as the enlarged EU in this case) is made possible by particular border regimes. Second, based on this case study, this article attempts to show that a concrete built environment and its practical meaning is the key presupposition, channel and outcome of the scalar shifts and struggles taking place in the border conditions as part of broader scalar change (in this instance, EU enlargement presupposing turning the German-Polish border into an internal EU and Schengen border). As such, the particular trans-border social meaning of a built environment encountering changes due to a mutating regime of border functioning and, hence, due to the establishment of the new scalar formation is an articulation both empowered by and empowering this new scalar formation.

As Marek Furmankiewicz writes, 'in cross-border co-operation, especially in euroregions, spatial connections and physical resources (border rivers, nature regions), which give scope for common work, are very important' (Furmankiewicz 2007, 350). For Goerlitz-Zgorzelec, which formed a single town before 1945 when the German-Polish border was re-established, both the built and natural environments play this crucial role. The River Neisse, as the synthesis of the natural and built environment (bridges, the infrastructure of the riverbanks, the infrastructure for

border control, etc.), became one of the most important scenes of the local reworking of macro-trends. It was saturated by the social meaning of closure when the Oder-Neisse Line was established and served as a rather closed border between Poland and East Germany. After 1989, on the other hand, it has become one of the most important elements of European integration. The growth of trans-national connections between different localities and the growth of the autonomy of local self-government, which, as is conventionally agreed, are the major trends of Europeanisation in the context of global socio-spatial change (Perkmann 2003), both caused and were reconfirmed by a radical re-tooling of the Neisse in relation to its Western and Eastern sides. Transnational German-Polish environmental, infrastructural and cultural projects were very much concerned with how to make this river a means of connection, not a means of separation, while the euroregion launched in this area was called the *euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa* in German, Czech and Polish.

Such changes in the regime of the uses of concrete spatial configurations appear to stem from mutations in the regime of border functioning, which, to retain the angle of the concepts introduced above, in its turn can be understood as establishing a new scalar organisation. Eiki Berg and Perit Ehin use the term 'border regime' as a system of control that regulates behaviour at borders. The authors write about three main features to be analysed: first, the *functions* attributed to the border, second, the *mode of governance* and third, the *degree of openness* (Berg and Ehin 2006, 55). Although they focus on external Schengen borders, where the function of control remains the most important, it would be reasonable to argue that any European border as an institution is at least a two-way road and cannot be analysed in terms of the command of control only (Bauer and Darley 2007). The EU, as the formation of a new scale – and its growing importance in the structuring of space and movements – presupposes a new kind of relation between different socio-geographical units both within its limits and beyond its borders. Here urban agglomerations adjacent to internal EU borders are the most radically re-scaled, while the entire situation of European Integration and the growing role of urban centres in relation to the territories of nation-states provoke the question: what is the urban scale as opposed to the national and EU scales? Or, how can we position such urban units within the prevailing scalar hierarchies? If we understand urbanisation as a presupposition and an outcome of historically grounded modes of capital accumulation (Harvey 1989, Harvey 2006), then it would be appropriate to place analytically regimes of border functioning in the very centre of this spatially dispersed and bounded accumulation process. Besides, if within the analysis we juxtapose socio-spatial practice and the practical meaning of spatial forms with prevailing scalar hierarchies, then it would be fruitful to coordinate the issue of the re-tooling of the framework for spatially grounded social action with the historical variations of the institutions of borders, involving different degrees of openness and closedness with regard to different modes of accumulation through movement and exchange. In this light, the focus on regimes of border functioning empowers researchers to trace how the uneven development between the two sides of the border – and in a broader context of changing scalar configurations – is continually structured and re-structured or, bounded and re-bounded, by those who use borders and border conditions for gaining different kinds of surplus.

This analysis of the socio-geographical meaning of the revitalisation of the Neisse suburb in Goerlitz-Zgorzelec aims to show how concrete *spatial typologies* on the *urban scale*, or concrete pieces of the *built environment* and their uses by social actors of different levels, are embedded into the new scalar hierarchy caused by EU enlargement. In this instance, the concept of the 'built environment' is used instead of

the concept of 'architecture,' since it gives more opportunities to analyse the relations between human agency on the one hand and spatial configurations on the other. The Neisse suburb in Zgorzelec is the only piece of the built environment on the Polish side of the river that can be historically and symbolically associated with the old city core of Goerlitz. Remarkably, in contrast to the German side, where the old city centre became the main target of both state and private investments in infrastructure immediately after the fall of the GDR, on the Polish side this historical part of the city was totally neglected. Moreover, Daszynskiego Street in Zgorzelec, where most of the old nineteenth century buildings of the Neisse suburb are located, was perceived for a long time as one of the city's most dangerous areas, inhabited by 'pathological' families, forgotten and not integrated into the rest of the city. Here, it is reasonable to argue that in the context of the shortage economy in 1990s Poland, there were not enough institutional and market instruments for the commodification of the houses, which were ill-equipped with utilities yet had important historical meaning. The same situation could be observed in the 1970s-80s on the other side of the Neisse in Goerlitz, where people preferred to settle in the better equipped socialist pre-fabricated block-housing on the outskirts of the city, while the historical core was the location of social problems. There was even a plan to blow up some part of Goerlitz city centre and to build modern houses instead, but the 1989 transformation made it impossible for this plan to be realised.

The perception of, and plans concerning, the Neisse suburb in Zgorzelec rapidly changed at the beginning of the 2000s and, as will be argued below, were connected to a broad socio-spatial transformation, which is here conceptually constructed as re-scaling. The key moment for this change was the EU funded opening, or rather re-opening, in September 2004 of the Old Town Bridge, which connects the Neisse suburb on the eastern side of the river with the historical centre of Goerlitz on the western side. This project was not only a highly symbolic gesture in the course of Poland's accession to the EU and the growing intensiveness of trans-border cooperation in a town which had been divided, and sustained as divided, by the destruction of all the bridges during the Second World War. In addition, it would also not be enough to talk about it as a straight effect of the EU policy of planning balanced development across its territory. From the angle of the spatial change caused by the EU enlargement and the emergent new German-Polish border regime, the re-opening of the bridge can be considered as a local 'project' or a reworking of the broader trend of the mutations of state territoriality or of the mutations of the regime of border functioning. This mutation was supplemented by EU specific funds and institutional programmes on the one hand, and by the local peculiarity of the built environment with its social uses, symbolic meaning and trajectories of the commodification of space on the other. The most striking result of the reconstruction of the Old Town Bridge became the massive reconstruction of the Neisse suburb with the dominant goal of its revitalisation in both an architectural and social sense.

As the data gathered on both the German and Polish sides of the Neisse River indicates, in many respects the revitalisation project was the way to smooth over the clash between the well-restored historical core of Goerlitz and the poor Neisse suburb in Zgorzelec. As argued by the Zgorzelec architect C.A., who started to work on the revitalisation project in 2004, when certain plans for the restructuring of this area were already elaborated:

I would say that the main impulse to launch the program of the revitalisation of the Neisse suburb was the perspective of or, in general, the construction or

re-construction of the Old Town Bridge. To put it briefly: from the moment of the opening of the Old Town Bridge, passing across the Old Town Bridge from Goerlitz one fell into a wilderness. In Goerlitz, of course, the old city in the 1990s changed totally [...] After the re-unification of Germany, a lot of funds were made available for the revalorization of the old city of Goerlitz. In connection with its character, meaning and potential. And of course in Zgorzelec for a long time nothing was done in this respect and in the end I would say that common sense prevailed. Because, I would say, if this work [revitalisation – S.L.] would not start, today one would cross the Old Town Bridge [...] I would say, in Goerlitz it looks really like a fairy tale, this architecture has such character [...] it is even ‘sugary’ in some places, because it was restored and got back its old magnificence. And on our side there would be just bushes, there would be, I don’t know [...] Well, it would be a serious clash after crossing the Old Town Bridge.

For all that, however, it is necessary to emphasise that it was precisely the built form of the Old Town Bridge that made this clash real, as it created a framework for the further asymmetrical interplay between the actors on the both sides of the Neisse. This concrete bridge, as an injection into the existing built environment, further altered the uses of other spatial configurations on the urban scale. These mutations primarily involve the capitalisation of the space of the district and its appropriation by the practices of urban entrepreneurs, where the growing density of restaurants, bars, and cultural attractions, such as museums, and shops for tourists, is its evident outcome and constitutive force. As several of my informants from Zgorzelec said, ‘Euros are flowing across this bridge to Zgorzelec’ or, sometimes, ‘to Poland’. Such an attitude towards the transformation analysed here can be found not only in the case of the inhabitants of Zgorzelec, but also in the case of expert knowledge, which also deals with the newly established configuration of scales grasped in the most immediate way as the recently established border regime.

For instance, the programme for the revitalisation of this area, prepared for approval by the Zgorzelec city administration in 2004, stresses that the Neisse suburb in Zgorzelec is de-capitalised and should be revitalised in order to make it compatible with the previously rejuvenated historical centre of Goerlitz. The assumptions of this programme fit well with the data gathered through interviews with local experts and informal talks with Zgorzelec inhabitants in the sense that they all show that before 2004 the Neisse suburb served, both practically and discursively, as the intensification of different sorts of problems, thus hindering its development as an organic part of the city’s body. Within the programme of revitalisation, the district’s problems are divided into spatial (an old communication infrastructure), social (uncertain property relations) and economic examples (a still not established structure for trade and services). In this vein, such a combination of potential problems is presented as requiring a specific formula of rehabilitation. Furthermore, the aims are a modernisation of the technical infrastructure which would attract investors and encourage the overall economic development in this area; the establishment of adequate property rights for both houses and land (i.e. the privatisation of communal and state-owned buildings); a proper solution for transport (building car-parks on the one hand and the limitation of car mobility on the other); the creation of attractive configurations of trade and services which would have a ‘centre-making character’; and the liquidation of social problems to make the area safer. According to a 2004 survey, thirty-six percent of buildings required a profound renovation, while the strategy for this renovation in the broader stream of the revitalisation project was

supposed to be a private-public partnership together with the utilisation of EU funds. In the overall context, the important role of investments and privatisation was assumed (not only the activities of the municipal authorities), as was the availability of loans for dwellers who want to renovate their houses independently.

More important here is that, already in this programme, the Neisse suburb was imagined as a spatial succession of trade, tourism and recreation that would connect the city centre of Zgorzelec with the Old Town Bridge. In this context the term the 'showcase of Zgorzelec' referred to the Neisse suburb and, in the course of the field research I conducted in Goerlitz and Zgorzelec in May-July 2008, it was reproduced by most of the Polish experts I interviewed. It should be pointed out that most of the programmatic aims within the revitalisation project discussed above were realised by summer 2008, while interviews showed that these aims are still regarded as the reference points for the urban development of Zgorzelec's. The term 'showcase' can be interpreted as something serving as a city's currency within its efforts at self-promotion. However, the very usage of this term and the socio-spatial conditions of the possibility of its use suggest the problematic meaning of the built environment constituting the Neisse suburb and of both its social and spatial character in the trans-border conditions of Goerlitz-Zgorzelec. When dismantled, this problematic meaning can help reveal the fabricated nature of various spatial units and of their interrelations, both of which are involved in the projection of the Neisse suburb, while the area's broader scalar context turns out to be an adequate explanatory framework of its current vision and functions. In other words, the processes constituting the current constellation of the Neisse suburb can be turned into a research problem when viewed as dependent on its scalar background. Two major aspects of the problematic meaning are the projected (and contested) centre-making potential of the Neisse suburb, and the aim of privatisation of this area, which is expected to result in its commodification through the establishment of a structure for unique trade and services designed largely for tourists. These two aspects are closely interconnected, while it is precisely the change in the scalar order, spatially grounded in the construction of the Old Town Bridge in 2004, which determines this specific interconnection.

Goerlitz is an uncharacteristic case of a former GDR town of such a size (around 60,000 inhabitants) since its economy is in many respects based on the tourist industry. The preserved architectural heritage and low cost of living (in relation to the standard of the apartments in the revalorised old city core) made it a popular destination for elderly tourists from all over Germany, with the main currency of the self-promotion of Goerlitz as a tourist destination being its historical centre. In this vein, the revitalisation of Daszynskiego Street in Zgorzelec can be read as an attempt to include this part of the Polish side of the Neisse River into an already existing and architecturally grounded mode of capital accumulation. The public-private venture to bind this formerly abandoned part of Zgorzelec to the more developed and better invested in spatial configurations on the other side of the river through architectural style, colour and design details, also presupposes the new trajectories of capitalisation in this part of the city and its built environment pursued by entrepreneurs and the state. In this context, the very practical meaning of the built environment (i.e. the projections and uses of the built environment in a broader social and geographical configuration) of the Neisse suburb acquires a new, trans-national dimension. Talking about the revitalisation project and his own role and place within it, my interviewee Zgorzelec architect C.A. emphasises that Goerlitz-Zgorzelec is an artificially and politically divided urban unit with an almost 1000 year common history, and, therefore, each side should be consciously tied to its counterpart.

From here stem all my analyses, strivings and decisions. As I said, I managed to change some things [in relation to previous projects of revitalisation – S.L.], to quickly rework the colouristics of those buildings. Because there were already investors who had already bought the buildings and wanted to carry out renovation and my idea was to beat them to it. Before, everything happened in a way which, according to me, is not the right proper one because a planner made a colouristics project ignoring history. Here, in Zgorzelec, in the Neisse district practically everything was also happening in isolation from history, from what had been shaped historically. Nonetheless, I managed in some sense to bring it about such that everything that happens in Zgorzelec, primarily in the Neisse district, is tied to [...] to Goerlitz. That means, my plan was to make the two towns closer to each other, to give them an identical character in the sense of colouristics, to just carry over this image of the city in order that Zgorzelec would not develop independently from Goerlitz and Goerlitz from Zgorzelec. [...] Because it was one city and I perceive this city as one city. I am talking as an architect. [...] Both cities, and the objects situated on the different sides, do not differ in the sense of certain decisions with regard to architectural detail. If they appeared in the same historical period, one can find a lot of similarities in the buildings, which appeared in Zgorzelec and in Goerlitz, because they appeared in the same city, one which had administrative limits including both today's Zgorzelec and today's Goerlitz. My plan was to come back to this, to plan the development of Zgorzelec as tied to the development of Goerlitz, to make it a certain continuation, a certain reference. From here come all the Old Town lamps, which are in the Neisse district because of me, of course. Because there also existed a totally different project, a different decision, different lamps. But I manage to bring it about such that today the lamps are basically identical with those in Goerlitz.

This passage from an interview reveals how changing scalar configurations, manifested primarily in Poland's accession to the EU and in the Europeanisation-centred projects, give a new scalar frame of reference for spatial planning practice and for the socio-historical dynamics of the extant built environment. Particular street lamps or the colours of buildings that ten years ago were still totally abandoned acquire a new social sense when they shift within a prevailing constellation of socio-geographical scales. In the same way as the River Neisse and its banks are invested in differently, socially, on various stages or circuits of socio-geographical structuring, lamps and facades become the localisations of negotiations concerning certain scale-specific projects. Moreover, the very purpose and rationality of the architect's practice is crystallised and justified in connection to the changing spatial and social relations between Polish and German towns, or, in other words, in connection to the limits and possibilities that newly emerging scalar formations constitute for social actors. In this vein, the practical stances of Goerlitz architects – who acknowledge that culture as consumption, and tourist consumption in particular, forms the main instrument for the city's place-promotion – in relation to the discussed revitalisation project also have a clear scalar background. As K.F., an architect from Goerlitz, says:

Up till now the touristic and also somehow the cultural focus lay on the old city [of Goerlitz – S.L.]. Let us say more or less only on the old city. Now it is in one direction expanding to the Wilhemian district of Goerlitz and on the other side to the Neisse Ufer Bereich [the Neisse riverside area – S.L.], which includes of course the Polish side. [...] And this is of course of

meaning for both sides, not only for the German or the Polish side. And it is an expanding area for tourists, for the touristic centres of the inner city of Goerlitz, of course. [...] As you surely know there is the term of *Waterfront development*, which is normally associated with big building developments, like docklands or whatever. One can also call these future developments on both sides of the Neisse 'waterfront development', but not in terms of big buildings, rather with more recreational, let's say soft tourism, et cetera.

It is thus evident in these discussions, that the scalar background is dynamic and open for both discursive and practical (both aspects are taken here in the narrow perspective of architects' professional stances) re-tooling and competition. On the western side of the Neisse, the old Goerlitz city centre is still prioritised as the centre of the trans-border tourist area, despite the symbolic affirmation of the bridges themselves or the border itself as the new centre of a united European city. However, on the eastern side, the argument concerning how materially and stylistically the Neisse suburb should be revitalised, or fastened to the historical core of Goerlitz, is the most prevalent aspect of scalar re-tooling. As Z.B., a cultural manager who is involved in the organisation of certain cultural events in the Neisse suburb says:

Zgorzelec is kind of a poorer offshoot of Goerlitz. It would be good if it could be broader [Daszynskiego Street – S.L.]. Ha-ha. And they left this old city to us, as we have no old market, nothing. And I am very happy that Daszynskiego Street acquires such an appeal. [...] Unfortunately, there are still plastic windows, unfortunately our laws are not so restrictive as laws in Germany. Unfortunately, old paving stones were removed, even though the old ones could have been revitalised. But I am still happy that this street *emerged*, that step by step it really looks better.

The fact that Z.B. talks about Daszynskiego Street as only a recently emerged one should mean that it re-emerged both socially and architecturally due to the formation of a new scalar constellation, thus enabling this part of Zgorzelec to become socially and architecturally interchangeable with its Western counterpart.



Figure 5.1. Goerlitz [photo taken by the author, Siarhei Liubimau, in 2008].



Figure 5.2. The Neisse Suburb in Zgorzelec [photo taken by the author, Siarhei Liubimau, in 2008].

The transformations of the Neisse district in Zgorzelec can be roughly described as gentrification, or as the rehabilitation of old social and spatial structures (usually ones

referring to the industrial labour class) by post-industrial middle-class property owners, developers and trendy services (Smith 1982). However, in the case of the Goerlitz-Zgorzelec gentrification, or revitalisation (a term which gives a more positive shade to the analysed processes) is remarkable since it becomes possible due to the obvious change of scalar hierarchies. More precisely, the rehabilitation of Daszynskiego Street is not only an important aspect of the local trajectory of Europeanisation and the strategic use of a certain scalar lens which gives priority to the urban scale and not to the scale of the territorial nation-state. It is also an outcome and a presupposition of changing socio-geographical modes of capital accumulation. The fact that some part of Zgorzelec is revitalised cannot be addressed without the coordination of its urban scale with the urban scale of Goerlitz, the scale of the German and Polish nation-states and the EU scale. Thus, it cannot be theorised properly without a deliberate placing of the twin-town's scale within the broader scalar constellation. Here, it is possible to say that the re-scaling of the Neisse district is possible due to an asymmetry in development (geographically uneven development). Thus unevenness made possible the idea of this bridge as the way to make these two cities closer to each other. Yet the result was the intensification of unevenness (or, the 'clash' between the two sides of the river), which caused another attempt to move both parts closer to each other by arranging injections into the urban fabric. Apparently, the border (or, its changing regime of functioning) understood as a medium of exchange makes the spatial configuration adjacent to it the site of intensified socially and geographically grounded asymmetries and, therefore, turns them into localisations of an intensified 'politics of scale'.

The 'politics of scale' as a) the production and reconfiguration of relatively bounded units of socio-spatial organisation and b) the process of the creation of mutually embedded and positioned spatial units (Brenner 2001), becomes an especially useful notion. In this exact context I would find it fruitful to talk about the 'architecture of Europeanisation', which signifies the socio-spatial typologies present in border zones in the clearest way. The 'architecture of Europeanisation' is the realisation of EU political and economic goals by planning a certain built environment, like bridges, roads, surveillance equipment, recreation zones etc., which socio-spatially adjusts trans-border relations and thus adjusts and reconfirms a distinct scalar hierarchy. In this vein, from the perspective of such programs as INTERREG, border areas are seen not as closures, but rather as loci of intensified international cooperation, while borders themselves are consciously turned into instruments of European integration. Moreover, another more complex meaning suggests that the 'architecture of Europeanisation' is the built environment that merges with place-specific trans-border projects. Through this it becomes the locus of scalar shifts and struggles emerging from the changing border regime that challenges or complicates the existent scalar order. If borders are treated as institutions that make possible the scalar order of Europe, then the 'architecture of Europeanisation', as introduced here, indicates how Europe is socio-spatially negotiated and constructed on the urban scale.

Conclusion

The analysis of both the social meaning of the Old Town Bridge and the restructuring of the Neisse district in Zgorzelec shows that, in the case of the dynamic dispositions of border cities in the mosaic of socio-geographical scales, more theoretical attention should be paid to built environments as loci of the 'politics of scale' and scenes of the changing character of political borders. This perspective is to a significant extent

based on the understanding of the social production of space as the social production of geographical scales. As was argued with reference to the empirical material gathered as a result of qualitative interviews with actors involved in spatial planning and trans-border cooperation projects and fieldwork conducted in Goerlitz-Zgorzelec, built environments on internal EU borders, which significantly change their appearance and social meaning due to changing regimes of border functioning, can be conceptually constructed as the 'architecture of Europeanisation'. In a first sense, the 'architecture of Europeanisation' is the realisation of the economic and political goals of the EU by means of projecting a particular built environment. In a second sense, the 'architecture of Europeanisation' is the built environment, which becomes the locus of scalar shifts and struggles caused by the process of Europeanisation as a reshuffling of socio-geographic structuring in the stream of EU enlargement.

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Language Contacts on the Russian-Chinese Border: the ‘Second Birth’ of Russian-Chinese Trade Pidgin

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State borders can be seen as both physical and symbolic barriers, prohibiting any uncontrolled transition between neighboring countries. At the same time the very fact of a border's existence inevitably provokes various language and cultural contacts on near-boundary territories. These contacts may induce serious changes in local communities' verbal behaviour, even resulting in the appearance of new hybrid linguistic systems like pidgin and Creole languages.

For a long period in history the border between the Russian Empire and China was a place of constant and intensive cultural and language contacts that gave birth to a trade pidgin, the so-called Kiakhta language, or Russian-Chinese Pidgin. At the end of the 1930s the border between China and the USSR was closed, many Chinese were deported from the border regions, and any contact became impossible (Perekhval'skaia 2007). Russian-Chinese Pidgin passed out of use and was soon forgotten.

After Perestroika in the Soviet Union trade on the Russian-Chinese border started again, with a great deal of seasonal migration between the two countries (Sharmashkeeva 2007). In communicating with each other Russian and Chinese speakers use different language forms, some of which resemble those typical of the Russian-Chinese Pidgin of the past. What is more, the language attitudes of speakers and the sociolinguistic situation in border regions now and in the past are similar in some ways, giving the researcher a rare chance to witness the ‘second birth’ of a pidgin. This possibility of the ‘second birth’ implies many serious theoretical questions concerning the nature and origin of pidgin languages, rather a moot point for modern creolistics (see, e.g.: Holm 1989; Holm 2000; Mühlhäusler 1986; Romaine 1989; Sebba 1997; Thomason 2001; Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

In this article I will deal first with the history of Russian-based pidgins, describe several grammatical features of Russian-Chinese Pidgin (as reflected in different written sources) and then turn to the modern situation in the Russian-Chinese border region. This part of the article is based on the preliminary results of field research conducted in the Zabaïkalskiï region of Russia (formerly the Chita region and the Buriato-Aginskiï autonomous region) and the Chinese city of Manzhouli in 2006-2008.¹

Russian-Based Pidgin Languages

With a history such as that of Russia, we can suppose that there were many situations favourable to the rise of contact languages. However, in fact only three Russian-based pidgins can be documented (Belikov and Golovko 1994). The first one is known by the name of Russenorsk. It was used in Norway during trading contacts between Norwegian and Russian sailors. The earliest cases of using this language can be traced in documents dating from the end of the seventeenth century. In the nineteenth century, after the legalisation of the trade, Russenorsk became widely spread in the European north. It was spoken not only by Russians and Norwegians but also by Finns and, possibly, by British sailors in Arkhangelsk (Broch 1996). According to

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some theories Russenorsk was not ‘invented’ by Russians in Norway but was preceded by some more ancient contact language, presumably with a substantial Finno-Ugric component (Broch and Jahr 1984; Davydov et al. 1987; Perekhval’skaia 1987).

In the 1920s Russenorsk was discovered by linguists – Olaf Broch published his collection of texts in Russenorsk and its first linguistic description (Broch 1927; Broch 1930). Structurally Russenorsk does not look like a typical pidgin. It has two source languages and not one – Norwegian provided almost 50 percent of its vocabulary, and Russian – thirty percent; there are also many doublets (Russian and Norwegian words used quasi-synonymously). From this we can conclude that the languages came into contact on ‘equal terms’, which means that both sides tried to modify their verbal behaviour and did not treat the other as inferior. At the same time contacts were brief and limited, usually not going beyond naming goods and prices. Unsurprisingly, Russenorsk grammar is rather restricted. There was only one multifunctional preposition **på**, almost no auxiliary affixes, and the possessive pronouns **moja** and **tvoja** were used instead of personal pronouns (Russenorsk shares this feature with Russian-Chinese pidgin, a fact that gave rise to much speculation about their possible common origin; see Kozinskiĭ 1974).

Taïmyr Pidgin, called *Ruskaia Govorka* by its users, was spoken on the Taïmyr peninsula by aboriginal people – Dolgans and Nganasans – when communicating with Russians and Yakuts, and also in contacts between these two ethnic groups themselves. The period of its widest use was from the end of the nineteenth century until the 1930s. Then Taïmyr Pidgin gradually fell out of use because of the constant expansion of Russian. In the 1980s it was studied by Evgeniĭ Khelinskiĭ (Khelinskiĭ 1987), who interviewed several speakers of the language. Even at the beginning of the new century, when Dieter Stern carried out his field work in Taïmyr (Stern 2005b) it was still possible to find someone who remembered this pidgin.

Taïmyr Pidgin grammar was rather elaborate for this kind of language. Some of its features, such as the wide use of postpositions and a complicated system of personal pronouns with forms of dual number and inclusive and exclusive forms (Khelinskiĭ 1994), can be explained by a local substratum – they are typical for Nganasan, one of the Samoyedic languages.

Compared with these two pidgins, Russian-Chinese Pidgin was much more widespread. At the end of the nineteenth century it was spoken by no less than one million people in the area around the border with China (Belikov 1994), a length of more than 3,000 kilometres. Its history dates from the beginning of the eighteenth century. After the Treaty of Kiakhta (1727) all trade between the two countries had to be carried out in Kiakhta, the small city founded for this purpose (for more information on Russian-Chinese trade see Foust 1969). This centralisation of contacts resulted in a constantly growing number of Chinese merchants residing in Kiakhta and trying to speak Russian. There is even some evidence, although rather dubious (see Stern 2005a), that the Chinese authorities made these merchants take an examination in the Russian language. Chinese speakers’ ‘imperfect’ Russian (an ‘interlanguage’ in the terms of second language acquisition theory)² and oversimplified and ungrammatical forms of foreigner talk used by Russian native speakers eventually gave birth to a new pidgin, first called Kiakhta language, or Russian-Chinese language. It was documented by several travellers and amateur

² See Mather 2006 on theoretical approaches towards relations between second-language acquisition and creolisation.

linguists who were amused by this ‘broken’ and extremely ‘funny’ language (Cherepanov 1853; Maksimov 1864).

Then, after the liberalisation of Russia-Chinese trade in 1860, this contact language spread along the border, becoming the main medium of communication with Russians not only for Chinese people working in Russia but also for many aboriginal people of Siberia and the Far East (Belikov 1994; Perekhval’skaia 2006). Its function as a lingua franca made possible the development of rather stable forms. The most famous examples of Russian-Chinese Pidgin can be found in the books *Dersu Usala* (made into a film by Akira Kurosawa in 1975) and *Po Ussuriïskomu kraiu* by Vladimir Arsen’ev, the Russian traveller, ethnographer, and writer (Arsen’ev 1978).

The first linguistic descriptions of the pidgin appeared at the end of nineteenth century (Aleksandrov 1884; Schuhardt 1884). Some new language material was gathered by Soviet linguists in the 1930s (Vrubel’ 1931; Shprintsin 1968), and nineteenth-century sources were analysed in several Western publications (Neumann 1966; Nichols 1980). The most recent recordings of Russian-Chinese Pidgin date from 1990 (Belikov and Perekhval’skaia manuscript).

It should be stressed that, unlike Russenorsk, Russian-Chinese Pidgin can be called a ‘typical pidgin’ with one main source language (which was Russian). Only a small amount of pidgin vocabulary was taken from Chinese and some aboriginal languages like Tungus or Udege. Communication, we can assume, was asymmetrical: non-Russian speakers tried to speak Russian, and very few Russians made the effort to learn some Chinese, let alone minority languages.

Russian-Chinese Pidgin as a Grammar System

We now turn to specific grammatical features of Russian-Chinese Pidgin. A thorough analysis goes beyond the scope of this article; my purpose here is to show using several examples that this language variant is not just ‘broken Russian’, a collection of mistakes, but a unique linguistic system independent of its source languages.

Like most pidgins, Russian-Chinese Pidgin lacks many morphological categories³ – there are no such things as cases, numbers or gender for nouns, pronouns and adjectives or tenses, persons and numbers for verbs. Usually a pidgin has to make do with just one word form or several forms that can vary without any relation to meaning. Such phrases as ‘I want drink’, ‘I wants drink’, or ‘Me want drink’ can be equally correct. The most frequent verb form in Russian-Chinese Pidgin is the **imperative**, which is interesting because in spite of its important role in communication, imperative formation rules in some cases are rather complicated in Russian. The most probable suggestion is that imperatives prevailed in the speech forms addressed by Russian speakers to their Chinese interlocutors.

On the whole, imperative forms in Russian-Chinese Pidgin could be used for any purpose – to express not only imperatives but indicatives as well – and in any context – when speaking about the past, present or future. As markers of tense such adverbs as ‘**RAN’SHE**’ (before) and ‘**SEICHAS**’ / ‘**TEPER**’ (now) were used as in these examples:

Tut ran’she moia zhivi (Arsen’ev 1978)
here before my-*fem.sg* live-*imper.*
(I was living here formerly)

³ On the notion of ‘grammar simplicity’ in pidgins, see Siegel 2004.

Moia ran'she khorosho streliaĭ (Arsen'ev 1978)

my-*fem.sg* before well shoot-*imper.*

(I was a good shooter formerly)

Lan'se kakxozza zima ganiaĭ lepakhoza pomogaĭ (Belikov and Perekhval'skaia manuscript)

before kolkhoz winter-*Nom.sg.* send-*imper.* lespromkhoz help-*imper.*

(People from the kolkhoz were sent to help the lespromkhoz)

A shchasa toka kartoshka sadi, sio magazina kupi, a lan'she ne (Belikov and Perekhval'skaia manuscript)

and now only potato plant-*imper.* all shop buy-*imper.* but before no

(Now people are planting only potatoes and buying everything in the shop, which was not the case before)

At the same time Russian-Chinese Pidgin began to develop the auxiliary past-tense affix 'LA'. It emerges at the crossing between Russian and Chinese grammar. In Russian it is a past tense marker for feminine gender, while in Chinese [了] it also marks past action related to the present. The independent use of this enclitic in the pidgin can be demonstrated in the following examples where it is attached to forms not suitable for it in Russian grammar: imperative, past tense and even adjectival:

Libiatis'ka... Katora zhinisiala (Belikov and Perekhval'skaia manuscript)

children who marry-*imper.+past*

(children who get married)

Uot eta ush konchilala shchasa netu (Belikov and Perekhval'skaia manuscript)

here this already finish-*past+past* now no

(It's gone [about ginseng liquor], nothing more)

Periamo slovo, za moia fal'shivaĭla nitu (Cherepanov 1853)

right word, for my-*fem.sg* false+*past* no

(My word, I'm not lying)

But the most striking feature of Russian-Chinese Pidgin grammar is the expanded (compared to Russian grammar) use of the copula **EST'**. Its use in Russian (unlike many European languages) is rather restricted – most sentences demand no copula in the present tense. Moreover, phrases like 'Ty est' khoroshii' (You are good) sound very unnatural to a Russian ear and are treated as a stereotype of foreigners' speech, usually for comic effect. But in Russian-Chinese Pidgin this copula is widely used in the contexts where in 'normal Russian' it demands another form of subject or should be omitted, as in these examples:

Ivo dziania esi (Shprintsin 1968)

his money be-*3pers.sg.*

(He has money)

Moia glaza est' (Arsen'ev 1978)

my-*fem.sg.* eyes be-*3pers.sg.*

(I have eyes)

Ivo dumaĭ, nasha chushka est' (Arsen'ev 1978)

his think-*imperative* our pig be-3*pers.sg.*
(He [the tiger] will think we are pigs)

Moia dumaĭ, trubka tut blizko est' (Arsen'ev 1978)

my-*fem.sg* think- *imperative* pipe here near be-3*pers.sg.*
(I think the pipe is nearby here)

The first two examples can be easily explained if we consider the lack of morphological categories in pidgins. But the other two seem to be in conflict with the theoretical expectations. It is typical for pidgins (as well as for so-called simplified registers like baby talk or foreigner talk; see Ferguson 1996: 115–123) to omit copulas, and not to insert them. But in Russian it is sentences without copula that are normal, and the redundant copula becomes the marker of speech either produced by or addressed to a non-native speaker (Fedorova 2000).

Furthermore, the copula **EST'** can appear in contexts totally impossible in Russian – in combination with the verb:

Koni khodi est', tebe khodi est', koni khodi netu, tebe khodi netu (Arsen'ev 1978)

horse-*pl.* go-*imper.* be-3*pers.sg.* you-*Dat* go-*imper.* be-3*pers.sg.*, horse-*pl.* go-*imper.* no, you-*Dat* go-*imper.* no
(Where the horses will go you should go, where the horses won't go you should not go)

Nasha labodaĭ shibka daleka esi (Shprintsin 1968)

our work-*imper.* very far be-3*pers.sg.*
(We work very far away)

Tam pomiraĭ est' moia zhena i moi deti (Arsen'ev 1978)

here die-*imper.* be-3*pers.sg.* my-*fem.sg.* wife and my-*pl.* children
(There is the place where my wife and children died)

Moia khorosho ponimaĭ, tebe ubeĭ est' (Arsen'ev 1978)

my-*fem.sg.* well understand-*imper.* you-*Dat* kill-*imper.* be-3*pers.sg.*
(I understand pretty well it is you who killed [the deer])

Za moia Mikita skazyvaĭ budu, kako Dalai pogovori esa (Cherepanov 1853)

for my-*fem.sg.* Mikita say-*imper.* +*future* how Dalay speak-*imper.* be-3*pers.sg.*
(I will tell Mikita what Dalay has said)

Moia gavali esi tibe shibuka lan'che perishola esi (Shprintsin 1968)

My-*fem.sg.* speak-*imper.* be-3*pers.sg.* you-*Dat* very before come-*past* be-3*pers.sg.*
(I told you to come much earlier)

Chetyre sontsa khodi, Daubikhe naidi est' (Arsen'ev 1978)

four sun go-*imper.* Daubikhe find-*imper.* be-3*pers.sg.*
(After four days [of travelling] you'll find Daubikhe)

Comparing these forms with the ones without the copula we can suppose that this combination of VERB+EST' started to function as a sort of aspect marker expressing the perfective.

Unfortunately for linguists, this very interesting language is now dead and forgotten. The most recent data on Russian-Chinese Pidgin was recorded in 1990 when by chance the Moscow linguists Vladimir Belikov and Elena Perekhal'skaia found in the Primorye region an old Chinese man called Diadia Vania who knew no Russian and used Russian-Chinese Pidgin for communicating with his family. But now, through an interesting twist of history, we have the same languages in contact on the same territories and under similar conditions. Let us now turn to the present-day situation and field data.

The Situation Today: Who Communicates, with Whom, and Where?

Having in mind Joshua Fishman's famous title (Fishman 1965), we can say that when describing a sociolinguistic situation one should ask oneself the following questions: who speaks, what language, with whom, when and where? Of course, from the linguist's point of view 'what language?' is a central question, but other ones often determine the answer, especially in language-contact situations.

There is a widespread opinion in modern Russia that a great part of Siberia and the Russian Far East has been invaded by the Chinese. The so-called 'yellow peril' (see Siegelbaum 1978 on the historical perspective of this phenomenon) is a popular topic for talk shows and political debates. In fact Chinese immigration is kept under strict control and legislation continues to become tougher all the time (Larin 2001). There are almost no illegal migrants from China in Chita or Blagoveshchensk. Those who come to work have working visas and pay fairly heavy customs duties and taxes. In fact, it is Russians who go to China ostensibly as tourists but in reality to conduct trading business there. As is common practice all over the world (Skeldon 1995) Chinese immigrants to Russia form close-knit communities (Diatlov 2008a; Diatlov 2008b) and occupy several business niches; in Russia (by Russia here I mean mainly border areas) they are employed in construction, market trade, small repair enterprises and agriculture. There are many joint Russian-Chinese enterprises and business relations are often based on family ties. Mixed marriages (not always registered officially) are not uncommon now – according to my informants, Chinese men are popular among Russian women because they 'work hard, earn money and do not drink'.

Here it is appropriate to note briefly the attitudes of Russians towards Chinese. Judging only by mass-media discourse, one could assume that these attitudes are rather hostile: the Chinese are depicted as a potential threat to Russian economics and culture (see Lukin 1998). This view is, at least partly, shared by some Russians but usually not those involved in close contact with Chinese. People see the Chinese as some sort of aliens with a different language, culture and way of life. Usually they describe the Chinese in negative terms – as dirty, uneducated, uncultured, primitive, etc. Even positive qualities usually attached to 'typical' Chinese (such as diligence or thrift) are often perceived as 'unnatural' for Russian culture – in one of my informant's words '*Normal'nyĭ chelovek tak vkalyvat' ne budet*' (No normal person would work that hard). At the same time those involved in constant and close contacts with the Chinese tend to give preference to positive stereotypes. They depict Chinese people as kind, loyal, hardworking, and 'unspoiled by civilisation' (meaning they are simple-minded people who can make do with just basic food, goods and facilities).

Chinese are often seen and pitied as the victims of Russian police and officials, making them ‘second-class people’. It is interesting to mention as well that positive attitudes towards Chinese are more typical for Russian women than men.

Most ‘visible’ contacts between Russian and Chinese speakers occur in the market place where Russian-speaking customers communicate with Chinese-speaking salesmen who usually have some knowledge of colloquial Russian. Communication of this type is open to any observer, spontaneous, informal, restricted to certain topics and presupposes no personal relations between interlocutors. The other type of communication can be found (with much more effort, I should say) in everyday conversations between Chinese and Russians involved in some constant business or personal relations. They may be spouses, business partners, each other’s employers or employees etc. The main difference is that they are not just strangers to each other; their communication is not accidental. We will now look at several examples in order to examine the impact that this difference makes on Russian speakers’ language forms.

What Language?

First, it should be noted that there are some words used both by Chinese and Russians when communicating with each other that are unknown outside the border area. The words of this type are called *iazyk chelnokov* (‘shuttles’ language’) or *zhargon chelnokov* (‘shuttles’ jargon’) by Russian speakers of the region (shuttle is a name for people doing business by transporting goods across the border and selling them for a higher price).

kapitana – chief

karifana, druga – to address a man

kunia – to address a woman (from Chinese 姑娘 *gūniang* ‘girl’, but normally not used as an address – see Tsze 2007)

russo-turisto – to address any Russian

super-mimumum – best price

pamagai(ka) – person helping a Russian tourist (or *kemel*, see below) with buying goods, packing, transporting etc. (from Russian imperative form *pomogai* ‘help’)

kemel – person paid to bring goods from China (from English *camel*)

kemelikha – she-*kemel*

kemelit’ – go to China as a *kemel*

Here we can see how these words are used in dialogues between Russian customers and Chinese salesmen:⁴

Ch[inese]: Oh, **russo-turisto** ! **Kunia**, **shuba khochesh**, **obuv’ khochesh?**

Vsio kachestvo.

Oh, russo-turisto. *Kunia*, fur-coat-*Nom.sg.* want-*2pers.sg.* shoes want-*2pers.sg.?*

All quality-*Nom.*

(Oh, Russian! Girl, do you want [to buy] a fur-coat, do you want to buy shoes?

Everything is high-quality)

⁴ All the following examples are taken from fieldwork data recorded by the author, Nadezhda Likhanova and Dina Sundueva in 2006–2008.

R: Shubu nado, a skol'ko stoit?

Fur-coat-*Acc.sg.* need-*Adv.*, and how much cost-*3pers.sg.*?

(I need a fur-coat, and what is the price?)

Ch: Tsena dogovolimsia, ustupliu super-minimum.

Price-*Nom.* Negotiate-*Fut.1pers.pl.*, take off-*Fut.1pers.sg.* super-minimum

(We'll negotiate the price, I'll give it for the minimal price)

Ch: Privet, karifana! Chio nada, pamagaika nada, net?

Hi, karifana! What need-*Adv.*, pamagajka-*Nom.sg.* need-*Adv.*, no?

(Hi, friend! What do you need, do you need helper?)

R: Net, nichego ne nado. Podskazhi tol'ko, gde zdes' mozhno pochifanit'?

No, nothing not need-*Adv.* Suggest-*imper.* Only where here possible *prefix-CHI*

FAN (from 吃飯 chīfàn 'eat')-*inf.*]?

(No, I need nothing. Just tell me where can I eat something?)

Ch: Pochifanit', «U Iury».

prefix-CHI FAN-inf., at Iura-*Gen.sg.*

[You can] eat at 'Iura's place' [name of a café].

R: Druga, chego stoit?

Friend, what cost-*3pers.sg.*?

(Friend, how much is this?)

Ch: Pisiat.

fifty [piat'desiat]

(Fifty)

R: A super-minimum dash? Ustupi, a?

and super-minimum give-*2pers.sg.*? Take off-*imper.* ok?

(And will you give me the lowest price? Please, take off)

Ch: Sorok piat'.

forty five

(Forty five)

R: Davai sorok!

Give-*imper.* forty!

(Let it be forty)

Ch.: Ne. Sorok piat' super-minimum.

no forty five super-minimum

(No. forty five is the lowest price)

These examples also show that Chinese use the interlanguage forms of Russian available to them but Russians speak rather informal and colloquial language, using almost no foreigner-talk strategies. They do not simplify their speech and the only obvious result of the language-contact situation is their use of conventionalised Shuttles' language lexemes. Of course the same words can be used metaphorically when referring to a contact situation or even as in-group language play.

Nevertheless, sometimes Russian speakers have to make a linguistic compromise of a sort using forms they obviously do not like:

Ch: Zdlavstvuï, druga.

hello friend

(Hello, friend)

R: Zdravstvuï. Aromatizator dlia mashiny est'?

hello aromatizer-*Nom.sg.* for car-*Gen.sg.* be-*3pers.sg.*

(Hello. Do you have a car aromatizer?)

Ch: Ne poniatno, druga, tio nada. Koliosa esti, obogrev esti, tio nada?

no clear friend what need-*Adv.* wheel-*Nom.pl.* be-*3pers.sg.* heating-*Nom.sg.* be-*3pers.sg.* what need-*Adv.*?

(I do not understand, friend, what it is you need. I've got wheels, heating, what do you need?)

R: Ia govoriu aromatizator nado v mashinu, nu, voniuchku, ponimaesh?

I say-*1pers.sg.* aromatizer-*Nom.sg.* need-*Adv.* in car-*Acc.sg.* well stink-*Acc.sg.* understand-*2pers.sg.*?

(I say aromatizer for a car, well, *voniuchka* [stinky thing, also used for unpleasant person], do you understand?)

Ch: A, voniuchka esti, vsiaka razna. Smotli, vybilaĭ, druga. Kak ty skazal, tio nada?

oh stink-*Nom.sg.* be-*3pers.sg.* every different. look-*imper.* choose-*imper.* friend. how you say-*past* what need-*Adv.*

(Oh, *voniuchka*, I've got it, various kinds. Look, choose, friend. What did you say, what do you need?)

R: Pravil'no aromatizator, voniuchkoĭ my i cheloveka mozhem nazvat', a za eto i po morde mozhno poluchit'. Mimbio?

right-*Adv.* aromatizer stink-*Instr.sg.* we and man-*Acc.sg.* can-*1pers.pl.* call-*inf.* and for that and to mug-*Dat.sg.* possible get-*inf.* Mimbio? [from 明白 míngbai]

(Correct word is aromatizer, *voniuchka* we can call a man, and you can be beaten for that. Got it?)

Ch: A, poniatna, poniatna.

aha, clear-*Adv.* clear-*Adv.*

(Aha, I see, I see)

This type of speech behaviour is common for Russians speaking with foreigners, especially those not considered to be equal and 'western'. As my previous study on Russian foreigner talk in St. Petersburg shows (Fedorova 2006) using ungrammatical utterances (so-called 'broken language') in real communication with non-native speakers is not accepted practice (although these forms are numerous in stereotypes of this communication). But unlike the St. Petersburg situation, interethnic communication in the Russian-Chinese border region does provide 'broken language' on the part of native Russian speakers.⁵ Although rare, ungrammatical utterances can be found in spontaneous communication:

[talking about a mobile phone that is not working]

R: Novyĭ, megafon. Ne mogu, antenna ne rabotaĭ, meniaĭ.

New-*masc.sg.* Megafon [name of mobile company] not can-*1pers.sg.* antenna not work-*imperative* change-*imperative*

(It's new, 'Megafon'. The antenna won't work, change it [the mobile])

Ch: A-a, davaĭ ia delaĭ.

aha give-*imperative* I do-*Imperative*

⁵ At the same time Elena Oglezneva (Oglezneva 2007) who collected her data in the neighboring Amur region found no such examples. Whether this is due to the actual difference between the regions or just to her use of only 'open' communication on the marketplace is as yet unclear.

(Aha, let me repair it)

R: Ne-e, meniaĭ, drugoĭ.

no change-*imper.* another-*masc.sg.*

(No, change it, give me another)

Ch: Ne-e, eta kholoshyĭ.

no this-*fem.sg.* good-*masc.sg.*

(No, this one is good)

[Chinese shop owner and Russian salesgirl talking about long-distance calls bill]

Ch: Eto chio?

this what?

(What's this?)

R: A, eto ia, ia Oksana pozvoni

oh, this I I Oksana-*Nom.sg.* call-*imper.*

(That's me, I called Oksana)

But much more often, as in the second example, they appear in a kind of communication that we can call non-accidental or even professional:

Ch: Ty poekhala? Oh, ia mnogo raboty. Lena uekhala?

you *pref.-go-past?* oh I many work-*Gen.sg.*.. Lena-*Nom.sg.* *pref.-go-past.*

(Are you going? Oh, I've got a lot of work. Has Lena gone?)

R: Lena uekhala GAI.

Lena-*Nom.sg.* *pref.-go-past.* GAI

(Lena has gone to GAI [State Motor Vehicle Inspectorate])

R: Ty chto khochu?

you what want-*1pers.sg.?*

(What do you want?)

Ch: V Chite mnogo deneg goniaĭ govori.

In Chita-*Prep.sg.* many money-*Gen.pl.* drive-*imper.* say-*imper.*

(He said he sends a lot of money to Chita)

R: Kitaiĭ-chelovek?

China-*Nom.sg.* man-*Nom.sg.?*

(Is he Chinese?)

Ch: Ne-e, almian. Sagen.

no Armenian [in the apocopic form] Shagen

(No, Armenian. [His name is] Shagen)

R: Shagen? Kak ran'she? Ty mne rabota? Ia ne znaiu. Gde on kak est'?

Shagen? How before? You I-*Dat.* work-*Nom.sg.?* I no know-*1pers.sg.*.. Where he how be-*3pers.sg.?*

(Shagen? The same as before? Will you work for me? I don't know. Where is he?)

R: A-a, eto Chita firma! Da, ia pisala, tam bumaga ia est'.

Aha this Chita-*Nom.sg.* firm-*Nom.sg.*! yes I write-*past* there paper-*Nom.sg.* I be-*3pers.sg.*

(Aha, this is the firm from Chita! Yes, I wrote, I have paper there)

Ch: Takoï den'ga net.

such-*masc.sg.* money no
(There is no money there)

R: Tam gonial-gonial shchet v banke nepravil'no. On bumaga tebe pishi, Kha In shchet nepravil'no. [...] On mne bumaga daet. Potomu chto on govorit, esli ty tovar pokupaï, ty den'gi netu. Ia tebe shchet daet. Ia den'gi zaplati.

there drive-*past* drive-*past* bill-*Nom.sg.* in bank-*Prep.sg.* not right-*Adv.* he paper-*Nom.sg.* you-*Dat.* write-*imper.* Kha In bill-*Nom.sg.* not right-*Adv.* [...] He I-*Dat.* paper-*Nom.sg.* give-*3pers.sg.* Because he say-*3pers.sg.* if you goods-*Acc.sg.* buy-*imper.* you money-*Nom.pl.* no. I you-*Dat.* bill-*Acc.sg.* give-*3pers.sg.* I money-*Acc.pl.* pay-*imper.*

(The money was sent to the wrong bank account. He, Kha In, miswrote it when writing it in the receipt for you [...] He gave me the receipt. Because he says 'if you bought the goods you don't have the money. I'll give you the receipt. I'll pay')

Here we can see that Russian speakers' verbal behaviour varies during the conversation, moving from 'normal' to 'broken' language forms. And some of them are rather striking: imperative forms for all purposes, using nominative forms of nouns and pronouns instead of indirect cases, nouns used as adjectives (*Chita-firma*, *Kitaï-chelovek*), and even extended use of the copula 'EST'.

These forms resemble pidgin forms from the past. Of course we can not call them pidgins, at least not yet. Creating a new language demands more time but surely something is happening here and we should seize this opportunity to observe language contact in real time.

Is there any future for the 'Reborn Pidgin'?

Our last questions are somewhat speculative: Is there any future for these new language forms, some of which remind us of 'good old' Russian-Chinese Pidgin? Is it really possible to be eyewitnesses to a 'newborn' pidgin? When speaking of possible perspectives for this study, we should bear in mind that the social and political situation in the region can change radically at any time. Consequently I see three possible variants for the future. First, following some political decisions, all contacts may stop, resulting in the total disappearance of contact language forms. Second, if there are conditions for Chinese migrants to improve their language skills, including the provision of formal language instruction in Russian, we will confront something like a post-pidgin continuum with the contact idiom gradually coming closer to normative Russian. In this case, some conventionalised language forms may survive as regional language markers. Finally, we might really see a new pidgin born. Of course, this last possibility is the most appealing to any interested scholar, but the second one looks more realistic. In any event, the evidence from the very first studies of language contact, regardless of its results, cannot be overestimated.

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Cultures of Politics and Business

Вперёд! Exploring the Dialectic between Continuity and Transformation in the Development of the Pro-regime Russian Youth Organisation *Nashi*

Maya Atwal



Figure 7.1 Seliger 2008 [photo taken by the author, Maya Atwal]

Challenging our fundamental conception of transformation as the antithesis of continuity, this chapter contends that in the case of the Russian youth movement *Nashi*, continuity and transformation have enjoyed a symbiotic, albeit restricted, relationship. Despite *Nashi's* resolute objective of securing the incumbent regime and maintaining political stability in the face of the perceived 'orange' threat, the movement has simultaneously aspired to be an agent of socio-political change and called for a rejuvenation of the current elite. While petitioning for an overhaul of the existing set up without seeking to bring an opposition government to power or to incite political instability may be nothing extraordinary in itself, the fact that a Kremlin-sponsored organisation, which was established in order to prevent a Russian 'coloured revolution', has been able to challenge the existing political elite and attract young Russians inspired by the impact of the youth movement *Pora* during the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, is nothing short of exceptional. This chapter examines how it has been possible for *Nashi* to practise a dual continuity-transformation strategy within the framework of Kremlin sponsorship and the repressive political environment in Russia. *Nashi's* achievements and limitations in pursuing its transformative agenda are considered as evidence of the success or otherwise of this dual strategy and ultimately of the relative advantages and disadvantages of state-sponsored participation in Russia more widely.

The research presented in this chapter is influenced by the author's own participation in *Nashi's* annual summer camp at Lake Seliger from 12-25 July 2008 and by fieldwork carried

out there.¹ As well as interviews with members of *Nashi's* leadership, observations and informal talks with participants at Seliger, this chapter draws on web-based primary sources including, but not limited to, archival material from *Nashi's* website² and the website of the State Duma of the Russian Federation.³ The chapter consists of three parts. The first section introduces *Nashi* and explores the themes of continuity and transformation in the movement's development, examining their origins and manifestations in *Nashi's* ideology and strategy. It identifies the obstacles that *Nashi* faced in adopting a dual continuity-transformation strategy and attempts to explain how *Nashi* may have been able to overcome these obstacles in the specific context of the run-up to the 2007-8 electoral cycle in Russia. The second section builds on preliminary assessments of the relationship between continuity and transformation made in the first section by evaluating *Nashi's* overall ability to meet its dual strategy. It explores what the movement's results or lack thereof reveal about the nature of the dialectic between continuity and transformation here and ultimately about the power relations between *Nashi* and the Kremlin. Finally, the third section applies these findings to existing theory on the effects of state-sponsored participation. By drawing out the benefits as well as the limitations of state-sponsorship in the case of *Nashi*, it questions the common assumption that an 'active state' is an inherently corrosive force for the development of civil society.

Continuity and Transformation in the Development of Nashi

Nashi was officially founded in March 2005 with state backing and its development was a direct response to the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and the Kremlin's consequent fear of youth-sponsored instability during the 2007-8 electoral cycle in Russia. *Nashi* is a pro-regime youth movement, which supports the continuation of Putin's political course and has therefore sought to undermine any potential threat to the hegemony of the incumbent Russian regime. The movement's stated objective has been to facilitate Russia's modernisation, enabling her to become a global leader in the twenty-first century (Nashi 2005). According to *Nashi's* manifesto, accomplishing this ambition depends on the fulfillment of three key tasks: 1) preserving Russia's sovereignty, 2) changing the mentality of the ruling elite (for example, encouraging rejuvenation and innovation as well as demanding patriotism, competence and integrity), and 3) promoting the development of a functioning civil society and public accountability of power-holders. Taking *Nashi's* aims at face value, the parallels with *Pora*, the youth movement set up in 2004 in opposition to Kuchma's regime in Ukraine, are striking. National sovereignty, anti-corruption, the development of civil society and public accountability are common to both *Nashi* and *Pora's* goals. Although *Nashi* has mobilised around support for Putin and explicitly aimed to ensure the continuation of the existing regime in the face of the perceived American-sponsored 'orange' threat; at the same time the movement has successfully marketed itself as a pioneer of socio-political change: *Nashi* sought to reject the weaknesses of the incumbent elite and thwart foreign attempts to steal the elections and was thus able to attract many young Russians inspired by the power demonstrated by Ukrainian youth in the Orange Revolution.

[...] As far as I am aware, at the beginning at least, [*Nashi's*] sole task was to prevent an 'Orange Revolution' - to organise mass rallies and gather together large numbers of patriotic people, who support the current political course. But then there was so

¹ This research was funded by the ESRC as part of a Centre for East-European Language Based Area Studies (CEELBAS) PhD studentship award.

² <http://www.nashi.su/> last accessed 11/5/09.

³ <http://www.duma.gov.ru/> last accessed 5/5/09.

much power and energy, and bright young political personalities began to emerge from Nashi, that it became clear that this was not the organisation's only task. In Russia now, in my opinion, it is imperative to create something new....⁴

In the above quotation *Nashi* spokesperson and longstanding commissar, Maria Drokova, emphasises the development of the movement's transformative role alongside the imperative of securing the continuation of the incumbent regime. However, while *Nashi* is well-known for its mass actions and displays of patriotic fervour, its intimidation of the opposition and its fierce support for the policies of former President Putin, there has been little recognition of the considerable transformative elements of the movement's aims (e.g. see Schwirtz 2007, Vinatier 2007, Guillory 2008, or Heller 2008).

In earlier work, which sought to evaluate *Nashi's* sustainability by considering the movement's autonomy and the agency of its activists, it was noted that both of the dominant discourses on *Nashi* identified there failed to acknowledge the agency of *Nashi* activists.⁵ Moreover, it was posited that this failure derived from their common misconception that the state has the unilateral power to direct the youth movement as it sees fit and to control the outcome of activists' participation (Atwal 2009a, 750). Perhaps this aggrandisement of the state's perceived power over *Nashi* accounts for the fact that the movement's transformative agenda is often ignored, because regard has been shown only for the designs that the state may have on *Nashi* as opposed to the objectives of *Nashi* leaders and activists themselves. The implication here is that the Russian state would not back the implementation of the kind of change advocated by *Nashi* and would use the movement for its own ends and consequently only in the capacity of supporting continuity, i.e. securing the preservation of the incumbent regime.

Alternatively, the emphasis on *Nashi's* role in supporting continuity alone rather than recognition of its dual continuity-transformation strategy may derive from the apparent conflict between these two aims. In other words, *Nashi's* declared aspirations of initiating radical change may have been disregarded by commentators because of the perceived incompatibility of such aspirations with the movement's anti-orange/pro-stability genesis and with the limitations of Kremlin sponsorship. Either way, regardless of the state's intentions or the ostensible tensions within the movement's dual strategy, this chapter contends that *Nashi's* transformative agenda should not be dismissed offhand, and considers the obstacles to *Nashi's* pairing of continuity and transformation on a conceptual and a practical level. In doing so, this chapter attempts to explain how *Nashi* may have been able to reconcile its ambitions to support both political continuity and transformation as well as garner Kremlin support for this dual strategy.

⁴ Author's interview with Maria Drokova, Lake Seliger, July 24 2008.

⁵ The article referred to here categorises prevalent perceptions of *Nashi* into two dominant discourses. Firstly, the 'creeping authoritarianism' discourse, which 'views *Nashi* as an attempt by the Russian state to undermine the development of independent youth political movements. Variations on this theme are typical of those opposed to the Russian regime, including opposition within Russia as well as Western 'liberal democratic' commentary on *Nashi*'. Secondly, the 'defending Russia' discourse, which 'portrays *Nashi* as a legitimate response to external threats to the sovereignty of the Russian nation and is favoured by the Kremlin and those who support the incumbent Russian regime' (Atwal 2009a, 744).

Shifting Semantics

The first obstacle that *Nashi* needed to overcome was a conceptual issue, and this was the seeming inconsistency between the movement's actions to preserve the incumbent regime by stamping out the seeds of 'coloured revolution' in Russia and its promotion of the need for extensive socio-political change on a par with many of the demands made by the opposition youth movement *Pora* during the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. Defying the usual juxtaposition of continuity and transformation, *Nashi* asserted that political stability was the necessary framework for progression in Russia and that change was essential for the continuation of the existing regime and the realisation of Putin's course:

The changes which we aim to make to the format of our country's development will be revolutionary, but revolutionary in content not in form. Our task is to achieve dynamic change, [...] our generation must replace the defeatists currently in power. But that does not mean that we should destroy the existing state. On the contrary, political stability is the most important condition for the development of our country (Nashi 2005).

The movement's ambition, as they put it, was to initiate a 'revolution in content, but not in form', in other words radically transforming the nature of Russian politics without overthrowing the incumbent regime. Thus, while making similar claims for socio-political transformation as *Pora*, unlike the Ukrainian youth movement, *Nashi* identified the regime rather than the opposition as the necessary vehicle for initiating an overhaul of the current polity. In this way *Nashi* attempted to reconcile broadly the apparent conflict between its pro-regime, pro-continuity ideology on the one hand and its pervasive criticisms of elements of the existing elite on the other.

It should be noted that in some philosophical circles a dominant ruling group is considered to be conducive to implementing major socio-political change. Dagnino notes that in Latin America in the mid 70s-80s, the particular environment in which Gramsci's work was received 'seems to have nurtured a strong emphasis on the progressive or "revolutionary" possibility of hegemony as a project for the transformation of society' in contrast to the European application of the term hegemony 'to an analysis of the maintenance of the status quo and dominant power relations' (Dagnino 1998, 39). The similarities between this notion of the 'progressive possibilities of hegemony' and *Nashi's* alignment of the preservation of the incumbent regime with the means of promoting socio-political change as well as the certain logic of such an approach are clear. The ability of a dominant regime such as in Russia, with little surviving opposition, a heavy concentration of power and a monopoly of administrative resources, to drive through far-reaching socio-political transformation at an official level is undeniable. Nevertheless, as we shall see in due course with *Nashi*, a dominant regime imposes its own limitations on the scope of possible change.

Closer examination of the three main tasks set out by *Nashi* in its manifesto reveals a recurrent theme to the movement's conception of the underlying problem in each instance and how it envisaged that each task should be fulfilled. Despite the transformational designs of the movement's aims to change the mentality of the ruling elite and develop a functioning civil society to hold the authorities to account, ultimately *Nashi's* plan of action across the board has rested largely on undermining the 'western-sponsored' opposition. Essentially, *Nashi* has sought to realise Russia's future potential simply by ensuring the continuation of Putin's course and denouncing democratic pretenders and other 'non-patriotic' elements, who allegedly seek to return Russia to the chaos of the nineties. *Nashi* thus shifted the target of its criticisms of the current polity from the regime to the opposition, retaining its pro-regime

credentials in spite of its inflammatory critique of the system. Effectively associating the opposition with backsliding and instability in this manner enabled pro-regime groups in favour of political continuity to claim the mantle of being progressive and dynamic and thus attract young Russians inspired by *Pora* in Ukraine. In this light, continuity was infinitely preferable to the alternative of a return to the instability of the nineties and, moreover, was deemed requisite for Russia's future progression and positive transformation.

Realpolitik

The second obstacle to *Nashi's* pairing of continuity and transformation was the practical complications of petitioning for political transformation while maintaining the necessary benefits of Kremlin approval and support gained exclusively through political allegiance. In the contemporary political environment in Russia, where the emergence of any independent initiative is inhibited and its development institutionalised so as to disarm any potentially subversive activity, the scope for advancing political change is severely restricted. The formal political opposition is marginalised and powerless and the development of a functioning civil society is impeded through the introduction and selective application of legislation on monitoring NGOs, extremism and the right to assembly. In such repressive circumstances, with the overwhelming dominance of the regime and limited course for public accountability, there is simply no reason for the Kremlin to support the advancement of any organisation that seeks to challenge the status quo or for it to appease any calls for unwelcome change. Ordinarily, therefore, it would be difficult for any group to mobilise around an agenda for change let alone a pro-regime organisation in receipt of state support.

However, with the perceived threat of political instability in the run up to the 2007-8 electoral cycle the development of pro-regime youth organisations became pertinent to the Kremlin's critical interests and young Russians themselves realised their worth, as Drokova notes:

When the threat of the 'Orange Revolution' arose, after the events in Ukraine and Georgia, it became clear that youth is one of the most active political groups and that at certain points young people's actions can affect the whole country. The realisation of this by both young Russians and the government led to the creation of *Nashi*.⁶

With the regime in potential jeopardy, political stability became an active pursuit. Instead of being the constant, the continuation of the current political course became a goal in itself. This shifted the balance of Russian politics, effectively opening up a dialogue between the Kremlin and youth initiatives as the Kremlin sought to procure their support in maintaining political stability and securing the incumbent regime; a task hitherto achieved simply by shutting out alternative voices. Counter-intuitively as far as the restrictions associated with having Kremlin support are concerned, at this time adopting a strictly pro-regime stance and developing aggressive counter-orange measures became the key to giving Russian youth movements some degree of political influence and leverage to push through change otherwise unheard of in the contemporary environment. Thus *Nashi's* pro-regime credentials have been both an asset and a necessary counterpart to its transformative ambitions. At the same time, because of the nature of the 'orange threat', *Nashi's* progressive rhetoric has also found Kremlin favour by enabling the movement to divert young Russians' attention away from oppositional groups seeking to emulate the success of *Pora* in Ukraine. In this way, being pro-regime *and* pro-transformation was not only practically possible for *Nashi* in the specific

⁶ Author's interview with *Nashi* commissar Maria Drokova, Seliger, July 24 2008.

context of the perceived threat of political instability during the 2007-8 electoral cycle, but actually this combination was uniquely important to Kremlin support for the movement at this time.

In terms of the potential reasons suggested above for why *Nashi's* transformative agenda may have been neglected by commentators, it has been demonstrated that neither the movement's aspirations to promote continuity and stability nor the fact that it received Kremlin support would have necessarily prevented it from pursuing an agenda for change. In *Nashi's* case, continuity and transformation were not mutually exclusive on a conceptual or practical level and so the movement's transformative ambitions should not be dismissed on those grounds. However, what remains to be seen is whether it would have been correct to assume that the state could and would stifle any attempt at genuine transformation by *Nashi* despite its public support for the movement and thus whether or not it would have been justified to discount *Nashi's* transformative ambitions on that basis. This will be considered in the next section by assessing to what extent *Nashi* has managed to deliver on its aims of initiating far-reaching change in any meaningful fashion.

Evaluating the Success of Nashi's Dual Strategy

I will now evaluate how successful the movement's dual strategy has been in practice. Given that *Nashi's* aim of preserving the incumbent regime and ensuring the continuation of the current political course has been widely acknowledged and that the movement's ability to achieve this goal with Kremlin support is neither contentious nor surprising, *Nashi's* success in executing its dual strategy will be measured in terms of the movement's ability to initiate its planned changes and to realise its transformative ambitions.

Transformation

As far as *Nashi's* contribution to transformation is concerned, the key area in which the movement's success has been noteworthy so far is in changing perceptions of youth within Russian politics and society. Not least, the very fact that the 2007-8 electoral cycle was distinguished by the esteem in which politicians held young people represents a remarkable change from the legacy of fighting for pensioners' votes that has characterised post-communist politics in Russia. More specifically, *Nashi* has promoted the philosophy that young people need to be supported in their development and that the state needs to provide opportunities for youths' self-realisation. As *Nashi* seeks to underline, this is a significant departure from the 'free for all' of the nineties, which left young Russians to fend for themselves and shape their future, either by means of the education and connections that their family could provide, or for those from less fortunate backgrounds, by turning to crime and banditry:

A few years ago in Russia youth politics did not exist in principle, because there was simply no inclination for it and also because neo-liberalism was in vogue - the idea of 'help yourself', 'make yourself'. Either you managed to make something of yourself and were a winner, or else you failed and were branded a loser. But not everyone has the same capabilities or equal opportunities, some do not have the necessary technology. Even now, few people understand the concept of youth politics. For the first time [...] we are trying to get the message across that young people need to be provided with

opportunities, young people need to be connected, given the technology etc.⁷

Consequently, by setting the political focus on young people and seeking to reach out to youths who previously found themselves on the margins of society, *Nashi* has encouraged the development of youth political efficacy.⁸ The Kremlin's attention and Putin's personal interest in meeting *Nashi* activists and publicly endorsing the movement's efforts boosts young Russians' external political efficacy. Moreover, slogans such as '*VremYa Prishlo*' ('my time has come') reinforce *Nashi's* message (epitomised in the grandiose rhetoric of its manifesto – see below) that Russia's future depends on the actions of young people today and that every single young person has the choice to take an active part in determining their own future:

We live in difficult times. Freedom, justice, cooperation – that is how we envisage Russia in the future. But we live in a country where world history has been written and will continue to be written over the next ten years. We can make Russia as we would like it to be and in doing so we can make the whole world a better place. Not everyone has the chance to do that in their lifetime (*Nashi* 2005).

Through its work to promote youth initiatives *Nashi* has attempted to place the cultivation of young Russians' self-realisation at the forefront of securing Russia's future prosperity and global standing. In this way *Nashi* has endeavoured to ensure that the new status of youth in Russian politics and society becomes a lasting legacy by claiming an ongoing justification for continued state interest and support for youth work. The establishment of the State Agency for Youth Affairs (successor of the State Committee for Youth) is perhaps the greatest example of the movement's bid to consolidate the change in perceptions of young Russians among politicians and the society that it has encouraged, and in testimony to *Nashi's* particular influence here, the movement's founder Vasily Yakemenko was made head of the agency, with several other *Nashi* commissars receiving positions within the agency, as well as in the State Duma and the Public Chamber.⁹

However, while the progress made by *Nashi* in terms of advancing socio-political transformation is significant and although the movement has done much to attempt to ensure its enduring impact, simply outlining *Nashi's* achievements obscures analysis of the extent to which it has actually addressed the issues that it identified as being integral to Russia's development and the extent to which it has fulfilled its own objectives to this end. This level of assessment of *Nashi's* ability to implement its transformative aims is integral to our understanding of the relationship between continuity and transformation here, and ultimately of the power-relations between *Nashi* and the state. From this perspective, *Nashi's* overall success in terms of initiating its dual strategy has been poor. In terms of public accountability and elite rejuvenation, both detailed in the movement's manifesto as being imperative to

⁷ Author's interview with the head of one of *Nashi's* federal projects, Seliger, July 21 2008.

⁸ According to Karaman, internal political efficacy refers to a person's perception of his own ability to understand and participate in politics, while external political efficacy refers to a person's perception of the ability of political institutions to respond effectively to and satisfy their needs (2004, 31–32).

⁹ For example, *Nashi's* founder, Vasily Yakemenko, was appointed head of the State Committee on Youth Affairs which has since become the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs under President Medvedev; former head of '*Nashi vybori*' (Our elections) and significant figure in *Nashi's* ideological leadership, Sergei Belokonev, is a State Duma deputy and vice-chair of the former State Committee on Youth Affairs; long-standing *Nashi* commissar, Yulia Gorodnicheva, is a member of the Public Chamber; and *Nashi's* spokesperson and commissar, Maria Drokova, works for the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs.

ensuring Russia's future prosperity and global standing, *Nashi's* impact has been negligible. As alluded to above conceptually, in practice *Nashi's* demands of Russia's elite to possess certain qualities have not been extended to critique the integrity of Kremlin officials or United Russia members.¹⁰ Instead opposition figures such as Kasparov and other 'non-patriotic' elements such as Anthony Brenton and Marina Kaljurand have been targeted by the youth movement.¹¹ Furthermore, although *Nashi* declared elite rejuvenation (or to use *Nashi's* own term 'cadre revolution') to be of primary importance and despite the drive by *Nashi* and the Young Guard to get dedicated young people into power, they have achieved very little in the way of tangible results.¹² On 10 April 2006 United Russia announced the introduction of a youth quota, which meant that 20 per cent of United Russia's party list in all future elections should be comprised of under 28-year-olds (later this threshold was raised to under 35-year-olds for elections at a federal level). Yet, according to the lists submitted to the Central Electoral Committee, under 35-year-olds made up only 12.2 per cent of United Russia's party list for the 2007 State Duma elections and a total of 7.3 per cent of United Russia's elected deputies. To put this into context, the percentage of deputies aged under 35 belonging to the 'party of power' in the fourth convocation of the State Duma (2003-7) was 6.8 per cent.¹³ Thus *Nashi* has not been able to instigate any significant increase in the proportion of young deputies in the State Duma.

On the basis of this reckoning of *Nashi's* achievements and shortcomings in realising its transformative ambitions it is fair to say that the movement did manage to improve attitudes towards young people in Russian politics and society as well as to change young Russians' perceptions of themselves. Nevertheless, when the movement's transformative achievements are evaluated alongside its original goals set out in its manifesto, it becomes clear that there are at least two key areas, namely public accountability and elite rejuvenation, where *Nashi* has not delivered on its declared aims. This chapter will now investigate why *Nashi* has been successful at initiating change in some areas but not others and explore what this reveals about the relationship between continuity and transformation in the case of *Nashi*. In seeking to identify what distinguishes *Nashi's* successes from its shortcomings this chapter hopes to finally resolve whether potential efforts by the state to stifle attempts at genuine transformation by the movement have limited *Nashi's* results here.

¹⁰ United Russia (*Yedinaya Rossiya*) is the 'party of power' and currently holds a constitutional majority in the State Duma of the Russian Federation.

¹¹ For example, Garry Kasparov, key opposition figure in the run up to the 2007-8 elections was repeatedly derided by *Nashi* for allegedly having an American passport. Furthermore, in May 2007, following the repositioning of a Soviet war memorial in Tallinn, *Nashi* activists picketed the Estonian embassy in Moscow and mobbed the Estonian ambassador, Marina Kaljurand until she left her post. Similarly, after speaking at a conference of the opposition coalition *Drugaya Rossiya* (Another Russia) in July 2006, British ambassador Anthony Brenton was repeatedly followed and harassed by *Nashi* activists in a prolonged campaign of intimidation that lasted more than four months before the Foreign Office finally replaced him.

¹² The 'Young Guard' (*Molodaia Gvardiia Yedinoi Rossii*) is the youth wing of the political party of power 'United Russia'.

¹³ Author's own calculations based on material from the Central Electoral Committee of the Russian Federation, <http://www.izbirkom.ru/izbirkom.html> (accessed April 23 2009), and from the State Duma of the Russian Federation, <http://www.duma.gov.ru/> (accessed November 1 2008). For all calculations of ages of Duma deputies the age which they turned in election year is used, i.e. for ages of Duma deputies in the 5th convocation deputies age is simply 2007 minus their year of birth.

Leverage and Limitations

It is useful to consider the interaction between continuity and transformation in the development of *Nashi* in terms of a trade-off between the Kremlin and *Nashi* according to what each could and would be willing to offer the other. On the one hand, the Kremlin had the means to bolster *Nashi's* bid to improve the status of youth in Russian politics and society and to rejuvenate the existing elite by procuring certain favours for *Nashi* in return for the movement's allegiance and support. On the other hand, *Nashi* had the potential to help secure the preservation of the incumbent regime by reinforcing regime legitimacy and allaying fears of the perceived threat of a youth-led revolution during the course of the 2007-8 electoral cycle. Characterising the interaction in this manner not only provides for the existence of countervailing forces and multiple agents, but also allows for the possibility that both continuity and transformation may take place simultaneously to some degree, albeit each at the expense of the other, and that it may be necessary to make concessions in one area in order to make gains in another.

Despite *Nashi's* affiliation with the Kremlin and the favourable environment in the run up to the 2007-8 electoral cycle, from the outset the relationship between them was not one of reciprocity on equal terms, but rather one of protracted negotiation stacked in favour of the Kremlin. Certainly, in 2006-7 the recent events of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and Putin's looming retirement as president combined to create a unique political environment in Russia that was advantageous to youth organisations as a whole. Moreover, at this time, pro-Kremlin youth movements were pertinent to the regime's critical interests and so could reasonably expect to gain the Kremlin's favour and, in view of potential services rendered to the state, to be able to exert some degree of influence over the Kremlin. Yet, taken on an individual basis, the value of a youth movement's worth to the Kremlin was greatly diminished by the fact that while having the state's support was the only means for youth movements to obtain vital resources, including budgetary allocated funding, access to media, protection from bureaucratic interference and such like, the Kremlin was not dependent on any one particular youth movement. This meant that although the security offered by *Nashi* was contingent on the Kremlin recognising the significance of young people and paying them due heed and attention, *Nashi's* ability to push for transformation beyond what the Kremlin was prepared to give was severely limited. For example, despite the fact that there was some discontentment within *Nashi* over United Russia's failure to meet its promise of 20 per cent youth quota on its party list to the fifth convocation of the State Duma, protest, if any, was muted, and certainly kept out of the public eye. This suggests that the imperative of securing the incumbent regime over the course of the 2007-8 electoral cycle took precedence over the movement's transformative ambitions.¹⁴

This subordination of *Nashi's* transformative aspirations to the overriding imperative of continuity and, by extension, the subordination of *Nashi's* aims to the Kremlin's interests is evident in the above assessment of the movement's achievements in meeting its planned socio-political transformation: for the most part, the changes that occurred were only those integral to *Nashi* establishing itself and being thus able to effectively secure the continuation of the incumbent regime, or those that would underwrite the legitimacy of the regime in some way and meet little resistance from the Kremlin, its allies or powerful elites. *Nashi's* key area of success, as noted above, has been in changing perceptions of young people, raising their

¹⁴ One of *Nashi's* leaders (who wished to remain anonymous) admitted that, although the youth quota was more an informal agreement and a declaration of intent than a formal commitment, the quota simply was not fulfilled and consequently there has been some degree of discontent about that within *Nashi*. Correspondence with this author, 25 March 2009.

political status and consequently their political efficacy. This 'transformative' success dovetails nicely with supporting the continuity of the incumbent regime by encouraging young people to participate in politics, thus getting out the youth vote and legitimising the regime. In terms of public accountability, where little progress has been made, the fact that *Nashi's* holding of existing authorities to account has been confined to the opposition is perhaps unsurprising given the potential repercussions of such a policy for regime legitimacy and stability. Similarly, the likely resistance to the implementation of United Russia's youth quota from the patrons of the party, whose intentions of installing their own representatives of big business in the State Duma on United Russia's ticket would come under greater pressure from the reduction in available places on the party list, would have made *Nashi's* plans for elite rejuvenation a costly, and thus, unviable transformation from the regime's perspective (Atwal 2009b).

This cuts to the heart of the dialectic between political continuity and transformation in the case of *Nashi*. While the two processes were symbiotic in nature in the run up to the 2007-8 electoral cycle, they were mutually restrictive: assisting the perpetuation of the incumbent regime opened up possibilities for influence and leverage otherwise unheard of for young Russians, but simultaneously limited the scope of any changes planned or introduced by *Nashi* to the confines of state sanction. In other words, given the contemporary Russian political environment, transformation could only occur within the realms of broad political continuity and Kremlin support and this considerably limited the scope and timeframe of any such attempt. As previous state-sponsored mobilisation efforts in the Putin era attest to, while the Kremlin cannot fully direct the course and outcome of participation, it can indeed prevent an organisation from using the benefits of publicity, representation and other resources gained from state-support to pursue its own agenda. Incidents of state persecution of the opposition are numerous and demonstrate the lengths to which the Kremlin will go to eliminate any perceived challenge to the regime. However, the obvious precedent in terms of repression of state-sponsored participation is *Rodina* (Motherland) – a political party allegedly set up by the Kremlin prior to the 2003 State Duma elections in order to siphon votes from the Communist Party.¹⁵ When *Rodina* subsequently began to assert its own agenda, and thus by implication challenge the regime's hegemony, the Kremlin took action to tame all wayward elements associated with the party by forcing *Rodina* to merge with the Russian Party of Life and the Pensioners' Party in 2006 to form Fair Russia (*Spravedlivaya Rossiya*) and in the process sidelining its most controversial characters (in particular Dmitry Rogozin). With a ready supply of other politicians willing to take up the reins and play by the Kremlin's rules, as evident in the latest state-sponsored creation *Pravoe Delo* (Right Cause) which put an end to the Union of Right Forces (*Soyuz Pravikh Sil* - considered to have been Russia's main liberal-democratic opposition party), the Kremlin is able to go on in this fashion intimidating any potential challenges to its rule and picking up and dropping groups as it sees fit. Thus, with *Nashi's* leverage curtailed following the completion of the 2007-8 electoral cycle and the passing of the perceived 'orange' threat, should the movement persist in pursuing its own transformative agenda to the objection of the state, it would find itself debilitated and victim of the same fate at the hands of its former patron, the Kremlin, as *Rodina*.

¹⁵ Wilson refers to such parties, created by the state in order to divert support away from a genuine opposition party, as 'flies' (2005).

Theoretical Applications

The above findings on the relationship between continuity and transformation in the case of *Nashi* have a clear resonance for existing theory on state-sponsored participation in general. The power-relations between *Nashi* and the state underwrite the tension between continuity and transformation that was discussed above, and have determined the trade-off between the two processes. The final section of this chapter situates these findings in their broader theoretical context and assesses their implications for the prevalent assumption that an 'active state' is an inherently corrosive force for the development of civil society.

Normative Ideals

Systematic disregard for participatory spaces initiated or sponsored by the state to contribute to the development of civil society or even to allow for participants' autonomy and agency stems from the liberal ideal of the separation of the state and civil society embedded within Habermas's work. In the first section of his seminal work on the structural transformation of the public sphere (1989), Habermas presents the 'bourgeois public sphere' as an autonomous site of 'rational discourse' wherein private individuals formulate 'public opinion' to serve as a check on the state. From the liberal perspective, 'it is precisely this extra governmental character of the public sphere that confers an aura of independence, autonomy and legitimacy on the "public opinion" generated in it' (Fraser 1993, 24). In other words, in the Habermasian spirit, 'developing an autonomous public sphere outside the domain of the state is a precondition for citizen engagement that does not simply serve to legitimate the existing political system' (Cornwall 2002, 4). Although Habermas himself acknowledges the decreasing viability of such a clear demarcation of the roles of the state and civil society in the second section of his analysis, his conception of the classical public sphere being independent from the state is retained as a liberal-democratic normative ideal, which continues to inform contemporary understandings of the state-society dialectic (Hohendahl 1979 and Cornwall 2002, 4-5).

That is not to say that the role of the state in civil society has been ignored within the academic literature. The fact that the state often does adopt an active role in civil society has been recognised by scholars such as Stepan:

[The state] is the continuous administrative, legal, bureaucratic and coercive systems that attempt not only to structure relationships between civil society and public authority in a polity, but also to structure many crucial relationships within civil society as well (Stepan 1978, xii).

Moreover, Skocpol asserts that not only does the state play a direct interventionist role, but the influence of the state as a structure with its laws and frameworks also provides the context in which all societal developments should be understood, 'even such apparently purely socio-economic phenomena as interest groups and classes' (Skocpol 1985, 27). However, while the advantages and disadvantages of the 'active state' with regard to the economy have been fiercely debated (see Skocpol 1985) a similar debate on the potential benefits and limitations of state intervention in civil society or associational life has been non-forthcoming. It is here that the resonance of Habermas' lament of the disintegration of the classical model of the public sphere is most acutely felt. For example, recognising that state actions and the political environment affect participation by providing opportunities for or erecting barriers against collective action, advocates of a political process approach to collective action developed the

concept of ‘political-opportunity- structure’ (primarily Tilly 1978 and subsequently taken up by his associates McAdam and Tarrow). The concept of ‘political-opportunity-structure’ has since become part of an overarching framework, alongside ‘mobilising structures’ and ‘framing processes’ which has been widely accepted by scholars as a basis for studying social movements (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996, 2). Yet, despite the more holistic approach adopted in the ‘political-opportunity-structure’ framework, its proponents do not go so far as to consider state-sponsored participation among their extensive work on collective action (for example, see Tarrow 1998, and McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996). Thus, although social movement theory has been developed to accommodate the perceived need to recognise the influence of the state on the development of civil society, the latent assumption that state influence on civil society is corruptive and inevitably impedes activists’ autonomy and agency remains tangible and therefore the tendency to disregard state-sponsored participation persists.

The Case of Nashi

As has been demonstrated above, in the case of *Nashi*, continuity and transformation have enjoyed a symbiotic but mutually restrictive relationship. To apply this to the theoretical context here, *Nashi* has experienced both the benefits and limitations of state sponsorship. As far as the benefits of state sponsorship for *Nashi* are concerned, Kremlin backing and Putin’s personal endorsement of the youth movement were integral to establishing the movement and giving it credence among politicians, the authorities and young Russians alike. Indeed, as underlined earlier through recollection of the fate of *Rodina* and other civic and political organisations falling foul of the Kremlin’s approval, not having or losing state sponsorship in Russia severely debilitates an organisation’s ability to function. However, the limitations of state sponsorship in Russia are equally severe. The difficulties experienced by *Nashi* with regard to implementing far-reaching and enduring change noted above testify to the fact that state sponsorship indeed results in the subordination of societal demands to state interests. Nonetheless, while it is true that the limitations of working within the confines of state approval have been considerable for *Nashi* and will prevent the movement from pursuing its own transformative agenda in future, the benefits accrued by means of state sanction and support have been critical to the movement’s ability to push for socio-political change at all. Thus, in this context state sponsorship is correlated with the development of a youth agenda and giving young Russians a platform in an otherwise hostile political environment. In this way, the relationship between continuity and transformation in the case of *Nashi* highlights the necessary benefit of state-sponsorship for political and civic organisations in certain contexts and thus rebuffs the general assumption that the ‘active state’ has an entirely detrimental effect on civil society.

Conclusions

In conclusion it is possible to say that *Nashi*’s combination of an agenda for change within a pro-regime, pro-stability framework was opportunistic in completely redefining the terms of play and taking advantage of the Kremlin’s fear of the potential threat of a youth-sponsored ‘coloured revolution’ during the course of the 2007-8 electoral cycle. In this unique political climate continuity and transformation enjoyed a symbiotic relationship, because supporting the development of youth initiatives and facilitating youth self-realisation were perceived to be vital to neutralising the potential ‘orange threat’ and thus ensuring the preservation of the incumbent regime, and, at the same time, adopting a pro-regime, anti-‘orange’ stance became

the means to securing Kremlin support and the political influence necessary to advance change. As a result, *Nashi* has made a significant contribution to political transformation in Russia within the framework of supporting overall political stability and continuity, most noticeably raising the status of youth among Russian politicians and society and increasing awareness of the value of supporting youth initiatives and the difference that young people can make.

However, while being essential to the realisation of *Nashi's* transformative ambitions, state sponsorship simultaneously placed limitations on the scope of change possible, in particular impeding any attempts to make changes that would directly impinge on the incumbent elite. Furthermore, with the threat of a Russian 'coloured revolution' assuaged and the regime's dominance consolidated in the 2007-8 electoral cycle, *Nashi's* leverage over the Kremlin has been curtailed and the opportunity to pursue its own transformative agenda (albeit already heavily limited) has passed. As such, the implementation of *Nashi's* dual continuity-transformation strategy in future will be strictly confined to those actions that directly support or coincide with the Kremlin's interests.

Finally, in response to the prevalent assumption that state-sponsored participation is inherently detrimental for the development of civil society and following from examination of *Nashi's* dual continuity-transformation strategy in this chapter, the critical question becomes not whether state-sponsored participation is a positive or negative phenomenon but rather, in the Russian context, whether state-sponsored participation is better than none. In the case of *Nashi*, whether suffering considerable limitations to its ability to pursue its own agenda in order to gain some influence and publicity is better than being confined to the margins of Russian politics.

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Russian Perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian Political Sovereignty, 2004-2008

Rasmus Nilsson

In this paper I seek to understand Russian perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty between 2004 and 2008.¹ Thus, the focus is on Vladimir Putin's second term as President of the Russian Federation – a period when the sovereign status of these post-Soviet states had been consolidated to the extent that their demise as internationally recognised actors was unlikely in the medium term.

I argue that Russian foreign policy perceptions towards Belarus and Ukraine during this period were mainly influenced by what I define as the paradigm of Power. However, I also contend that a paradigm of Nation remained significant, unlike a third paradigm of Law. Since perceptions within both the paradigm of Power and the paradigm of Nation indicated failure to accept Belarusian and Ukrainian sovereignty, I conclude that Russian political elites had still not accepted the existence of the two sovereign states, over a decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

My thesis is structured as follows: after the introduction I present the framework for my analysis. Then follow the three main parts of the paper. Each concerns a separate political issue relevant to the discussion at hand: territory, governance, and ideology. Finally, I use the conclusion to summarise my main points regarding each of these issues.

Framework

In this paper I address the interaction between international state-actors, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. Thus, my argument belongs within the disciplinary framework of International Relations (Baylis et al. 2008a, 3). Furthermore, since my argument is concerned with perceptions, the theory that frames my argument is post-Positivist and Constructivist in nature. Post-Positivism relates to epistemology; to underlying assumptions about what knowledge may be obtained about the world. Is it possible to find 'truth', or are subjective standpoints all any analysis within the social and political sciences may find (Marsh and Furlong 2002, 18-19)? Post-Positivists argue the latter, seeking to understand, not explain the world (Bevir and Rhodes 2002, 131-2). Furthermore, I draw on the ontological assumptions of Constructivism. Ontology relates to underlying assumptions about what motivates events. Is it material factors, including relative military or economic capabilities, or is it ideas and perceptions about the world, about friends and enemies, that matter (Wendt 1999, 92-138)? Since this article focuses on perceptions, it mainly follows the latter course, employing a theoretical framework seldom used in analyses concerning post-Soviet developments.

¹ The theoretical parts of this article appeared in an earlier article in the academic journal *Political Perspectives*. The author would like to express my gratitude for the very valuable feedback he received from the reviewers of *Political Perspectives* in this connection. Of course, any mistakes in the present paper are the responsibility of the author alone. Furthermore, the author would especially like to thank Dr Peter Duncan, Dr Felix Ciută, Professor Margot Light, and Dr Bobo Lo for their substantial and very helpful feedback concerning issues discussed in this article. Special thanks go to the organisers of the SSEES Postgraduate Conference 2009 whose invaluable suggestions significantly helped improve the article. Of course, any mistakes remain the sole responsibility of the author.

Yet the impact of material factors cannot be completely ruled out. Thus, Russian perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty were motivated mainly by constitutive dialogues between political elites in these states, but also partly by the imbalance of material capabilities between Russia and its neighbours.

For the purposes of my argument a few definitions are required. I define 'sovereignty' as 'the rightful entitlement to exclusive, unqualified, and supreme rule within a delimited territory' (Baylis et al. 2008b, 587). The 'political' I define as any issue concerning 'the organizational stability of states, systems of government and the ideologies that give them legitimacy' (Buzan 1991, 19-20). Beyond this, my argument discusses paradigms of Power, Nation and Law. I use 'paradigm' in the sense of worldview, or *Weltanschauung*. This refers to a coherent set of assumptions regarding the past, present, and future. Russian paradigms relating to Belarusian and Ukrainian sovereignty interconnect with perceptions of 'Russia.' In other words, perceptions concerning Belarusian and Ukrainian sovereignty are constituted by perceptions concerning Russian sovereignty. Based on the study of academic literature, and especially of a significant body of primary Russian-language sources, I have discerned three major paradigms relevant for my argument. According to the paradigm of Law, 'Russia' is the same as the Russian Federation. It originated as a self-conscious construction, and the strategy of Russia for the present should be to stabilise its position internationally, with an aim to eventual 'normalisation', in accordance with established, predominantly Western, international rules and norms. Here, Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty is respected as separate from that of Russia. In contrast, according to the paradigm of Power, 'Russia' is the same as the Russian empire. That is, 'Russia' originated from specific, historical developments, and its strategy for the present should be to widen the international sphere of influence for Russia, with an aim to eventual 'great power' status. In this paradigm, Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty is subsumed under that of Russia. This paradigm was the most visible between 2004 and 2008. Meanwhile, a third paradigm, the paradigm of Nation, also significantly influenced Russian perceptions. According to this paradigm, 'Russia' is the same as the Russian nation, understood primarily, but not exclusively in an ethnic sense. This Russia originated from a primordial, ahistorical state, and its strategy for the present should be to re-gather the Russian people, with an aim to recreate a 'pure' Russia in the future. In this paradigm Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty is not accepted in their current form. Parts of these states are perceived as legitimately belonging to Russia, while other parts are seen to belong to states opposed to Russia.

Finally, I define as a Russian any individual describing him- or herself as Russian, without considering their status of citizenship, cultural or ethnic background, etc. However, the perceptions of some Russians are more significant for the purposes of my argument than others. To discern whether a given individual belonged to a foreign policy elite between 2004 and 2008, it is necessary to estimate roughly how closely connected this person was to the contemporary power centre of Putin (Lo 2003, 42-44). At the same time, however, since an important part of my argument concerns the way in which perceptions of Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians constantly influenced and reinforced one another, this article will consider Belarusians' and Ukrainians' perceptions of Russia, too.

Within this framework, the three main sections of this article analyse Russian perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian sovereignty concerning territory, governance, and ideology. Within each of these themes, the relative significance of the paradigms of Law, Power and Nation within Russian elites' perceptions of

Belarusian and Ukrainian sovereignty is due to Russian domestic politics as well as politics in Belarus and Ukraine. Any actor in international politics, including Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, needs an identity, needs to be something different from, if not necessarily opposed to, other identities (Hopf 2002, 7). The three paradigms outlined above are examples of this. The paradigm of Power was co-opted by the Russian political elite from the outset. However, this made it impossible for any other Russian actors to define themselves in opposition to the regime without defining Russia differently. At the same time, the Russian leadership failed to outline sufficiently and consolidate the paradigm of Law as an acceptable alternative. The paradigm of Nation thus filled this vacuum. At the same time, however, this development was also reinforced by actions of Belarusians and Ukrainians. They contributed to strengthening the paradigm of Nation in Russia by reacting to perceived Russian aggression. Thus, the fact that Russian perceptions developed as they did depended on the interaction of the Russian political elite with Russian as well as non-Russian actors.

Territory

Law: International Legal Norms

Russian elite perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian territorial sovereignty could rarely be grouped within the paradigm of Law. This tendency risked conflicting with prevailing perceptions in Ukraine. The President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, had not offered any new territorial guarantees to Ukraine during his first term. At the same time, though, an opinion poll from September 2004 showed that 75 per cent of respondents in Ukraine supported Ukrainian territorial sovereignty. This figure was the second highest reported in similar polls conducted in Ukraine over the preceding twelve years and, crucially, came before the presidential election of Viktor Iushchenko (Shulman 2005, 34-5). Understanding that this represented a persistent trend, the Russian commentator Sergei Dubynin reminded Russians in January 2005 that 'there are no influential political or social forces in Ukraine, who would like to engage with the task of direct unification with Russia' (Dubynin 2005). Increasingly, the same could be said about Belarus. A survey from December 2005 showed that only 12 per cent of respondents there agreed that 'Belarus and Russia should become one state, with one president, government, army, flag, currency etc'. This proportion had markedly dropped from 21 per cent one year before, and 28 per cent in late 2000 (Drakakhrust 2006, 108-19). Yet the Russian leadership did not arrive at the necessary conclusions. Admittedly, at a press conference held jointly with Iushchenko in December 2006, Putin stressed that the territorial dispute had to be resolved through international law (Surkov 2007, 35). Yet this statement was provided out of necessity rather than out of conviction, and subsequent Russian territorial claims indicated that no permanent acquiescence to the Ukrainian position would take place. The fact that Russians would not heed their neighbours' demands also became obvious in the discussion about Russo-Belarusian integration. Notably, in April 2007, the Russian Ambassador to Minsk, Aleksandr Surikov, underlined how Belarusians could not expect preferential economic treatment in any future union (Avimova 2007). This might have made economic sense, but only served to reinforce Belarusian disinclination to integrate.

Power: Union State Moving Forward

Yet the Russian leadership was unwilling to abandon the idea of Russo-Belarusian integration. Previously, reintegration with Belarus and Ukraine had commanded support in Russian leading circles during Putin's first presidential term. In 2004, opinions polls of the Russian elite showed that support for reintegration with Belarus remained strong among all political groups. Indeed, within governmental elites a 34 per cent increase in favour of reintegration had been discernible over the previous five years (Zimmerman 2005, 196, 207). Furthermore, Russians believed that if inhabitants of Belarus had partly lost interest in integration this was due to disillusionment with the project, not to any inherent animosity towards Russia. Tellingly, a poll from 2004 revealed that twice as many Belarusian-speakers opted for unification with Russia than did Russian-speakers themselves. Russian-speakers were, on the contrary, much more interested in looking to the EU (Ioffe 2008, 84-85). It might have been expected that the election of Iushchenko as Ukrainian President in December 2004 indicated that Ukrainians had become more sceptical regarding Russians' intentions towards Ukraine. It might also have been expected that the Iushchenko administration would seek to strengthen popular Ukrainian mistrust of Russia. Indeed, a survey from February 2006 showed that only 19 per cent of respondents intending to vote for Iushchenko's Our Ukraine electoral bloc wanted to unite with Russia and Belarus. However, at this time the former Prime Minister Iuliia Tymoshenko's coalition had become more successful, and among its prospective voters 40 per cent wanted integration with Russia and Belarus (Katchanovski 2008, 371). In addition, support for such integration did not fall even as Putin openly criticised the Ukrainian and Belarusian regimes. In Ukraine, Tymoshenko and her supporters ignored previous Russian accusations of criminal activity against Tymoshenko. In the meantime in Belarus, even during the trade war with Russia in 2006-7, opinion polls showed that 40 per cent wished for closer relations or unification with Russia, while only 22 per cent would prefer closer relations or integration with the EU ('Natsional'nyi' 2007). Putin wanted to take advantage of such sentiments. In April 2007, he emphasised that 'Russia is open to any kind of integration [with Belarus]. We are ready to go as far as our Belarusian friends are prepared to go' (Putin 2007). At the same time, data showing economic progress were also used to retain public support for the process. Vasili Khrol, Deputy State Secretary of the Russia-Belarus Union State, highlighted that the Union budget had grown one and a half times between 2001 and 2006, and that turnover of goods within the Union had increased almost threefold (Avimova 2007). This provided seemingly concrete proof that continued integration was worthwhile, not only for Belarus, but also for an increasingly chaotic Ukraine. Dissatisfaction with Iushchenko's Westernising project had grown, and in June 2007, a survey among inhabitants living throughout Ukraine by the Eurasian Monitor International Research Agency showed that 55 per cent of respondents were now willing for their state to enter into a union with Russia (Marples 2008, 34-35).

Nation: Taking Territory back

Russian belligerence could easily change Ukrainian opinions, however. A serious Russo-Ukrainian territorial clash had already taken place over the island of Tuzla in the Kerch Strait in late 2003. Despite subsequent attempts at conflict resolution by Prime Ministers Mikhail Kas'ianov and Viktor Ianukovych, the risk of Iushchenko's

election as President a year later confirmed to Putin that territorial threats might remain necessary as a bargaining tool. Mostly, other politicians were left to present the threats. In November 2004, the Mayor of Moscow, Iurii Luzhkov, thus attended a self-ascribed separatist conference held in Severodonetsk in eastern Ukraine by invitation from Ukrainian Prime Minister and presidential candidate, Ianukovych. Luzhkov's appearance had undoubtedly been approved by Putin beforehand, since the Mayor of Moscow used the conference to present Putin's support for Ianukovych's candidacy ('Komu' 2004). Additionally, the idea of separatism in south-eastern Ukraine at this time had substantial popular backing. After Ianukovych's defeat, a popular survey conducted in the region in December showed that 20 per cent of Crimeans and a remarkable 40 per cent in Donetsk wanted their region to separate from the rest of Ukraine and join Russia (Shulman 2005, 44). Although these wishes did not subsequently result in unrest, Belarusian observers at the time were sufficiently worried for President Aleksandr Lukashenko to argue in May 2005 that the Russia-Belarus union had reached an impasse because of Putin's earlier proposal that Belarus become part of Russia – a proposal that allegedly would result in a new Chechnia west of Russia (Marples 2008, 25). Not many people believed Lukashenko, and open military territorial conflict remained an unrealistic scenario for the region. Yet diplomatic disputes showed no signs of détente, and by June 2006 official delegations from Russia and Ukraine openly disagreed on border demarcation in the Sea of Azov: 'Russia is attached to the Kerch agreement from 2003, which was signed by the presidents of the two states. [Ukraine] suggests changing the status of the Sea of Azov, declaring the waters not internal, but international' ('Rossiia' 2006). In the case of Belarus, matters were different since territorial integration was, officially, welcomed by both parties. However, in October 2006, Lukashenko complained to visiting Russian journalists that the Russian authorities were hindering the re-unification of Russia and Belarus by offering either nothing more than cooperation like in the EU, or, conversely 'that [Belarus] should be incorporated into Russia [and] "even Stalin had not gone that far"' (Savchenko 2006). No Belarusians were allowed to contradict Lukashenko, and it was perhaps particularly ominous for the prospects of future cooperation between Russia and Lukashenko that the unquestioned leader of Belarus was the most outspoken critic of Russian territorial ambitions. In Ukraine, on the contrary, Iushchenko's administration had no interest in increasing the dispute, but rather reacted to renewed provocations by Luzhkov. In February 2007, the Mayor went to Sevastopol', where he declared: 'Here in the legendary Sevastopol', a city of Russian glory, we must talk about the developments that tore Sevastopol' and Crimea away from Russia [...] These developments were undeserved' Not unreasonably, Ukrainian authorities accused Luzhkov of interference in Ukrainian internal affairs (Vas'kovskaia 2007). Perhaps they were prudent in doing so as a precautionary step, for Luzhkov's sentiments certainly had supporters within the Russian executive. A civil servant of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs whom I interviewed in May 2007 repeatedly returned to discussing territorial revanchism and potential divisions of Ukraine (*Interview with civil servant*, 2007). At the pinnacle of his power, Putin provided similar threats. Eventually, in April 2008, he reportedly warned American President George Bush that the entry of Ukraine into NATO might prompt Russia to encourage the predominantly Russian-inhabited areas, including Crimea and the eastern regions, to break away from the rest of the state (Allenova et al., 2008, 1, 3). Thus, even borders officially agreed on were not secure for the future.

Governance

Law: Iushchenko in Moscow

Even under Kuchma by mid-2004 Ukraine was ranked as ‘partly democratic’ by the respected international organisation, Freedom House – a result that surpassed all other post-Soviet states, bar the Baltic States (Solonenko 2007, 140). Russia had certainly lost democratic ground since El'tsin's retirement, but this hardly seemed to concern the presidential administration. There remained a token allegiance to the popular vote. In October 2004, the Chairman of the Russian Electoral Commission, Aleksandr Veshniakov, complained that the Belarusian referendum on constitutional amendments allowing Lukashenko to stand for President again did not ensure public control and should not be emulated by Russia (Marples and Pervushina 2005, 26). However, few doubted that Putin planned to stay in control for many years, even if public opinion should somehow turn against him. Indeed, the idea of sovereign democracy that was becoming such a buzzword in Putin's Russia was also visible in relation to neighbouring states. In December 2004, before the re-run of the second round of the Ukrainian presidential election, between Iushchenko and Ianukovych, Putin did state that the Ukrainian crisis ‘can only be solved democratically, that is on a legal basis, and not under external or internal pressure according to political bias,’ but this was primarily a demand for Western actors to refrain from assisting the Ukrainian opposition (‘Vladimir’ 2004). Iushchenko still won, and in January 2005, the co-chairman of the Russo-Ukrainian inter-parliamentary commission, Aleksandr Lebedev, grudgingly had to admit that masses of Ukrainians flocking to Kyiv and protesting there, had decided the Ukrainian election. It could not be explained through the concept of foreign plots and financing (Herd 2005, 15). That was the opinion of most observers, and Iushchenko's triumph now led the Belarusian opposition to criticise the West for not supporting it in similar fashion to topple Lukashenko (Ibid, 8). Putin had been unable to prevent the Orange Revolution and now sought to minimise the damage. Thus, when Iushchenko, fully aware that Russian elites had strongly criticised his democratic credentials, suggested that his first trip abroad would be to Moscow, Putin happily agreed to seek reconciliation between the two regimes (Kovalova 2007, 184).

Power: Supporting Ianukovych

Putin did not necessarily respect Ukrainian sovereign governance, but in a direct continuation of previous policy he saw Iushchenko's visit as an opportunity to increase continued Russian influence in Ukraine. Previously, in the run-up to the Ukrainian Presidential election of late 2004, leading Russian actors had supported Ianukovych with a sum of at least 50 million dollars and possibly 300 million dollars (Velychenko 2007, 5). That this had not led to the desired outcome was mostly blamed on outside interference. By December 2004, when a swift election for Ianukovych was scuppered, Putin ‘compared the West with “a fellow in a colonial helmet” [and] reproached Washington for wanting to impose “a dictatorship in international affairs under the guise of pseudo democratic rhetoric”’ (Nugaired 2004). Russian political analysts argued similarly, with Viacheslav Nikonov stating: ‘Ukraine is next in line for the execution of the American plan of ‘velvet revolution,’ [...] the secret service operation to replace regimes that have not already been tested successes as “banana republics” by the USA, already accomplished in states in

Eastern Europe or Georgia' (Nikonov 2004). In Ukraine, until his defeat in the repeated electoral runoff, Yanukovich sought to deflect the blame for his impending defeat: 'A large number of organisations sponsored by the USA have worked in Ukraine for many years. America interferes with the internal affairs of Ukraine' (Bogdanov 2004). In Belarus, there was evidently a similar fear of Western influence and pressure for regime change. In late December 2004, twenty opposition youth activists from United Civic Party regional and city organisations were detained for participating in an unauthorised demonstration celebrating the victory of the Ukrainian opposition (Herd 2005, 8). Yet the Belarusian and Russian leaderships had to accept that they could not keep Iushchenko from power. As a second-best solution, however, maybe Iushchenko could be persuaded not to unite with the West against Russia. In January 2005, Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov noted that 'not all [states] have succeeded in getting rid of stereotypes from the past. This shows in the reaction of some circles in Europe and the USA to the political crisis in Ukraine [and in their declarations] that "Ukraine has to join forces with the West"' (Gavrilov and Chirkin 2005). After Iushchenko's regime was beset by domestic troubles in 2006, the former head of the Russian presidential administration, Aleksandr Voloshin, went on a semi-official mission to the USA, where he complained that expanded American activity had problematised events in Ukraine and elsewhere in the post-Soviet region, an area that Russia could rightfully lay claim to (Sidorov 2006). At this time, the recent dearth of Western economic and other support for Iushchenko showed Voloshin that the government of Ukraine might be persuaded that Russia could offer Ukraine more than the West could. And despite the spats that had taken place between the Russian political elite and Lukashenko, it seemed clear in Belarus, too, that Western help would not be forthcoming. By May 2007, the lack of Western assistance had finally convinced some members of the Belarusian opposition that governance by Moscow would be a lesser evil than Lukashenko. Uladzimer Parfenovich and Leanid Sinitsyn duly published a manifesto that favoured associated member-status for Belarus in the Russian Federation (Sinitsyn 2007). Lukashenko opposed this, but he was even more averse than Putin to Western intervention. Thus, it came as no surprise when in October 2007 Russia, Belarus and other post-Soviet governments presented a plan for monitoring all elections in OSCE member-states equally, and for reducing the amount of monitoring: '[...] the number of [OSCE] observers [at a given election] shall not exceed 50 people'. This would prevent the OSCE from establishing whether elections were free and fair and would thus reduce the risk of an unpleasant Iushchenko-like surprise cropping up in Putin and Lukashenko's way in future (Bausin et al. 2007).

Nation: Disparaging the Ambassador

Still, such measures would not help the Russians to get rid of Lukashenko. Indeed, within Belarus the Belarusian President was now becoming increasingly popular relative to the Russian leadership. Already, Putin had suggested incorporating, and thus neutralising, the Belarusian central administration into an expanded Russia. Yet this seemed decreasingly popular in Belarus, and not just among Lukashenko's supporters. In November 2004, following suspension of Russian gas to Belarus, inhabitants of Belarus for the first time favoured Lukashenko to Putin. Answering the question 'If the position of President for Belarus and Russia was established whom would you vote for?' 30 per cent supported Lukashenko, against Putin's 24 per cent. Putin had previously been favoured, notably gaining 51 per cent to Lukashenko's 14 per cent in April 2002 (Drakakhrust 2006, 113). Putin's role in the Ukrainian turmoil

during this time worried inhabitants of Belarus, who did not want similar unrest. The peaceful outcome of the Ukrainian election had not seemed certain, particularly after Yanukovich's menacing statement in November: 'Today we're on the edge of catastrophe [...] When the first drop of blood is spilled, we won't be able to stop it' ('Vybory' 2004). And even if Putin had not promoted Ukrainian civil war, parliamentarians in Russia supporting him had been more willing to do so. Luzhkov was now a member of United Russia, openly supporting Putin, and in December the Mayor of Moscow visited eastern and southern Ukrainian regions including Donetsk, Luhansk and Crimea, the leaders of which vowed to pursue strategies of greater autonomy from the central Ukrainian government by any possible means, should Iushchenko win the election. As mentioned earlier, Luzhkov repeatedly visited Severodonetsk to express his support ('Komu' 2004). Lukashenko was unwilling to be similarly undermined. In mid-2005, the Kremlin appointed the governor of Saratov region, Dmitrii Aiatskov, as ambassador to Belarus. However, after he spoke disparagingly about Lukashenko at a press conference in his hometown, 'the Belarusian [administration] strongly opposed his appointment', Aiatskov never went to Minsk, and by February 2006 Aleksandr Surikov became ambassador instead ('Rossiiskii' 2006). Yet while the Russian government deferred to Lukashenko, at least in this instance, Iushchenko's regime was still being obstructed. Supplies of natural gas to and through Ukraine were halted on January 1, 2006, just when the Ukrainian political system was most vulnerable during its transformation from a presidential to a presidential-parliamentary system (Flikke 2008, 385). Although no political turmoil ensued, the dispute showed Iushchenko's political skills in an unflattering light, while a Russia-friendly parliamentary opposition could argue that increased power to them would mean less difficult relations with Russia in future. Iushchenko had been forced to cede some presidential power to the parliament in order to come to power, but Lukashenko could not be similarly undermined. Russian criticism of Lukashenko was therefore sometimes forced to use other means, including slander. In November 2006, for instance, Russian journalists quoted his family's neighbour: 'We all drank and we're going on drinking [...] the President's uncle [...] can tell you the recipe for home-brewed alcohol in details', while in January 2007 even the normally measured analyst Iuliia Latynina denounced Lukashenko as 'the demonstrative parasite in Minsk' (Bobrova 2006) (Ivanov 2007). Still, Lukashenko knew that such comments would be resented by inhabitants of Belarus in general, and he was determined to exploit any waning in Belarusian public support for the Russian leadership. In January 2007, dismissing Western and Russian interference alike, he stated that 'as long as we're not disturbed [by other states] our people can figure out things for themselves. We don't need either "coloured" or "gas revolutions!"' ('My' 2007). Putin's administration was hardly impressed and continued to undermine Belarusian governance, not least by halting energy supplies. Ukraine could be damaged, too. In September 2007, following the Ukrainian parliamentary elections where Tymoshenko's bloc gained 31 per cent of the votes, threats by Gazprom to cut supplies to Ukraine were followed by Putin's announcement that Ukraine should pay a price closer to the international average (Copsey 2008, 306). Even though Tymoshenko was now much more reconciliatory towards Russia, Putin intended to demonstrate the consequences of challenging Russia.

Ideology

Law: Ukraine in the EU

Russian respect for Belarusian and Ukrainian ideological sovereignty had decreased during the first term of Putin's presidency. During the second term, he did profess his support for Ukrainian membership in international organisations such as the EU, but his professed support, given in December 2004, can easily be linked to his desire to persuade Ukrainians to vote for Yanukovich in the presidential election. Moreover, Putin was clearly aware how impossible it was for Ukraine to become a member of the EU even in the medium term (Tsygankov 2005, 148). To refuse any sort of sovereign international identity for Ukraine would have forced Putin to specify a Russian vision, and this had not been worked out yet. As Russian analysts complained: 'What can we offer Ukraine and the other post-Soviet states today? Builders of a "new empire" must have a no less weighty domestic ideological foundation and no less serious foreign policy intent. At present there is neither the one, nor the other' (Vladimirov 2004). Without a Russian vision, Ukrainians looked to GUAM, the organisation they had helped found almost a decade earlier, which in May 2006 became the Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development. One of its stated aims was to 'secure rule of law [and] strengthen European integration', squarely positioning the organisation within established, Western norms (*Organizatsiia* 1997). Yet in order to achieve these aims, cooperation with democratic states such as the Baltics and Romania were in order, and these now thought of little else than their newly-attained membership of the EU. Iushchenko's Ukraine was therefore somewhat left to itself. Belarusians, too, felt increasingly peripheral in Russian international affairs. In October 2006, members of the Belarusian political elite argued that the Russian elite no longer viewed Belarus as a priority, and that the Belarusian state therefore should seek a different source of inspiration (Rubinov 2006b). Yet no one any longer knew what that source might be.

Power: Modern Russian Identity and the Spiritual Leader

Putin's imperial ideology had been clear already during his first presidential term. Iushchenko's election in Ukraine brought the momentum of this project to a halt, but Russian political analysts did not believe that Ukrainians could construct an identity for their state that would be both European and separated from Russia. In December 2004, Tsipko announced: 'Russian language and Russian culture are an inseparable part of European civilisation. At the same time, Ukrainian language – which was preserved through south-Russian folklore – remains to this day on the fringes of European civilisation' (Tsipko 2004). Tsipko and his colleagues believed that Belarus, too, was peripheral in Europe, unable to have any international impact without Russian assistance. Similarly, inhabitants in Belarus still agreed that their future was close to Russia, although, as seen above, not necessarily united with it. A survey in Belarus from April 2006 showed that 85 per cent perceived Russia as one of the five friendliest countries towards Belarus, as opposed to 1 per cent who perceived that Russia was one of the five most unfriendly countries towards Belarus (Ioffe 2008, 201). And according to Anatolii Rubinov, deputy chief of the Belarusian presidential administration, in July 2006 there was no ideological content in the oft-repeated phrase calling for a 'revival' of the Belarusian nation. Rubinov instead argued that the identity of the state was bound to the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic (Rubinov

2006a). In Ukraine, wistful memories of the Soviet Union belonged to the opposition, particularly the Communist party. Yet the more general idea of some sort of Eurasian unity together with Russia was much more widespread. By 2006, the controversial politician Natalia Vitrenko's party, Blok, controlled approximately 1,000 seats in local eastern and southern Ukrainian councils. With her close connections to Russian Eurasianists, such as Aleksandr Dugin, this political presence was a significant boost for pro-Russian ideology in Ukraine (Velychenko 2007, 11). However, Ukraine, and Belarus, too, had to receive benefits from Russia in order to stay loyal, and this had latterly not been the case. The outcome was increased alienation between the states. And this remained one of the few venues where Russian political opposition could criticise Putin. In January 2007, Aleksandr Prokhanov complained that 'there remains one Belarus that is the gateway to Europe, that Gazprom were so thoughtlessly prepared to slam, positioning the relationship of our states and peoples on an "economic foundation", which preserved "Russian state [rossiiskii] oil" and the "Russian state [rossiiskii] budget"' (Prokhanov 2007). This comment might not have been fair to Gazprom as Belarus had repeatedly failed to fulfil its contractual obligations to the Russian company. The purpose of Gazprom as a company was hardly to subsidise the Belarusian economy and regime. Still, Gazprom was a state-controlled company and Prokhanov was correct to point out that naked profit-seeking to the detriment of the Belarusian economy would not fit with government policies making Belarus into a subsidised vassal of Russia.

At the same time signs existed that a Russian leadership prepared to subsidise Belarusian and Ukrainian economies might be able to prevent Belarus and even Ukraine from allying with the West against Russia. Iushchenko might have become Ukrainian President, inaugurating Westernised international policies, separate from and at times, even opposed to, Russia, but his government was soon beset by infighting. Less than two years after his electoral defeat, Ianukovych had thus come back as Prime Minister, and with his return Ukraine looked to Russia again. In January 2007, the new government even ensured that Ukrainian Foreign Minister, Borys Tarasiuk, who had been closely identified with a pro-Western line for more than a decade, was dismissed as he had been in the past, following a pattern previously set by Kuchma (White and McAllister 2008, 10). Despite worries from the Russian opposition, therefore, powerful indications appeared that Ukraine and Belarus would remain closely aligned with Russia.

Nation: Rejecting West Ukrainian Leadership

Yet Ukraine and Belarus would only remain closely aligned with Russia if Russians would tolerate the right of Belarusians and Ukrainians to sometimes take differing opinions. Some indications existed that intolerance toward difference was growing in Russia, particularly among so-called panslavists, who enjoyed a state-tolerated renaissance. In May 2004, at the first Ukrainian-based congress of the Conference of Slavic Peoples of Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, the leader of the Slavic National Patriotic Union, Petro Tolochko, stated: 'If we wish to survive as a civilisation then we have to unite [if] we [...] should tear ourselves away from Belarus, Russia [...] we would [...] "come undone"' ('Slavianskii' 2004). The onus here was on Russia to preserve the bond, but it was obvious that Lukashenko and other Belarusians criticising Russia would not be tolerated, either. Iushchenko was seen by Tolochko and his allies as a straightforward enemy. It was therefore tempting for Iushchenko's Russian opponents to emphasise this animosity, framing him as hostile to Russians. In

June 2004, a report allegedly written by Russian spin-doctor Marat Gel'man appeared in Ukraine. It advocated presenting Iushchenko as an enemy of Crimean Russians by using unwitting Ukrainian nationalists to provoke land disputes and Tatar retaliation on the peninsula, showing Iushchenko's inability to protect local Slavs ('Tretii' 2004). This plan was not successful, but the impression that Iushchenko and Ukrainian nationalists were out to hurt Russian neighbours was only reinforced as the divisive presidential campaign developed towards the end of the year. Already in October, Russian commentators complained: 'If the "west-Ukrainians" are used to see themselves as oppressed, why should Ukrainians in the east accept such a detrimental role? [...] why should the "westerners", who worship the Polish lord and the American decree, declare themselves to be the only real Ukrainians' (Serkov 2004)? This impression, as I indicated previously, was only reinforced among Russians following the election. Ukrainians, too, could vilify Russia, denouncing it as almost barbaric. This shows, for instance, in Tarasiuk's comment while he still held the post of Foreign Minister in October 2006: 'Russia is the Eurasian outskirts. It won't enter the EU, since it wants to gain the status of a global great power at the centre of a Slavic Union' (Schuler 2006). Although the latter part of Tarasiuk's statement could be viewed as recognition of Russia as a great power, the former part linked Russia to a Tatar past, with Ukraine, incidentally, as the bulwark of civilised Europe. Lukashenko was prepared to use similar rhetoric in January 2007, in the wake of yet another energy dispute with Russia: 'You know, [Belarusians] are an inalienable part of Europe, the heart of Europe [...] Today has come the time when Europeans realized that [...] they also have to link their security with that of Belarus' ('My' 2007). Tarasiuk and Lukashenko seemed to have gone too far; Russia was in many ways as European as the two smaller states. The lack of tolerance went both ways, however. In the Russian government Belarus and Ukraine were seldom denounced as alien to Europe since Russia, as Tarasiuk had correctly pointed out, was simply not just part of Europe, but a special international actor. Yet less prominent Russian politicians did highlight the insular, xenophobic nature of Ukraine. This was most forcefully indicated to me in an interview with a member of the Russian Federation Council in May 2007. Repeatedly, claims appeared that Ukrainians wanted a state purified of *Moskali* (a derogatory word for ethnic Russians), Muslims and other outsiders (*Interview with member* 2007). This was presented as a disease unique to western Ukraine, whereas the eastern regions had much more in common with Russia. To me it was quite clear that the politician in question would view a split Ukraine as a natural development and, although the Russian leadership might not overtly share this sentiment, it no longer sought to counter it.

Conclusion

Between 2004 and 2008, the paradigm of Power dominated Russian perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty. In territorial matters, Putin ensured Belarusians that integration would go as far as they were ready for it to go, while the Union budget indeed increased substantially. Furthermore, opinion polls taken among executive elites in Russia showed that Putin had strong domestic support for his plans for integration with other post-Soviet states. In matters relating to governance, Russian elites openly and consistently supported Ianukovych during the Ukrainian presidential election. Putin complained about Western interference, while Sergei Ivanov claimed that old stereotypes continued to dominate thinking in the EU and North America. What these and other actors indicated was subsequently confirmed by

Voloshin, the former senior aide to El'tsin and Putin, who told the American administration that Ukraine and the rest of the post-Soviet region constituted part of a Russian sphere of interest. Finally, in matters relating to ideology, prominent Russian commentators, such as Tsipko, portrayed Russia as spiritual leader of the Slavic community and the only medium through which peripheral Ukrainians and Belarusians could enter Europe. Many Russians believed their state had a duty to assist this development, for instance, through unquestioned, generous subsidies or through political alliances with dominant parties abroad, such as that existing between Dugin and Vitrenko in Ukraine.

The paradigm of Nation also significantly influenced Russian perceptions of Belarusian and Ukrainian political sovereignty. In issues concerning territory, Putin showed that any previous border agreement could be annulled. Most notoriously, he threatened revanchism against Ukraine if it joined NATO, and he endorsed Luzhkov to visit eastern Ukraine and support regional separatism. Strongly voiced protests resulted, not just from Ukrainians but also from Belarus, where Lukashenko compared Putin with Stalin and threatened a new Chechnia. In matters concerning governance, the Russian government showed a distinct lack of respect for the Ukrainian democratic choice of Iushchenko. Energy and other types of disruption were introduced at the most critical times for the Ukrainian polity, for instance, during its transition from a presidential to a parliamentary system, while the Russia-endorsed presidential candidate in Ukraine, Ianukovych, warned of civil war when his election did not progress smoothly. Finally, in issues concerning ideology Russian commentators increasingly appealed to Russians in Ukraine, who should rebel against the alleged hijacking of their state by West Ukrainian nationalists. Although rumours that a Russian spin-doctor in Ukraine tried to provoke inter-ethnic strife to discredit Iushchenko were not confirmed, local political elites certainly took offence. If Tarasiuk and Lukashenko could agree on one thing, this was apparently that their states were more European than Russia.

Conversely, the paradigm of Law was insignificant. Russians declared that territorial disagreements with Ukraine should be solved by international law, but they did not follow up such words with action. Similarly, Iushchenko's visit to Moscow early in his presidency, a visit intended to alleviate some Russian concerns following his election, was not appreciated by Putin. Finally, Putin could easily suggest Ukrainian membership of Western organisations such as the EU when he knew this would not soon become a possibility.

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The Games of the Velvet Revolution: An Integrative Approach to the Transition in Czechoslovakia 1989

Vit Simral

Twelve years ago, in their influential article, James Mahoney and Richard Snyder (1999) reviewed contemporary research on regime change. They focused on problems of methodology and methods preference, and on the ‘chicken-egg’ controversy between the proponents of voluntarism on one side (Di Palma 1990; Przeworski 1991) and structuralism on the other (Luebbert 1991; Rueschmeyer et al. 1992) and argued that ‘laying the groundwork for the next generation of studies of regime change requires [...] integration of structural and voluntarist approaches’ (Mahoney and Snyder 1999, 4).

This chapter seeks to combine structural and actor-oriented approaches in an analysis of the transition of Czechoslovakia in 1989. Such a combination promises to get around the rigid conditions of socio-historical macro-structures as well as the vague, non-explaining flexibility of games in political arenas. It aims to uncover how structural variables affect the possibilities of politicians and citizens during the process of democratic transition.

In this chapter, game theory is employed as the actor-related framework for its analytical rigour and its theoretical potential to achieve a ‘prediction regarding the outcome of interaction among human beings using only data on the order of events, combined with a description of the players’ preferences over the feasible outcomes of the situation’ (Rubinstein 1991, 923). The game theoretical models make use of Joseph Colomer’s classification of regime change actors (Colomer, 1991), where actors are defined by their preference orderings. Four groupings in the classification – Reformists, Openists, Continuists, and Involutionists – constitute the ruling bloc, while the remaining two – Rupturists and Revolutionaries – represent the opposition (Figure 9.1).

Transition Preference Orders of Strategic Groups	Opposition					
	Maximalists		Soft-liners Gradualists		Hard-liners Maximalists	
Strategic Groups	1 Revolutionaries (OF local leaders)	2 Rupturists (OF HQ leaders)	3 Reformists (Pitra)	4 Openists (Štrougal)	5 Continuists (Adamec)	6 Involutionists (Bílák)
Most Preferred	R	R	r	r	C	C
	C	r	R	C	r	R
Least Preferred	r	C	C	R	R	r

R = rupture; C = continuity; r = reform

Figure 9.1. Transition Preference Orders of Strategic Groups (adapted from Colomer 1991, 1285).

Structures and Integrative Approaches

According to Mahoney and Snyder, two distinct integrative analytical methods may be identified in research on regime change: the path-dependent strategy and the Funnel of Causality (1999, 11).

Following absolute time in history, the path-dependent strategy looks for critical junctures in the course toward democracy. This interpretation is based on the assumption of ‘binding’ history and focuses on ‘temporally intermediate processes

through which the structural legacies of historical junctures are transmitted and which ultimately connect past critical junctures to subsequent regime change' (Mahoney and Snyder 1999, 13). Thus, even though such a model allows for the introduction of actors at the critical junctures, this strategy carries the weakness of historical determination and one-way logic (Larsen 2000, 456-457).

The Funnel of Causality, on the other hand, assumes that 'structural factors can never be sufficient causes of human action [...] [and] a margin of actor maneuverability always exists between the crevices of structural constraints, creating opportunities for actors to avert regime outcomes strongly favoured by structural forces' (Mahoney and Snyder 1999, 13). The funnel is a vector causal model 'in which variables from different levels of analysis are treated as independent vectors with distinct forces and directions' (Ibid., 12). In other words, the deterministic causation of the path-dependent approach is replaced by a probabilistic one.

Macro-structural variables are located at the top of the funnel, constituting the most aggregated level of analysis. In the downward direction, meso- and micro-level variables follow with shorter durations of specific processes than affected regime change. Each level of analysis explains a certain amount of variance in non-democratic regimes leading towards a certain type of transition. Actors at the leadership level are at the bottom of the funnel where the games of transition take place. Regime changes are then explained by summing up forces and directions of variables. This approach allows for combining different types of variables into a single variable and comparing their relevance. Instead of the problem of bridging structural levels, an observer is faced with a simple – however tricky – question of adding explanatory weights of vectors (Mahoney and Snyder 1999, 22). In short, because of its filtering function, the Funnel of Causality is a valuable tool for understanding both long- and short-term causes that directly affect the context of transition.

Together with Oyvind Lervik, who also introduces such a modification in his own model (Lervik 2001), this chapter discards the common 'one-way-only' assumption and the down-directional causation as sufficient for a valid model of regime change. Instead of 'exhaustion' of variables from higher levels directly to lower levels, connections are searched for and shown between every level of analysis. It is assumed that in theory a strong influence from the very bottom of the funnel can affect a variable at the top, and vice-versa. The case study of Czechoslovakia should support this assumption with evidence. Changes in the funnel variables are always taken into account when modelling games of transition and their rules.

A second modification to the funnel strategy makes use of a model proposed by Rueschmeyer, Stephens, and Stephens (1992), where three power structures shape social and political outcomes. These structures are state, class, and transnational power. Also this chapter uses these labels, but defines them differently: the variable 'transnational power' covers all processes that originate outside the borders of a country as well as processes common in the whole region. The term 'state' refers to the shape of a political system and its institutions as well as state economy. Lastly, the 'class' group represents development variables of civil society, actual social issues and attitudes towards the regime. The three-dimensional shape of the funnel allows all classes of variables to interdigitate at one moment at the same place to affect a particular event. Furthermore, it shows the mutual influence and diffusion of processes between all structural variables. In the presented model, Stein Larsen's types of variables are replaced with the aforementioned transnational power, state, and class; this classification is based essentially on the difference of duration of the

observed processes (see Figure 9.2).

Such an approach differs greatly from all previously presented (i.e., Mahoney and Snyder, Larsen, Lervik), but a similar one was used by e.g., Mahdavi (2006), who also employed Rueschmeyer, Stephens, and Stephens's model of power structures. Strictly speaking, this chapter aims to be an innovative synthesis of all these modifications mentioned above.

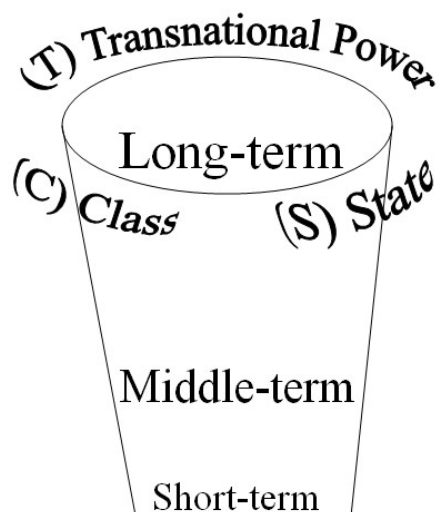


Figure 9.2. The 3-D Funnel of Causality.

Czechoslovakia 1989

(T) Transnational Power

Since the Renaissance, East Central Europe was an economic semi-periphery of the West, more developed than the rest of Eastern Europe or the Baltic states (Pounds 1978). The region differed from Eastern Europe and its nations had always seen themselves to be a part of the Western civilisation (Berend 1986, 332). As Stein Rokkan and his followers argue (Rokkan 1975, Kommissrud 1996), all nations in the region finished their state/nation-building before, or immediately after the First World War. The interwar period was affected by two global trends: the diffusion of Marxism-Leninism with a consequent rightist reaction, and the economic depression of the 1930s. In the 1930s, socio-economic problems contributed to an authoritarian twist in the majority of East Central European countries. In 1939, Nazi Germany consumed the whole region – either as an invader or as an ‘ally’.

After the Second World War, the Allies decided upon the fate of East Central Europe as a border between the West and the East. Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and East Germany fell under Soviet influence. At the beginning of the Cold War in the early 1950s, these four countries underwent a period of totalitarianism. Their regimes were characterised by exalted ideologies and socio-political transitions to ‘democratic centralism’. The Soviet model of economic socialism uniformly rendered Europe east of the Elbe more homogeneous than ever before. The State’s role became practically absolute and the application of socialist ideology eliminated the traditional rural-peasant character of society – there was ‘on average, compared to prewar conditions, at least a tenfold to fifteen fold increase in industrial production’ (Berend

1986, 345).

After Stalin's death in 1953, the reins of ideological control were loosened in the entire communist bloc, including the Soviet Union itself. Nikita Khrushchev, the new leader of the USSR, denounced Joseph Stalin's dictatorship and thus opened a Pandora's Box – 'destroying Stalin's infallibility destroyed Soviet infallibility as well' (Cipkowski 1991, 9). In many countries, including Gomulka's Poland, nationalism occurred within the Communist party and the unity of Soviet bloc began to vanish. Firstly, economic problems brought civil disorders to Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. In 1956, structural economic reforms in Hungary carried a noticeable pattern of political liberalisation. The Soviet army put a violent end to this development and, after Khrushchev's fall in 1964, Brezhnev's rigid era arrived. Bureaucracy took the place of charismatic leaders, and totalitarian ideology was on the wane. During the mid-1960s, Brezhnev's government focused on domestic problems and lost control of developments in East Central Europe (Ladrech and Wegs 1996, 145), but the 1968 invasion of 'deviating' Czechoslovakia indicated the nature of the renewed Soviet foreign policy towards the region.

According to Ladrech and Wegs, the history of the Soviet bloc from the Brezhnev era onward may be divided into four phases (Ladrech and Wegs 1996, 235). It began with meddling in the affairs of East Central European countries in the 1960s and the 1970s, accompanied by a relative growth of living standards. Communist leaders were trying to divert the attention of the people from their minimal political rights and demobilise civil society. In the late 1970s, economic depression led to the second phase, when opposition groups formed in Poland and Hungary. In Poland, the situation culminated in open protests and the birth of the Solidarity trade union in 1980. This development encouraged dissenters in neighbouring countries, and anti-regime movements spread across the region. Nevertheless, a successful motion towards regime change did not start until the third phase in 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev took hold of the position of general secretary of the Soviet Communist party. As a response to the critical Soviet economic performance, Gorbachev introduced *perestroika* and *glasnost* and gave his permission for liberalisation in the bloc. Moreover, in 1989, Gorbachev proclaimed a policy of nonintervention (Cipkowski 1991, 10).

The aforementioned characteristics of East Central Europe are all hallmarks of post-totalitarian countries – a limited degree of pluralism inside the regime, weakened commitment to ideology, only minimal routine mobilisation and technocratic leadership (Linz and Stepan 1996, 42-51). The regimes varied from 'early' to 'frozen' post-totalitarianism. The various and differently intense processes, which led to these conditions of post-totalitarianism, may be summed up as follows:

Long-term

- (1) The region had always been considered a semi-periphery to the West.
- (2) State/nation building process had been completed before the Communists took power.
- (3) All countries experienced a democratic as well as an authoritarian period in their history.

Middle-term

- (4) East Central Europe was of a vital military importance to the Soviet bloc.

- (5) Economies in the region copied to a major extent the Soviet socialist model.
- (6) In the 1950s, relations within the Soviet bloc worsened and became more complicated.

Short-term

- (7) All countries had been undergoing a period of constant economic decline since the 1960s.
- (8) Soviet liberalisation and the policy of nonintervention were introduced in the late 1980s.
- (9) Civil society showed a strong inclination to a 'snowball' effect in liberalisation.

(S) State

From 1918 to 1938, Czechoslovakia represented an exemplary stable democracy amidst authoritarian neighbours. The Czechoslovak Republic was founded upon four principles that set the stage for later fundamental intra-nation clashes: republicanism, social radicalism, anti-Catholicism, and an all-embracing constitutional Czechoslovak nationhood. (Balík et al. 2003, 45). During the era of the First Republic, the heterogeneity of national and ideological interests demanded a consensual type of polity that lasted until 1938. In the next seven years, the country was occupied by the Nazis and from 1945 to 1948, Czechoslovakia experienced a semi-democratic period when the Communists were preparing for their takeover. The Communists were strengthened by Soviet support and the close relationship between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union that dated back to 1943. In 1946, the first free elections were held and showed an unprecedented 40 per cent majority for the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ). The main cause behind the Communists' success was surely their plan for agricultural and economic reform in which the land that had formerly belonged to 2.5 million ejected Germans was redistributed to former voters of the Agrarians, who were proscribed in 1945 for their alleged collaboration with the Nazi regime.

The forced Czechoslovak withdrawal from the Marshall Plan signalled critical pressure from the Soviets to resolve the situation in the country and on 25 February, 1948, the Communist coup ended the long-lasting domestic political crisis. From 1948 till 1953, Czechoslovakia did not differ from the common totalitarian model of the Soviet bloc. All competitive power-centers like the Church or liberal-minded officer corps were violently crushed. The four satellite parties of the KSČ were utterly powerless.

Signs of liberalisation could be seen in Czechoslovakia during Khrushchev's era. The state of the country in the late 1950s could be regarded as a consultative post-totalitarianism (Balík et al. 2003, 136). Having no strong leader, the Party was controlled by groups of bureaucrats, and apparatus sections. Political processes and procedures became stable and rigid. State socialism – with the KSČ as a cornerstone of the regime – was *de jure* confirmed in the new constitution of 1960. The governmental system solidified in Bohemia and Moravia and was introduced into the comparatively undeveloped Slovakia, where a type of national communism had been evolving. However, the Slovak autonomous government was at that time even more limited and its authority circumscribed.

The situation changed only in the mid-1960s, with the 1968 Constitutional Act and federalisation of the country. In 1968, the degree of liberalisation in Czechoslovakia

reached the level of quasi-pluralistic post-totalitarianism and continued to become even more democratic (Balík et al. 2003, 136-137). Efforts to boost the deteriorating national economy showed flaws in the Marxist ideology. Civic organisations and non-political groups were becoming organised and weakened the fundamentals of the Communist ideology.

The process of democratisation was interrupted by the invasion of the Warsaw Pact armies on 21 August 1968. Occupation forces remained in the country until the regime broke down and the Czechoslovak army was under full Soviet control. Normalisation, i.e. the process of reverting to the pre-1968 political situation, began with purges in the KSČ, focusing first on the leadership and then on low-level party members (Fiala 1999). Charges of the members were based on the materials of the State Security (StB), a secret police corps and a fundamental constituent of the lasting non-democratic regime. The presence of the corps was perhaps even more valuable than that of armed forces (Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965). From 1968 until 1989, the number of collaborators with the State Security ranged from 11,000 to 13,000 (Milan 2000, 27, 35). The Communist Party renewed its power and became the only power-centre in the country, while the relevance of the elected legislative and executive organs declined. With the 15th Congress of the KSČ in April 1976, the personal and ideological transformation of the regime was completed and any prospective progress had been frozen.

The economic trend of the 1970s pursued the political policy of normalisation. The relative living comfort in Czechoslovakia, one of the most developed countries in the Soviet bloc, preserved the social peace and prevented conditions favourable for a revolution as characterised by the modernisation paradigm (Lipset 1960, 4). 'The less democracy there was in politics, the more of it was in economy' (Turek 1995, 68). On the other hand, for twenty years preceding the regime breakdown, the social contract, based on a certain level of living comfort for everyone, did not allow the national economy to grow and brought a significant lack of working motivation. The poor performance of economy disunited the ruling bloc and a minor group of pro-Gorbachev bureaucrats called for a slight regime change that would enable economic growth. At the dawn of the regime change, 'state' variables may be summarised as follows:

Long-term

- (1) The role of the Church was considerably weak, especially in the Czech lands.
- (2) The Czechoslovak polity was consensual, not competitive.
- (3) The state/nation-building process was completed, more in the Czech lands than in Slovakia.

Middle-term

- (4) The power centre lay not in the elective governmental body, but in the Communist Party.
- (5) The gap between business and political elites' interests was widening.
- (6) Armed forces of the Warsaw Pact remained in the country after the 1968 invasion.

Short-term

(7) The Communist Party's ideological and personal base had frozen and could not progress.

(8) The StB infiltrated most of the regime opposition.

(9) The regime leaders split up into *pro-perestroika* pragmatists and orthodox Communists.

(C) Class

Czechoslovakia was a country of a monocephalic territorial structure, with Prague in the position of an all-dominating centre (Rokkan et al. 1987, 26; Hloušek and Kopeček 2004, 13). The First Czechoslovak Republic was still predominantly an agrarian country and full-scale industrialisation did not come until the post-war era. The start of communisation was the actual birth of the urban working class in Czechoslovakia, when the newcomers swamped the relatively small, pre-war group of workers (Schöpflin 1993, 31-6). Thus, the Communists in the late 1940s completely changed the social structure of Czechoslovakia and gained enough support for the first decades of their rule. The 1945 displacement of the German and Magyar minority homogenised the nation.

After the totalitarian period (1948-1953), the ideological grip on society in Czechoslovakia loosened. The intelligentsia ventured to discuss existing taboos that led to the cultural liberalisation of the 1960s and a partial restoration of relations with civic and cultural circles in the West. People were once again directly interested in politics, and various features of pluralism emerged.

Consequently, 21 August 1968 affected mainly the intelligentsia and civil society. The process of 'normalisation' succeeded in its purpose – to restore Communist rule and to placate the populace. From the early 1970s, society found itself in a state of resignation from politics. For average Czechoslovak citizens, accepting the regime and publicly showing their loyalty meant making a sacrifice that would lead to a peaceful life. Citizens had to ignore their values and adopt others – twisted, but nevertheless, mutual. Because of a lack of options, they followed the rules of the existing social contract (Možný 1999, 35, 49). The official media were full of vacuous phrases, which formed the façade of the regime, but in which no one believed (Fidelius 1998; Cívín 2005).

The post-invasion leaders conducted purges against the reformers differently in the two federated republics. Compared to the Slovak elites, the Party leadership persecuted the Czechs harshly. 'The result was that the Czech intelligentsia was pushed into dissent, while the Slovaks compromised and collaborated with the regime' (Eyal 2003, xx). Because of that, the opposition against the 'normalised' regime arose – with the exception of the early 1970s attempts of former Communist reformers – first and mainly in the Czech lands. Intellectuals, academics, and artists, all 'the groups most handicapped by the normalisation [...] became the core of the opposition' (Otáhal 1994, 21). Charter 77 emerged as the major platform that popularised ideas of the dissent in the society. The group's proclaimed purpose was to 'advocate human and civil rights in the country and the world' (Declaration of Charter 77 1977). Such a declaration pointed to the very core of the post-totalitarian regime and easily became a rallying point for the anti-regime opposition.

At the end of the 1980s, the social climate of resignation began to change as a new generation, not branded by the actual experience of the '68 Prague Spring and the post-Spring purges, came of age. According to Možný, Czechoslovak 'real' or 'pragmatic' socialism was based on a mutual arrangement of reciprocal services, which in reality substituted capitalism. Economic strength and networks were replaced by status in the 'nomenclature' (Možný 1999, 74-78). However, the new generation found this system highly unsatisfying and that manifested itself in the rise of students' movements and various independent post-material initiatives (Vaněk and Otáhal 1999, 17). University students were active mainly in the new subcultures of New Wave and Punk. In 1987 and 1988, first attempts to establish a parallel, non-state organisation to the pro-regime Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth (SSM) were answered by an immediate repressive counteraction by the StB. 'Students were not afraid to criticise', stated the Prague body of the KSČ in 1988 (Otáhal 2003, 63).

As the majority of the opposition movement could be found in Bohemia and Moravia, the situation in Slovakia was incomparably less favourable to a regime change. A major difference between the Czech and Slovak opposition was the significant presence of the Catholic Church in Slovakia. The Church was effectively paralysed during the normalisation and cannot be considered as an opposition centre until the late 1980s. Still, there existed an underground network of anti-regime activities, disguised by the official image of a state-subjugated Church (Cuhra 2005, 70). The early 1980s saw the revival of the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia. After the protest of Czechoslovak Cardinal František Tomášek and the Pope's official dissolution of the pro-regime Syndicate of the Catholic Clergy (*Pacem in Terris*) in 1982, the Czechoslovak authorities were forced to reduce their control over the Church.

Movements in civil society were the sparks that started the 1989 regime change. However, the process of forming the regime opposition was extremely complicated for several reasons:

Long-term

- (1) Prague had always been in the position of an all-dominating centre.
- (2) There were no significant ethnic minorities in Czechoslovakia after 1946.
- (3) The birth of the Czechoslovak working class was linked to the Communist era.

Middle-term

- (4) The reformers of the 1960s lost their influential positions after 1968.
- (5) Czech elites were persecuted by the regime more severely than Slovak elites.
- (6) Civil society underwent a process of political demobilisation in the 1970s.

Short-term

- (7) The generation not branded by August 1968 came of age.
- (8) The opposition movement found a common ground in the human rights movement.
- (9) The Catholic Church was stimulated by the Vatican in the early 1980s.

Game 1: Unsuccessful Liberalisation

At this point, the first game-theoretical model, showing a struggle for liberalisation inside the ruling bloc may be formulated. Most of the previous works on the Czechoslovak transition neglect this phase and conclude simply that the ‘frozen’ type of post-totalitarianism does not allow liberalisation to occur. This study argues that in Czechoslovakia, there was a possibility of broad liberalisation, but it emerged too early to succeed.

No later than 1986, four model factions had surfaced amongst the Communist leadership, induced by the worsening economic situation of Czechoslovakia, changes in the USSR, and in the region (i.e. variables $T(6,7)$, $S(4,7,9)$, and $C(4)$). These factions were:

- Reformists, i.e. those young politicians who did not partake in the normalisation purges and were not bound by the anti-reformist pragmatic acceptance.
- Openists, a strong group led by Lubomír Štrougal, the long-time Federal Prime Minister (1970-1988), and the official head of government responsible for national economic performance, who openly demanded regime reforms.
- Continuists, i.e. moderates represented by Ladislav Adamec, a pragmatic careerist of the normalisation era.
- Involutionists, led by Vasil Bil’ak, representatives of the ideological orthodox hard-line (Saxonberg 2001, 199-200).

An open conflict of the factions took place at the KSC Politburo meeting on 18 November 1987, where a successor to Gustáv Husák, who had held the position of the Party’s general secretary for two decades, was to be selected. Štrougal was the candidate of the pro-reform bloc; Milouš Jakeš, a puppet of the Bil’ak faction, was the frontman of the hard-liners. As it turned out, Štrougal’s position was weaker than it might have been assumed from the quantity of pro-reformists. Because most of the reformists held the position of mere candidate members in the Politburo with no voting rights and the moderate wing eventually agreed upon Jakeš, Štrougal lost and was demoted in the regime leadership hierarchy (Wolchik 1991, 126-131).

Why did Adamec ally himself with Jakeš instead of Štrougal? And was there a chance that – under different circumstances – he would have supported the Openists? This study offers the following explanation (Figure 9.3):

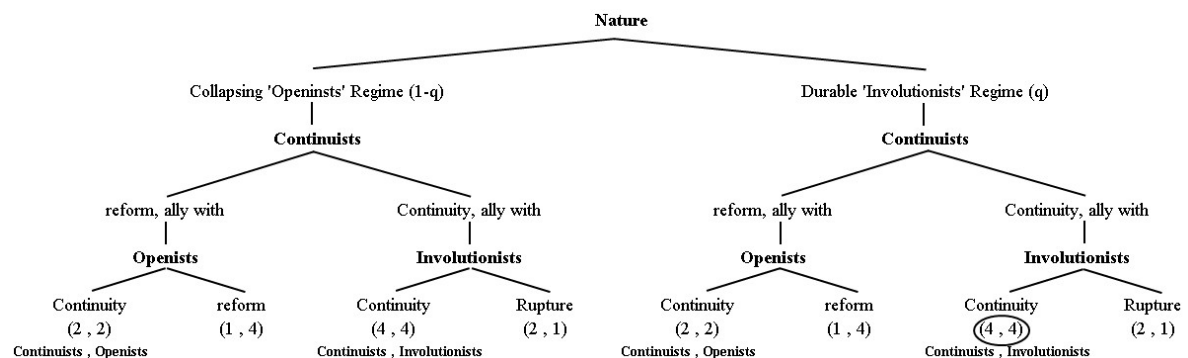


Figure 9. 3. Game 1 ‘Unsuccessful Liberalisation’.

When Adamec proposed Jakeš as the future general secretary, he followed the dominant strategy of the 'Continuists' actor. Taking side with Vasil Bil'ak's group of Involutionists, it appears that Adamec was aiming for the Pareto optimal¹ equilibrium of the game. When he stayed loyal to the bloc of hard-liners, he voted out the Openists group from the game for good and thus secured his own position in the ruling bloc and an opportunity for further promotions. If he had chosen differently, he would have had to support regime reforms and, when carrying them out, to confront the Openists. In this conflict, he would have lost to the opposing actor and reached his least desirable outcome.

As to the latter question of an alternative outcome, the 'Nature' tool, which is based on Bayes's Theorem, is introduced into the model. The right-hand sub-game illustrates a state of the world in which the Communist regime is able to survive the growing crisis. Conversely, the left-hand sub-game depicts a state of an inevitable regime breakdown. If the former is the case, the right choice for the Continuists is to ally with the Involutionists. However, if the regime is about to collapse, there exists a chance that those who helped the regime transition would benefit from the outcome. For the Continuists, their support to reforms thus becomes the more profitable, the more likely the regime breakdown is to occur. What must be stressed is one particular fact: according to the rational equilibria of the game, the *least desired* outcome for the Continuists when they chose to support reforms has to equal or surpass the *best* outcome when they chose not to.

In the 1980s, there were only few indicators that Czechoslovakia was actually reaching its turning point toward a non-Communist regime (Wheaton and Kavan 1992, 25). No open expressions of mass regime-opposition took place before 1988 and even Mikhail Gorbachev's visit ended up far more in favour of the Involutionists (variable $T(4)$) (Smith 1992, 326). Opinions about the degree of economic crisis distinctly differed (Saxonberg 2001, 77). The probability of q therefore seemed to be lower than it was in reality.

Still, as the process of liberalisation pushed ahead in the rest of the Soviet bloc and opposition to the regime emerged, the leaders' beliefs in the probability of having a collapsing regime were changing. The Continuists in the Federal government, represented by Ladislav Adamec, the new Prime Minister, were trying to free themselves of the Party's control and continue in an independent 'restructuring' policy. According to Miroslav Štěpán, a newly installed member of the Politburo, the regime allowed in December 1988 a demonstration celebrating the UN Human Rights' Day, because it 'wanted to see how the opposition would react to an opening' (Saxonberg 2001, 318). However, the Party's reversion to a hard-line strategy during Palach's week in January shows that the leaders were afraid of a quick backfire and losing control of the process. If it had not been for the earlier neutralisation of the Openists, the opening would have quite probably continued.

In conclusion, the unsuccessful attempt of the Štrougal camp to take control over the Party's policy weakened the soft-liners' position within the regime and created an even more conservative regime than the one before 1987. If Adamec's beliefs were to be rationally consistent, his dominating strategy was to support Jakeš; that strategy became crucial for his later promotion to the post of the Federal Prime Minister and the end of liberalisation. The information he possessed in 1987 spoke strongly for an alliance with the Involutionists – however incorrect this information would prove in

¹ An outcome of a game is Pareto optimal if there is no other outcome that makes every player at least as well off and at least one player strictly better off.

the following months.

Game 2: Successful Democratisation

Game 1 explains how an early attempt to liberalise the regime failed and how the ruling-bloc agreed on a hard-line anti-reform policy. However, this section shows that gaps occurred in that policy. These were wide enough for the opposition to organise itself and to demand democratisation. In August 1988, the first mass public protest against the regime, with more than 10,000 participants, mainly young people, took place in Prague (compare variables $C(1,7)$). More rallies followed in October and in December, with the appearance of various opposition groups and dissidents in the presence of officers of the StB (variables $S(8)$, $C(8)$). 'The issue of human rights provided the basis for disparate political groups to come together on a common platform' (Wheaton and Kavan 1992, 27). Despite violent repressions, mass meetings were occurring during the whole year 1989, bolstered by the revived Catholic Church (variable $C(9)$) in Slovakia and Moravia (variable $S(1)$) and supportive activities of artists and intellectuals in Prague, who are usually 'the first to manifest public opposition to authoritarian rule, often before the transition has been launched' (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 49). In the summer, the opposition's activity was given a further boost by events in neighbouring countries (variable $T(9)$).

A specific kind of liberalisation preceded this development, in the area, where the pressure for democratisation became most intense – in the students' movements. The SSM leader Vasil Mohorita, appreciative of the crisis in the pro-regime youth organisation, called for liberalisation of the regime at least from the spring of 1989. His position and rights as a member of the Politburo enabled him to organise the student movement and sponsor some independent initiatives. This gap in the regime's control was a direct cause of the authorised protest march on 17 November 1989, and the subsequent police violence, sparking the 'Velvet Revolution'.

The widely known course of this event resulted in the decision of the independent student movement to go on strike. Students were aware of the need to find a support for their demands, should the strike succeed. Even if they could persuade their fellow-students, non-members of the independent organisations (which they were) and draw academics, intellectuals and artists into the strike (which they also did), would they succeed in attracting the apathetic civil society (variable $C(6)$) – especially the cornerstone of the Communist power, the workers (variable $C(3)$)? In the end, they succeeded because of the simplest reason: even for the working class, in the autumn of 1989, 'the cost of toleration [of the regime] was greater than the cost of intervention' (Dahl 1971, 15) (variable $S(5)$). According to Jon Hovi and B. E. Rasch (Hovi and Rasch 1993, 91), the situation was sufficiently desperate for a participant in the strike to presume that any outcome of this action can be better than the initial state. The relation between an individual's assumption about the number of participants and probability of success, upon which he or she decides whether to participate, can be found in Oyvind Lervik's model (Lervik 2001) (Figure 9.4).

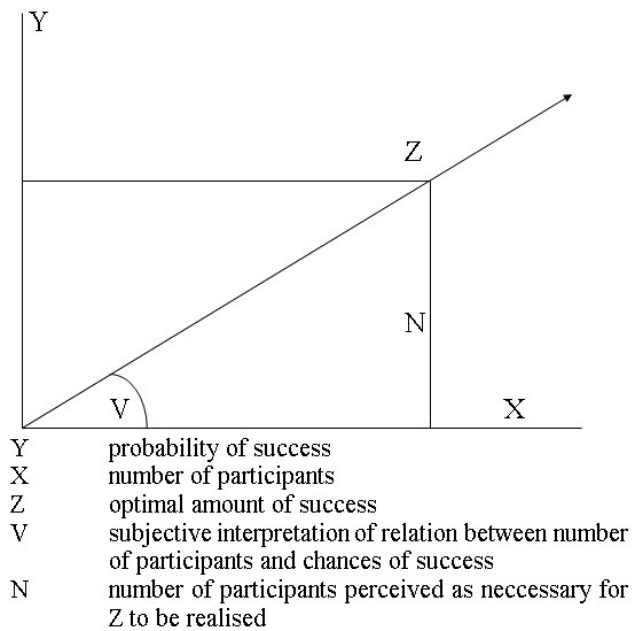


Figure 9.4. Mass Movement (adapted from Lervik 2001).

The Party leadership was stunned and incapable of action when mass protests sprang up on Monday 20 November – police actions against the strikers in the first week after 17 November appeared chaotic and weak. The Party’s Politburo did not meet until Monday, resolved nothing and called an extra Central Committee meeting for Friday. On Tuesday, the Politburo decided to call in the People’s Militia, yet without giving any orders to act. A military solution was contemplated during the whole week, but ultimately rejected – no ethnic cleavages existed in the nation (variables $T(2)$, $C(2)$) (as did in, e.g. China, where such a solution was still plausible) and nobody believed that ‘if ordered to fight their own people [...] soldiers would obey their officers’ orders’ (Bradley 1992, 93). An intervention of the Soviet troops in the country was merely an unlikely threat to the opposition (variables $T(8)$, $S(6)$). The indecisiveness shown at the Friday Central Committee meeting convinced the Prime Minister Adamec that whatever he would do, he must do without other Party leaders (Suk 2003, 44).

Meanwhile, the Civic Forum (OF), an umbrella civic organisation, became the major actor of the opposition and successively absorbed all other anti-regime groups, including the Student Strike Committee. The key role in this Rupture-preferring organisation was played by Czech dissidents and the Chartists in particular, under the unquestionable dominance of Václav Havel. Two members of the OF, musicians Michael Kocáb and Michal Horáček, had been in touch with the Adamec camp since September 1989 and through them the Prime Minister now began negotiations with the opposition. From the first meeting on 26 November, until the presentation of the new government, the OF supported Adamec against the radical opposition camp and maintained its policy to present him as ‘the only representative of the ruling bloc’ (Suk 2003, 46). Why did they do so (Figure 9.5)?

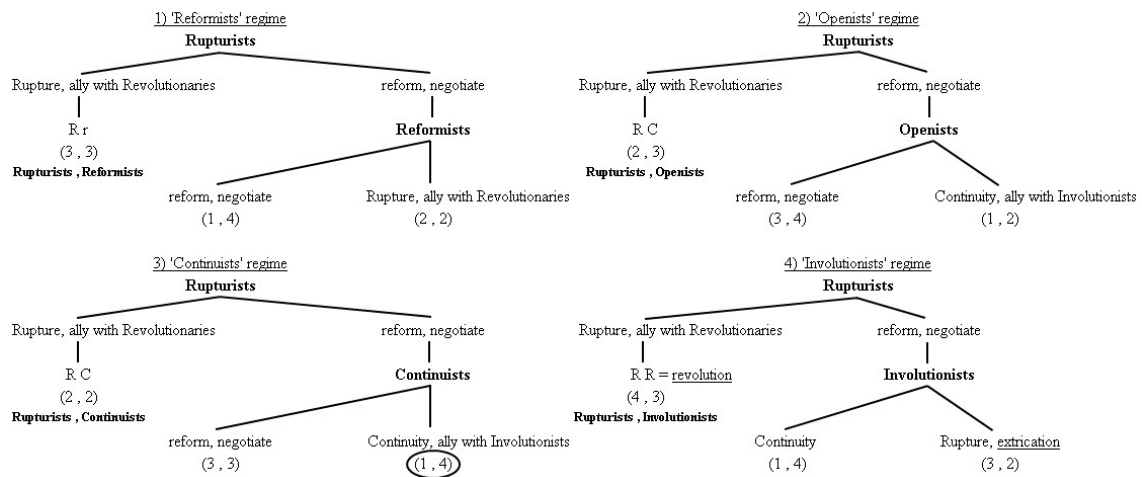


Figure 9.5. Game 2 'Successful Democratisation'.

In Game 2, four possible states of the world are introduced, among which the OF (Rupturists) could choose the one most likely to succeed. From their behaviour, it is quite clear that they did not consider States 1 and 4 to be the reality – the equilibria of those games lead already in the Rupturists' first move to an alliance with the Revolutionaries who advocate a non-negotiable solution. If the Rupturists had believed in one of these states of the world and had still resolved for negotiations, they would have made a move off the equilibrium path. In the case of an iterated game, it could be regarded as rational anyway. However, in the circumstances of November 1989, it seems implausible that the OF believed in iterations of the game.

Most probably, the Rupturists were thinking only in the limits of States 2 and 3. If the latter was their belief, they would also hardly start to negotiate and probably settle for a common policy with the Revolutionaries. Backward induction shows the strategy as the Nash,² non-Pareto optimal equilibrium that would have probably led to a more violent confrontation or quick takeover. In fact, this game is the infamous Prisoner's Dilemma.³ Negotiations would be profitable for the Rupturists only if there was an Openists' government.

However, in the previous game of liberalisation, the Adamec group was portrayed as the Continuists, and their ex-ante and ex-post behaviour indicates no change of their preferential set. Why then did the OF decide to negotiate with Adamec? A plausible explanation is that Havel and his fellow-workers believed in another state of the world than actually existed. From the OF's actions during this period of transition, it may be assumed that the OF did not uncover Adamec's real preferences before 3 December, 1989. Thus, in line with the rationality of the Continuists actor, the '15 Communists + 5 non-Communists' fiasco government was the actual outcome of the game.

² Actors are in Nash equilibrium if a change in strategies by any one of them would lead that player to earn less than if he or she remained with his or her current strategy.

³ In the classic form of Prisoner's Dilemma, cooperating is strictly dominated by defecting from cooperation, so that the only possible equilibrium for the game is for all players to defect.

Game 3: Čalfa's Dilemma

The new Communist government presented on 3 December, fell short of the expectations of Czechoslovak society. Consequently, the OF changed their strategy and increased their demands, particularly in the pressing issue of the composition of economic ministries (variable $T(5)$). The 'new' government resigned as early as 4 December and negotiations with Adamec were re-opened. Outcomes for both actors were equal, but not Pareto optimal. Adamec, who no longer relied on his alliance with the Party and saw no opportunity in forming a new Continuists' government, switched the weight of game arenas (Tsebelis 1990, 7) and as his 'principal' arena chose, most surprisingly for the Rupturists, the presidential contest (Suk 2003, 119).

At that moment, the OF was caught off guard. So far, the talks focused mainly on the Federal and national governments. The Presidency was a delicate issue – the person who filled the post, would represent the direction of transition: either towards a new Prague Spring, or to a complete regime change and re-integration with the West (variable $T(1)$). To take up a particular historical legacy was crucial, for the Velvet Revolution 'was characterised by almost complete lack of progressive, prospective ideas' (Habermas 1990, 162). On 7 December, Adamec resigned from his post of Prime Minister and from then on, featured solely as the new head of the KSČ. The OF was facing a tricky dilemma: for a transition by agreement, 'the weakness or absence of maximalist actors [is necessary] [...] because their participation causes disequilibrium and political instability' (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 19) – the Communist Party's activity thus was a menace to democracy. Suspicions about conspiracy arose in the opposition (Suk 2003, 210-211) and the contest for the presidency affected the unity of the anti-regime movement. The gap between the Czechs and Slovaks widened, mainly on the issue of historical continuity (variables $T(3)$, $S(3)$, and $C(5)$), and the discord culminated in an internal conflict about the OF's presidential candidate: would it be Václav Havel, or one of the '68 reformers, Alexander Dubček?

Most surprisingly, a new man in the post of Federal Prime Minister contributed decisively to Havel's final victory. Adamec's protégé and successor, Prime Minister Marián Čalfa was a Slovak and, according to custom, the Presidency and the federal head of government were to be split between both federated nations. Subsequently, Čalfa was regarded by the OF as a suitable Prime Minister for the whole transitional period.

How could a man from the Adamec camp become the Prime Minister of the transitional government? Čalfa officially governed the country from 10 December, the very day of Gustáv Husák's resignation from the Presidency, thereby chairing the State Security Council, commanding the armed forces, and co-administrating the Ministry of Interior. Moreover, he was now competent to grant pardon to Havel, who was *de jure* still on probation, and remove the last official barrier for Havel's presidential nomination. Furthermore, during a secret meeting, Čalfa offered Havel a very tempting prospect: he believed that he could persuade the MPs of the Federal Assembly to co-opt new members from the opposition and elect Havel as President. The Assembly was still under Communist control and, thanks to the complex constitutional framework (variable $S(2)$), the OF needed almost 90 per cent of seats in the Assembly to pass important acts and secure Havel's victory. And now, Čalfa promised that it would happen before Christmas (Suk 2003, 226). Game 3 explains how it could be done (Figure 9.6):

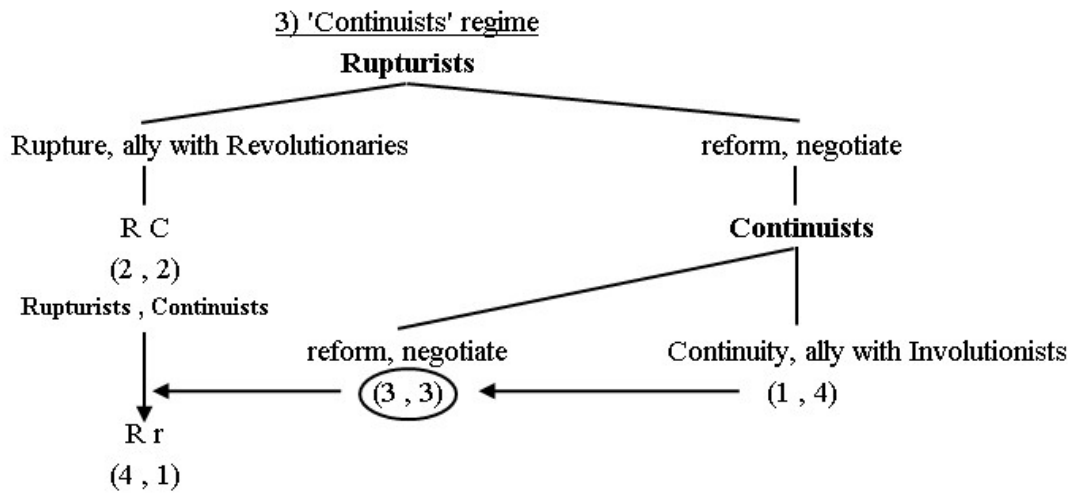


Figure 9.6. Sub-game 'The Continuists' Switch'.

Čalfa was apparently a pragmatist, who understood the probable consequences of students' demands in November remarkably quickly. He was a member of the Adamec camp, but diverged from its 'Continuists' attitude. When Adamec selected Čalfa as his successor, he may not have been aware of the fact that he had chosen a Reformist, who would eventually abandon him. Čalfa deliberately substituted the Continuists strategy with a contingent one that he agreed on with Havel during their meeting on 15 December 1989, and settled for the second best outcome. In a Reformist's beliefs, this move would lead to a better outcome in the next game. He may have been thinking along the following lines (Figure 9.7):

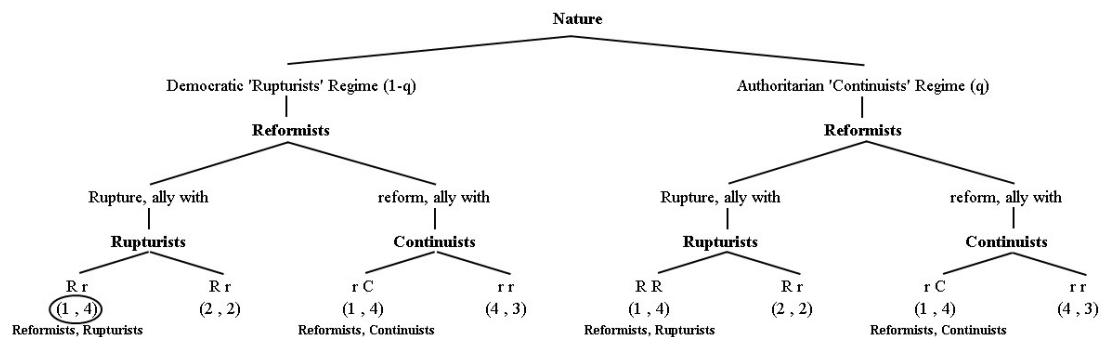


Figure 9.7. Game 3 'Čalfa's Dilemma'.

Čalfa most likely appreciated the fact that whatever path he would take, he would always reach the least desired outcome and the opposing actor would always gain the best of it. Therefore, he may have been meditating on the probability of two states of the world: a future democratic 'Rupturist' government, or the socialist 'Continuist' government. If the democratic opposition should win, it was rational to ally with the Rupturists and vice versa. The probability of q seemed in mid-December already so low that he decided to ally himself with the Rupturists. In addition, in an iterated game, Čalfa could have changed his strategy and reached his better outcome within a Pareto optimal strongly stable equilibrium, when the other actor has no intention to change his or her strategy. In an iterated game with the Continuists, he would have only caused a cycle-game with potentially infinite iterations (Figure 9.9). His information was complete enough to make the move he did.

		Reformists				Refomists	
		r	R			R ← r	
Ruptu- rists	R	3 3	4 1	Conti- nuists	C	2 3	4 1 ↑
	r	1 4	2 2		R	↓ 1 2	3 4
						→	

Figure 9.8. Strongly Stable⁴ Equilibrium & Force-vulnerable Equilibrium.⁵

On 28 December, the MPs elected one of their new co-opted members, Alexander Dubček, to the office of Chairman of the Federal Assembly and on the next day, Václav Havel to the office of Czechoslovak President. During the following weeks, discords between the OF and the Public against Violence (VPN, the Slovak parallel opposition organisation) were gaining momentum. More and more groups inside the opposition movement separated from the umbrella-like OF and original political parties from the National Front started their own policies. The time between Havel’s victory and the June parliamentary elections was filled with issues of a systemic change: economic reforms, the dissolution of the State Security, the Czecho-Slovak nationality problem, etc. The field of research would be too intricate for a simple game-theoretical model. It is plausible, however, to say that the danger of regress into a Communist regime was warded off before Christmas 1989 and also to perceive the December co-optation as the end of transition and the outset of consolidation.. Three existing games of transition should therefore suit the purpose of this study.

Conclusion

Three simple game-theoretical formulae are presented here and applied to the Czechoslovak regime change in 1989. Structural variables describe the settings of games in a new 3-D model of the Funnel of Causality. Its modifications are designed to show how variables of different origin and duration can affect a single historical event and to overcome the common one-directional dependency of structural approaches.

The case study begins with a structural description of all the crucial processes that led to the ‘Velvet Revolution’. Three games of transition are formulated, explaining the course of regime change that started with an attempt to liberalise the post-totalitarian regime in November 1987 and ended with the presidential election in December 1989. Three findings in particular should be noted:

Firstly, during the Czechoslovak transition, four groups of actors were successively neutralised (Figure 9.9) and dropped out of the game.

⁴ i.e. Nash equilibrium.

⁵ A force-vulnerable equilibrium is where a player can induce a change of strategy by actually changing his or her own strategy away from the equilibrium.

	1st move	2nd move	Outcome	Equilibrium	Losers
Game 1	Continuists	Involutionists	4 , 4	Pareto	Openists
Game 2	Rupturists	Continuists	1 , 4	Nash	Revolutionaries
Sub-game	Prisoners' Dilemma	Continuists	3 , 3	Pareto	Involutionists
Game 3	Reformists	Rupturists	1 , 4	(Non-myopic)	Continuists

Figure 9.9: Game Overview.

Secondly, wrong beliefs of the ‘Rupturists’ actor helped to start negotiations with the ruling bloc. In the case of complete information, the regime change would have been much more revolutionary and difficult.

Finally, by neutralising the ‘Openists’ in 1978, the ‘Continuists’ actor most likely helped its own neutralisation in 1989 and contributed to the final outcome of the games – not a mere reform, but a complete regime change.

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Productive Informality and Economic Ties in Emerging Economies: The Case of Cluj Business Networks

Norbert Petrovici and Anca Simionca

Studies of economic phenomena in the post-socialist region often point out that the businesses here have a particular affinity with informality and personal ties.¹ Usually focusing on different locations, the ‘new economic sociology’ revived Polanyi’s concept of ‘social embeddedness’ of the economic realm (Polanyi 1957) and documented in a variety of settings and levels the fact that economic action cannot be understood if abstracted from other relations between individuals and various entities (like firms, political parties or other individuals).² In a constant background dialogue with the liberal position that tries to maximise the degree of autonomy of the economic realm, these studies make a strong case out of the contrary: rather than an exception from the general/normal functioning of a capitalist economy, the intermingling of these spheres is constitutive to it.

When it comes to the former socialist countries, it is still often the case that accounts of informality and personal ties become instrumental for a different rhetoric. Personal ties among economic and political actors are easily brought forth as arguments supporting the thesis of an abnormal functioning of the economy in the region. This logic is still tributary to the imagery of ‘unfinished transition’, in which the former socialist bloc is undergoing (and having difficulty in completing) a process of rendering the economic realm into an impersonal/autonomous one (for a comprehensive critique along these lines, see Borocz 2000).

By saying this we do not imply that any account of economic informality or any documentation of cases of corruption and illegal actions referring to the postsocialist area falls into this trap. The intention is simply to emphasise that the existence of strong formal and informal ties between business actors can and should be discussed outside an *a priori* framing of it as corruption with negative and suboptimal effects. Our paper introduces the case of the business environment in the city of Cluj, Romania, as an occasion to explore further the issue of the relationship between informality and situated economic action.

One of the salient aspects of the economic life of the city is the recurrence of a set of names of business people who appear to be involved in most of the big economic events. The formal and informal ties among these individuals become visible in the media coverage of the various company merges, sells, or auctions. The local businessmen who are among the highly ranked nation-wise (Capital 2006) appear to have strong ties among themselves. As suggested above, one possible reading of these facts would point to a case of a corrupted business environment, which can be dismissed as yet another indicator of a failed transition to a *healthy* (i.e. impersonal) economic environment. We consider these categories to be unproductive for an adequate understanding of the situation.

As a consequence, our paper explores two directions. First, we investigate whether our data supports the hypothesis that the business world in Cluj is a strongly networked one (i.e. the big local economic actors tend to be tied to each other to a greater extent than in similar locations). Second, we ask why it is these particular actors that were successful in the current reconfiguration of the city. By tracing back the different contexts in which a faction of the

¹ We refer here to David Stark’s discussion on the strategies employed by economic actors in relation to property of firms, where the fuzziness of demarcation lines is being maintained and used for shifting liabilities towards the state and concentrating resources in their favour.

² See for example, Krippner et al., 2005; Bandelj, 2002; Ansell, 1997; Padgett, 1998; Padgett and Ansell, 1993; Granovetter, 2005.

economic elite in Cluj has been acting, we want to show how this informality was encouraged by the changing macro conditions, how it came about in this specific form and in which way it functioned as a resource contributing to the current success of these individuals. We suggest that a simple reading of the situation in terms of corruption or unhealthy business environment is analytically unsatisfactory.

Placing Business Networks in their Context: the Successive Stages of Post-Socialist Cluj

Cluj-Napoca³ is one of the largest Transylvanian cities, with a population of around 350,000 inhabitants that has great seasonal fluctuations due to the significant number of students that attend one of its seven state and four private universities. It is the second university centre in Romania, after Bucharest, and it attracts students from all over the country, although a big share of them originate in Transylvania.

For social scientists, Cluj is mostly familiar due to its particular ethnic configuration and manifestations that led to famous studies (like Brubaker et al. 2006). While the Hungarian population represents around 18 per cent according to the last census, it had been around 30 per cent in 1989, 50 per cent in the 50s and over 80 per cent in 1941. After 1989 the local administration had a strong nationalistic agenda, very easily visible in the omnipresent colours of the Romanian national flag (red-yellow-blue) on various objects in the city, starting with flags and going as far as patterns of tiles on the pavement, lamp posts and bins. Apart from the symbolic level, this agenda also translated into strong economic protectionism of the city, blocking the access of foreign investors and isolating Cluj from the global fluxes of capital.

In the early 90s the new democratic institutional arena favoured a particular faction of the local elites, namely the ones interested in promoting their ethnic agenda. In Cluj and surrounding cities (i.e. Targu Mures), elections were won by politicians with primarily nationalist concerns. An analysis of the parliament structure shows that, unlike the other great university centres in Romania, the graduates of Cluj University that ended up holding a position in parliament were associated either with the Romanian nationalistic party PUNR, or the Hungarian RMDSZ (Culic 2002). Their professional background was mainly in the Humanities, as opposed to the members of the parliament coming from the other university centres, who had mainly technical degrees, and who typically held a managerial or an administrative position (Petrovici 2006). Therefore, the local elite from Cluj that entered the Bucharest scene and occupied a position which would potentially facilitate their direct involvement in the process of national-scale resource distributions, were not business people and had a predominantly different agenda.⁴ The political context blocked the mobility of local managers to the parliament and therefore made it impossible for the business-oriented factions to access the nationally distributed resources (Petrovici 2006).

A shift in the relation of the Cluj business world with the Bucharest political arena took place between 1996 and 2000, when the liberal orientated political alliance CDR won the elections at the national level. The main electoral pool of this alliance was Transylvania, and Cluj became an important supporting pillar for the new political regime. These years were marked by the massive privatisation of the biggest companies that were at that time still state-owned. It is important to emphasise the differences between the ways in which the managers

³ Kolozsvár in Hungarian and K(C)lausenburg in German.

⁴ If they were interested, however, in business, it was to favour the Romanian capital over the Hungarian one. Their main focus was financial and not productive, as was the case with the managers or engineers seated in the parliament. An instance of this type of interests is the first Romanian bank, which was founded in Cluj and had its major shareholders and managers openly favouring, or being members of, the nationalist parties.

from Transylvania and the ones from the rest of Romania positioned themselves in relation to these reforms. Their peculiar position in relation to the Bucharest arena, a space occupied by people with alternative agendas, led the Transylvanian managers to favour a strategy similar to those from Central Europe. This translated into either selling the enterprises to foreign investors while negotiating a managerial position for themselves, or into becoming part of the group purchasing the enterprise. This differs from the logic of political capitalism, in which managers sought the appropriation of assets and profits while transferring all the liabilities to the state (Brown, Earle and Telegdy 2006; Earle and Telegdy 2001).

The new local administration that was elected in 2004 had a big impact on the way in which both the city centre and its periphery started to get reorganised. The symbolic fight over the appropriation of the city in ethnic terms became less visible. Instead the reconfiguration of middle-class consumption and its distinction patterns became more striking. The cafes in the city centre became increasingly popular and a space of differentiation among the profile of the highly educated and with above medium income users emerged and solidified (Petrovici 2011a). Five neighbourhoods (with varying levels of luxury, but extremely high prices) were under construction and the first two big shopping malls opened in 2008, with a plan of having two more in the following years. In the same year, Nokia, Siemens, Emerson, Bechtel, Trelleborg, Auchan and Carrefour entered the Cluj landscape, leading to a reconfiguration of the labour market and a new wave of population growth (both low and high educated) into the expanding city. In early 2008, before the global economic crisis, the rate of unemployment was estimated at less than 1 per cent, dropping from 3.5 per cent in 2004. It was obviously a period of economic boom and of re-scaling of the local economy by a strong interaction with the global sources of capital.

Placing Networks under the Formal Analytical Lens: the Research and Data

Our research design combines the formal analysis of networks with data obtained through qualitative methodology (document analysis and interviews). We attempt to bring the analytical insights of Social Network Analysis (SNA) of economic actors closer to the substantive debates in sociology.⁵

Our initial knowledge of Cluj pointed at the configuration of the local business groups as an important feature of the economic environment. In order to disentangle the particularities of our case, we decided to make our endeavour an (asymmetric) comparative one. We consequently chose Timisoara and Brasov, two other Transylvanian cities, as the points of comparison. This decision was guided by previous research showing significant inter-regional differences of firm profiles throughout Romania.⁶ The two other cities correspond roughly to the same regional profile, but do not share either Cluj's ethnic configuration, or its history of local administration. We intended therefore to minimise the differences among our cases in as much as their overall economic profile and size is concerned. The usefulness of the comparison comes from the particularities of the local administration policies in relation to foreign capital. While we cannot draw strong causal statements from the data we obtained in this way, we believe the comparative observations are insightful for indicating the

⁵ The need to move beyond the mere description in formal terms of the interlocking directorates of firms is signalled firmly by Mizruchi (1996). The technical tools should be used in order to address more substantive sociological questions about the effects, causes or alternatives of these intersections within the economic sphere.

⁶ Transylvania emerges roughly as being more oriented towards production than the other regions; Moldova's typical enterprise is trade oriented, while Southern Romania and Bucharest appear as more orientated toward services destined to the multinational companies that are establishing their national headquarters in the capital (Petrovici, 2011b).

particularities of the economic trajectory of Cluj in the past two decades.

Inspired by the technical tools of the economic sociology literature focusing on interlocking directorates (for an early review see Mizruchi 1996; for more recent analyses see Elouaer 2006; Schwarz and Lyson 2007), we used publicly available data⁷ for highlighting the existing links among the individuals who own the largest companies in Cluj, Timisoara and Brasov. Two types of networks were mapped out: one among companies, in which two firms appeared as linked if they have a common share-holder; and one among the share-holders themselves, in which a tie among two actors signified the fact that they appeared together in the ownership structure of a company. We then used some of the techniques of SNA in order to describe the resulting graphs.⁸

Comparing Cluj to Brasov and Timisoara

The standard measures used for characterising social networks have small absolute values and did not indicate large differences among the three cities analysed (see Table 1 below). All three networks appear as only loosely connected, while the differences in the values of the indicators are too small to be considered statistically significant. For example, the indicators for network density have very small values, ranging from 0.0016 to 0.0035. This means that only 1.6 per cent of the total possible ties in the Cluj graph is actually observed empirically. Also, the degree of network centralisation is very small, indicating overall large distances among actors; on the contrary, for dense networks, these indicators should have high values pointing at small differences among nodes. However, taking into account the fact that we focused on relatively small firms and that we looked at the structure of property, not at managerial boards, the small figures are hardly a surprise.

	Cluj	Braşov	Timișoara
Size of shareholder boards	2.17 (1.71)	1.84 (1.75)	2.05 (1.15)
Number of components	252	182	202
Size of components (mean and Std Dev)	3.16 (3..8)	2.76 (2.35)	2.70 (1.17)
Bi components	297	192	210
%Growth BiComponents/Components	15%	5%	4%
Density	0.0016 (0.0412)	0.0035 (0.0605)	0.0021 (0.0498)
Freeman's Network Centralization	0.07%	0.38%	0.12%
Clustering Coefficient	0.419	0.459	0.569
Transitivity (undirected)	26.04%	28.38%	31.64%

Table 10.1. Descriptive statistics for the business networks from Cluj, Timisoara and Brasov

* All figures are our own calculations

While the differences between the densities of the three networks are not (statistically)

⁷ We purchased the publicly available Borg Design CD, which offered information on the economic profile and structure of ownership of all active firms in Romania, we selected the top 200 firms in each year from 2000 on. As the overlap between these rankings was rather high, we ended up analysing the ownership connections among 610 firms in Cluj, 499 in Brasov and 469 in Timisoara.

⁸ The technical terms used in this paper are accompanied by footnote explanations. For a comprehensive discussion of SNA techniques, as well as for further explanations of the technical terms appearing this paper, see Wasserman and Faust, 1994.

significant, there are differences in Table 1 that hint in the direction of our hypothesis. The largest difference can be noticed for the Clustering Coefficient, which is a measure of the degree to which the density of the network comes from the fact that it contains strongly linked small sub-graphs, that are disconnected from each other; the smaller the value of this coefficient, the more links exist among the cliques.⁹ Given the fact that the property structure (from now on *property board*) of each firm represents a clique, the smaller clustering coefficient suggests that there are more inter-board links in Cluj than in Brasov or Timisoara. This would mean that in Cluj there are more individuals who simultaneously own two or more firms. Following a related logic, the Transitivity Index shows the percentage of transitive triads in the network; the more intransitive triads, the greater the chances that the links they measure are inter-board and not simply intra-board.

Another set of differences supporting the same line of argumentation arose when we approached the networks from the point of view of their components.¹⁰ The average size of these components is larger than the average size of the property board, for each city, indicating that there are also inter-board ties; the largest difference is, again, obtained for Cluj. While the absolute number of components is difficult to interpret - as it can be easily increased by a large number of small and disconnected firms - the larger number of bicomponents for Cluj indicates that there are significantly more cutpoints here.¹¹

A striking difference between the three cities emerged when we analysed the main components of the networks, which is the largest sub-graph connected within and disconnected from the rest of the graph. While for Timisoara the maximum number of nodes belonging to such a component is 9 and for Brasov – 8 (visible in Figure 1), the main component for Cluj comprises 57 individuals (its extended version is represented in Figure 2).

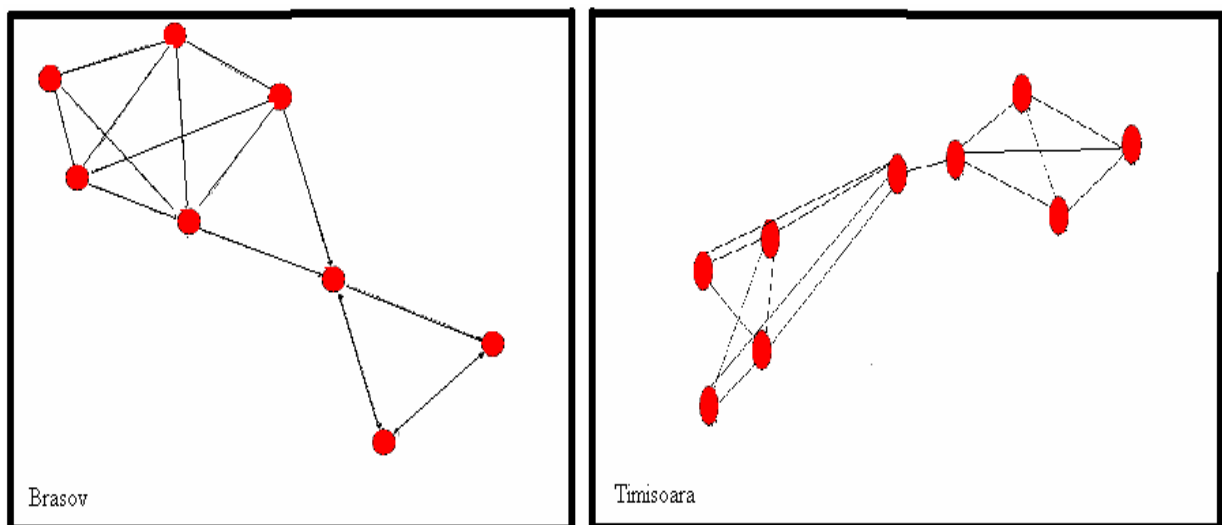


Figure 10.1. Main components of the Brasov and Timisoara business networks

⁹ We use ‘clique’ in its technical sense attributed by Social Network Analysis; it refers to a set of nodes between which all the possible ties are realised. The board of each firm is a clique in this sense because the very definition of ‘two linked nodes’ is given by their owning the same firm.

¹⁰ Components are the subgraphs that are connected within and disconnected from the rest of the graph

¹¹ Actors whose removal leads to the isolation of a component into two bicomponents are called cutpoints.

The purpose of mapping out the business networks in the three Transylvanian cities was to find out first whether the local economic elite actors of Cluj are indeed strongly tied among themselves, and second whether the degree of connectivity of the Cluj case holds some specificity, or is rather to be encountered in all similar localities.¹² Using SNA methods, we realised the ‘very dense network’ is to be used only as a metaphor, as in absolute terms the values for the overall densities of all three networks were extremely small. However, there is indeed significant difference among the three networks when we look at sub-graphs of which they are composed. In Cluj, the largest connected region of the graph encompasses most of the big economic actors, both firms and individuals. Supporting our thesis regarding the particularity of Cluj, there are no large connected sub-graphs in the Brasov and Timisoara networks; the big economic actors in these cities are not tied to each other.

The Extended Main Component of the Business Network in Cluj: Ties and their Origin

After having gathered more data on the 57 economic actors comprising the main component in Cluj, we decided to include some other firms that they own (but which were not included in our original sample because they were not among the top 200 in the past seven years). As a result, new ownership ties became visible between our initial firms. The enhanced main component comprises more than 120 business people in more than 70 firms.

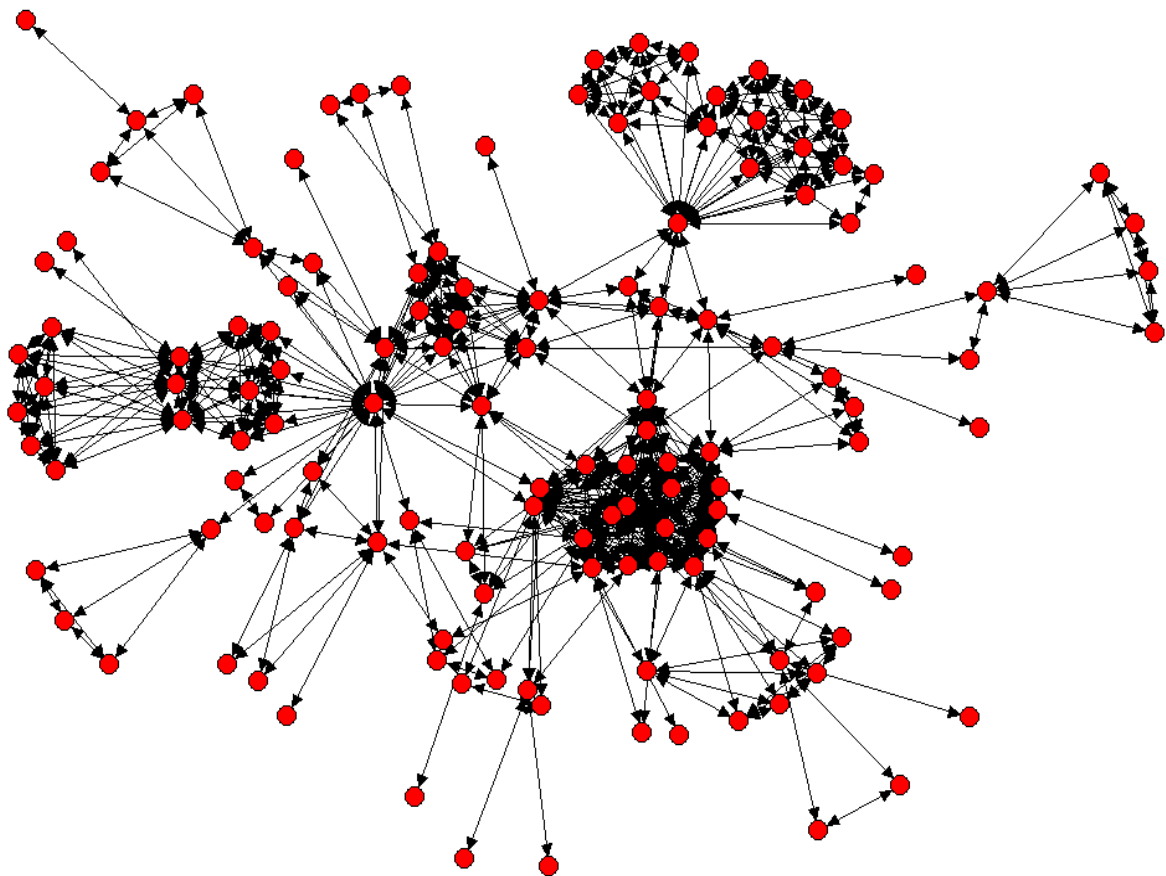


Figure 10.2. Property networks of individuals in Cluj 2007 (extended main component)

¹² As highlighted above, the similarity refers to the overall profile as production oriented cities and their size.

As expected (Granovetter 2005), the apex of this network is Transylvania Bank, a very successful locally founded financial institution. The other two centres of the network are a real estate firm (IMO Finance) and a former state industrial firm, Tehnofrig. A closer look at the profile of the firms included in the extended main component hints towards the existence of a very powerful alliance between financial institutions, real estate firms, former socialist enterprises, real estate development companies and transport companies.¹³ A smaller cluster is formed by the car dealer firms and the leasing subdivision of the Transylvania Bank.

As for the business people themselves, most of them belong to business clubs such as Lionel (4 clubs), Rotary (2 clubs), are well known to be friends and often share leisure activities. Most of them have a university degree and their businesses can be traced back to the late years of the socialist period. To take only two examples, the stories of the two most important current businesses (Transylvania Bank and Astral Telecom) involve cooperation between professionals who developed their ties in the informal socialist markets and later successfully extended them on the unregulated post-socialist ones. One of the central nodes in the network, Dorel Goia, is a former history teacher who started off his entrepreneurial activities by distributing translated copies of films during socialism. The small-scale business based on his passion for movies grew in time, especially as he teamed up with Horia Ciorcila. The latter was an important player on the informal postsocialist currency market and for some time he was involved in petty trans-border commerce. Together they created a cable television firm that proved very successful in later years. The company, Astral Telecom, was later sold to foreign investors, but the links between the two actors remained, and are reflected in their ongoing common investments. Another line of business during socialism was centred on dealing with cars and car components. The same Horia Ciorcila shared a passion for cars and rallies with the Nicoara brothers; Titus Nicoara was an official referee for rallies, and they were involved in organising both official and unofficial ones. These activities later transformed into the transport companies that can be seen in the current network.

The emergence of the strong network of solidarity among professionals in the city can be traced back to the socialist logic of production on two interrelated dimensions. The first one is a more general mechanism of sustaining the primary economy through informal adjustments of the shortage economy. This needed strong and dynamic lateral ties between managers and professionals (Verdery 1991; Szelenyi, Beckett and King 1994). The second level is more intimately intertwined with the fact that their specific locality is an important university centre in the country, and therefore the number of intellectuals endowed with cultural capital is higher compared to other sites. As we could see in the examples above, the numerous professionals favourably placed in the hierarchies of power (Szelenyi 1978) were in a position to transact easily on secondary markets with money, cultural or other goods.

What followed after 1989 for these individuals was, as suggested in the previous section, a period in which their main arena for action was forced to remain at the local scale. The significant social capital they had acquired during socialism was used to mobilise information, knowledge and capital in the context of local protectionism and the impossibility of political capitalism strategies. This is a period in which the businesses became consolidated and successful at the local level. While restricting their opportunities to reach for the sources of global capital, the protectionist politics of the ultra-nationalist local administration had an 'incubating' effect on the business people. By this, we mean that the

¹³ The former socialist enterprises have the advantage of being centrally located in the city on very valuable estates. While they retain their initial profile once relocated at the outskirts, the land is reconverted in profitable residential estates.

Cluj business world became a very strongly networked one,¹⁴ and that actors ‘grew’ together, as they had time to accumulate capital while being kept away from the crushing foreign competition. After 2004, when their economic interests ceased to be restrained by an ethnic agenda, and reforms at the national level induced a favourable economic environment, these strongly networked actors began to interact successfully with the supra-national sources of capital.

We are reluctant to classify this business network as a business group, at least following Granovetter’s (2005) influential definition, ‘a set of separate firms bound together in a persistent formal or informal ways’ (429). The links between the firms are shifting in time and most of them are not persistent ones. What is persistent are the links between the shareholders themselves.¹⁵ Our stronger claim is that these firms are not linked through complicated networks of direct or indirect reciprocal ties as described in the classical study of Stark (1996), but by their common shareholders, persons not firms. The nature of the links suggests that this is far from being a type of recombined property strategy, employed in order to create fuzzy borderlines between firms to permit dispersion of liabilities and concentration of resources. Instead, it seems that in order to render the complex postsocialist environment manageable – both its challenges and its opportunities – economic actors have engaged in a process of diversification of the personal business portfolio through involvement in specialised firms. Contrary to the recombined property thesis expectation, business actors engage in drawing clear borders between firms, making easier the management process of demarcated resources. In a context of specialised firms tackling only a small section of the business multiple ownership permits the flow of information about opportunities. Therefore, the informal ties among them were used as social capital that led to greater economic efficacy.

Conclusion: Informality is not Black and White

The focus of our paper has been a particular faction of the business environment in the city of Cluj, Romania. We started off from the hypothesis that there are long lasting informal ties among the biggest local economic actors, visible in the coverage of the most important economic events. First, by using the formal techniques of Social Network Analysis on publicly available data, we discussed the hypothesis of the existence of strong ties. We compared the situation in Cluj to that in Timisoara and Brasov, two cities from the same region and of similar size, but with different ethnic configurations and history of local administration. We concluded that indeed the case of Cluj holds some specificity in this respect, as in the other localities, the largest business actors appeared as isolated and were not involved together in owning firms.

After having established that the density of the local business networks is apparent from our data as well, we proceeded to a discussion of the implications of this situation. With the intention of avoiding a simplistic reading of this strong interconnectedness in terms of unhealthy business environment, we attempted to untangle the way in which it came to be. We traced back how these individual local-level strategies were developed during the various

¹⁴ As our discussion of the comparative side of our research indicates, it is one of the particularities of the business world of Cluj that the richest individuals are strongly connected among each other. In the other two cities we analysed, the wealthiest local individuals (according to the official ranking of the richest 300 individuals from Romania, Top 300 Capital, 2006) were not linked among themselves through the type of ownership structures we analysed.

¹⁵ The analysis on longitudinal network data is in progress. We base our claim on consistent information hinting in this direction coming from the much-mediated public transactions and from our interviews.

stages of the intricate interaction between the local level political context and the national economic and political sphere in the post-socialist era. We argued that most of these ties emerged during the socialist period, as networks of lateral solidarity among professionals. Further, strengthening the links among local businessmen was encouraged by the lack of access to the national level of resource control and distribution. The economic protectionism of the nationalist local administration allowed for an accumulation of capital that was successfully used after 2004. Contrary to the recombined property thesis expectation, business actors have been engaging in drawing clear borders between firms, facilitating the management process of demarcated resources. In a context of specialised firms, tackling only a small section of the business environment becomes more feasible and multiple ownership permits the flow of information about opportunities.

By describing the way the different stages of Cluj as a locality have impacted upon the opportunities and restrictions available for business, we aimed to explain the formation and subsequent development of these informal ties. Our argument is that we should avoid any *priori* assumption that this strong interconnectedness is a sign of corruption or of faulty economic activity; the post-socialist location of this case does not make informality equal illegality, corruption or inefficiency by default. However, assessing whether the activities of these businessmen, the mergers, selling or division of firms among them were at all points legal goes far beyond the scope of this paper and is not part of our argument. Our point is that if further research focussed on these aspects, it would need to find evidence beyond the existence of strong lasting friendship ties among businessmen, or the easily available examples of multiple ownership.

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