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Interview: Mary Fulbrook on the GDR

Blat, the Soviet system of favors

The apocalypse of Chernobyl

Transitology & postcommunism

South Caucasus and the EU

Hello again, Sovietology

Old powers, new dreams; new powers, old dreams

Illustration: Karin Sunvisson

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editorial

Transition & progress

Isn't it time to question the use of postsocialism as a category? The dividing line between the former Eastern European countries and Western European countries is less sharp now, and still in a state of flux. Isn't the European future one of interaction and mutual influence: sharing and shaping?

Maybe post-postsocialism is a more appropriate concept. The transition from communism may be a shared experience, but a generation afterwards the situation is not the same as it was. Kristian Petrov discusses, in a peer-reviewed essay in this issue, the concept of transition – how it was used in the 1990s and 2000s – and contrasts it with its use in communist ideology. He states that the "reconstruction of the dialectics between communist and postcommunist transitology indicates and responds to a need for historical reflexivity". He shows that the historical transitions in both cases, however unique each has been, appeared "asymmetrical, irreversible, and unconditionally progressive".

In Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia an extended transition period is taking place, monitored and orchestrated by the European Council. Democratization is imposed from the outside, Anders Nordström notes, in a peer-reviewed essay where he discusses and compares the processes evoked.

Transition indicates going from one state to another, though this need not imply an "improvement" or evolutionary development of any kind. Yet there will always be a past, if only as a relic. The question is the extent to which this relic can weigh on the present and future. Is the legacy of the roaring bear inescapable?

IN A LECTURE BY Alena Ledeneva, the suggestion is made that the only functioning system for transactions in the Soviet Union was in fact *blat*, the system of corruption and tacit agreement and alliances among all parties involved in a given transaction. She talks about the "knowing smile" that was a shared signal for those *in* the system. One may even talk about blat as *the* system, she argues. The marks and traces from this system in contemporary Russia are obvious. Thus arises the supposition that some transitions do indeed follow the First Law of Thermodynamics: Nothing ever simply disappears, it only changes form.

The vexed faith of Ukraine and its ties to the Soviet Union are shown in a perhaps unexpected way in another peer-reviewed essay in this issue. Johanna Lindbladh analyzes witness testimonies and collective memories from the literature of the Chernobyl catastrophe. The belief in technology was fundamental in Soviet culture. When the nuclear reactor exploded and harvested souls and spread illness throughout a vast area, over the course of many years, an image of the collapse of the Soviet Union was thereby created, she contends: the apocalypse of a decrepit regime. Technology could no longer symbolize achievements to be proud of, whatever the costs be. What is shown is rather that it all was a myth, and the suffering endured thus in vain; technological progress did not create a better life for man on this earth, it ended rather as an underworld inferno.

Recent events in Ukraine are addressed in two commentaries. In the midst of the turmoil, the future is of course uncertain. Twenty-five years after the fall of the Wall, we also look towards the past, in an insightful interview with GDR expert Mary Fulbrook.

LASTLY, I WOULD LIKE to bring up one obvious change. Baltic Worlds will now be published in a new format. We hope you find it more practical, easier to take with you and read wherever you are, and easier to collect and archive. New form, but the same solid content!

Ninna Mörner

awarded

Andrey Bely Prize

Irina Sandomirskaia, professor of cultural studies at CBEES, Södertörn University, was awarded the most prestigious Russian prize for literary scholarship, the 2013 Andrey Bely Prize. Her book *Blokada v slove: o cherkikritycheskoiteoriii biopolitikii-azyka* (Besiegement in Language: Essays in the Critical Theory and Biopolitics of Language) investigates the stakes of language production in the absence of political and societal freedom.

The Andrei Bely Prize is an independent literary prize, established in 1978. Materially, the prize consists of an apple, a single ruble, and a bottle of vodka.

The prize ceremony speech is available at BW's website.

next issue

IN THE NEXT ISSUE of Baltic Worlds a special section will be dedicated to the study of Russian cultural practices and questions of modernization. Peer-reviewed essays will deal with modern national culture, how its very idea, traditions and ideological fundaments are changing in a post-imperial society under constant demand and pressure to reform.

The guest editor will be Sanna Turoma from the Aleksanteri Institute, Finland.

It will appear in mid-September.

ESSAYS have been submitted to a double-blind peer review by at least two independent specialists. A peer-reviewed article published in BW will, for the authors and their institutions using the Norwegian bibliometric register (DHB), generate one publication point. All scholarly essays in BW are to be found in EBSCO as well as DOAJ. More information about the peer review system is available at the website, as well as in Style Guide for Contributors and Reviewers Guidelines.

colophon

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CHERNOBYL AS THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE SOVIET UNION

by **Johanna Lindbladh**

"Communism equals Soviet power plus electrification of the entire country." This was Lenin's famous slogan, which referred to his plan to provide all of Russia with electricity. The so-called Goelro Plan was born in a land devastated by war, economic crisis, and starvation. It was presented by Lenin at the 8th Congress of Soviets, which took place in the unheated, scantly illuminated auditorium of the Bolshoi Theater in December 1920. When the half-starved and freezing delegates to the Congress had become acquainted with Lenin's exciting and daring ideas, they unanimously approved the electrification plan.

Sixty-six years later, on April 26, 1986, the most extensive nuclear disaster the world had ever known struck the Soviet Union, this time an accident so devastating that it was impossible to conceal it from the world or from the Soviet people.[1] As a result of the explosion in reactor four at the Chernobyl plant in Ukraine, one of the main technological methods of electrification had proved to be fallible, and five years later, the communist ideology plus the whole of the Soviet Union had collapsed.

One year before the collapse, Paul R. Josephson, an American historian, specializing in the history of Soviet physics, observed that the inherently technicist nature of the Soviet system still remained a major force in the contemporary Soviet Union: "Atomic and space culture, which were built on forty years of achievements, are so deeply rooted in popular and scientific perceptions of Soviet leadership in space exploration and nuclear physics that it will take more than Chernobyl to shake this fact."[2] Although the Soviet Union, only a year after Josephson's article was published, did collapse, Josephson is able to confirm his earlier statement in an article from 2003 dealing with nuclear politics in Putin's Russia. Unfortunately, Josephson writes, the technological hubris from the Soviet era still is dominant in Russia. One example of this is the revitalized nuclear program offered by the Ministry of Atomic Energy (MinAtom), which promises to build no fewer than 40 reactors before 2020.[3] Today, more than 20 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, this alliance between advanced engineering and state power is tragically illustrated in Putin's Olympic games in Sochi 2014, when the whole world was able to observe Putin's unscrupulous exploitation of the small man and the subtropical landscape in the Sochi region, taking his own powers for granted irrespective of moral, environmental, and economical consequences.

Katerina Clark supports Josephson's view that Soviet ideology was founded on a belief in technology's great potential, which was supposed to lead to a "total transformation of man and his environment", and that this perception was "so intensified that it became the measure of advance toward communism".[4] This obsession with technology characterized not only the new power the Bolsheviks had after the October Revolution in 1917, but also their forerunners, namely the radical revolutionaries at the end of the 19th century, convinced of the need to destroy the old worldview in order to establish a new one. It is also important to note that the radical movement in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century went hand in hand with the Russian avant-garde movement, and that literature, art, ideology, and technology were tightly intertwined, and primarily focused on the potential of the new technology to deconstruct the old world order, its bourgeois language, culture and ideology, thereby paving the way for the "brave new world".

In their book, entitled *The New Soviet Man*, Herschel and Edith Alt describe this pre-revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist intelligentsia's image of the "new man":

> **They saw him as a man of steel, the builder who overcomes all obstacles, practicing the self-denial of a saint but also the ruthlessness of a soldier in battle; one who unquestioningly follows the leader and fulfils the expectations set for him by higher authority. He must be at one and the same time a "superman" and an "organization" man.**[5]

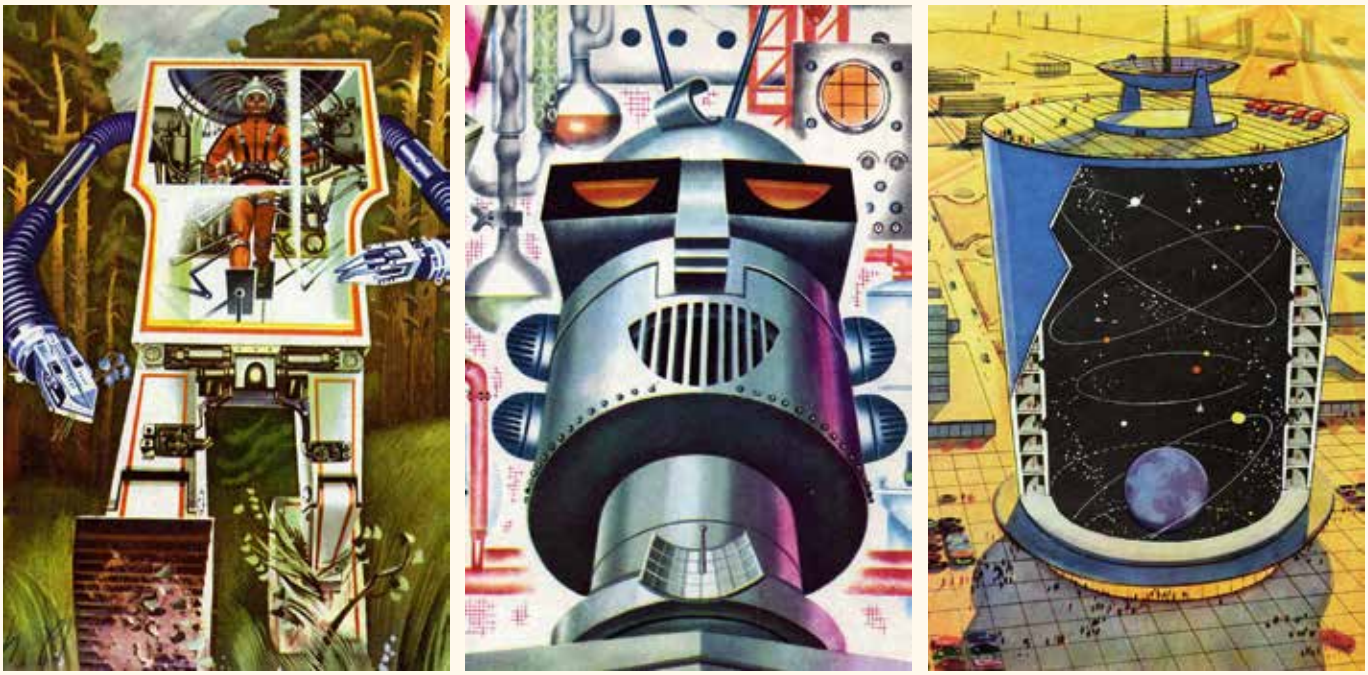
Given the fact that the Marxist-Leninist ideology had confidence in technology's potential to create a communist paradise on earth, technology and the rational scientific method acquired a

PHOTO: SOVFOTO/VIG/GETTYIMAGE

Laborers work on construction of the Soviet Union's Chernobyl nuclear power plant on July 1, 1975.

PHOTO: FLICKR/HENRIK ISMARKER

Abandoned building in the city of Pripyat, Chernobyl, 2009.



Illustrations from *Tekhnika Molodezhi*, a Soviet magazine for youth that has been published since 1933. Its futuristic art melded science fiction and technological progress.

fundamental importance in the creation of the new Soviet man. The Soviet biologist Trofim Lysenko, director of the Institute of Genetics within the Soviet Union's Academy of Sciences under Stalin, claimed: "In our Soviet Union people are not born. What are born are organisms. We turn them into people – tractor drivers, engi ne drivers, academicians, scholars, and so forth".[6] Thus, the scientific method and technology were not regarded solely as a means of increasing people's standard of living, but viewed as a fundamental device for creating the morally and ideologically perfect human being – the Homo Sovieticus, a product of the Marxist-Leninist laboratory.

Nuclear science was considered, along with the space program, to be the most important ideological symbol of the communist utopia. It not only was capable of defending the nation in a potential war against capitalistic countries, but also was an energy source with the potential to fulfill Lenin's dream of electrifying the whole country. The Soviet authorities were not slow to recognize the inherent symbolic value of this technology, capable of producing heat and light. Lenin's slogan thus soon became a metaphor for the enlightenment that would be spread throughout the country thanks to communism and electrification.

In his book *Red Atom*, Josephson describes the particularly important role that nuclear technology played in the formation of the Soviet ideology under Khrushchev. In his desire to avoid Stalin's relentless type of leadership, intimately connected with fear, destruction, and terror, it was crucial for him to connect his own leadership with modern technology, in particular with nuclear power, peace, and an optimistic faith in the future: "Nuclear technology was at the center of visions of a radiant communist future born during the Khrushchev era".[7]

It was also during the Khrushchev era that a new aspect of the nuclear atom was promoted, namely its "peaceful use", its potential to produce energy, not a bomb. In her book *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*, Kate Brown describes the construction of the world's first "civilian" reactor in the Soviet Union in terms of Igor Kurchatov's "pet project", leading to an emphasis on the Soviet "peaceful atom" (*mirnyi atom*).[8] One example of the propagandistic use of this concept is the Soviet slogan "The peaceful atom in every home" (*Mirnyi atom v kazhdyi dom*), referring to the miracle that would bring light to Lenin's little lamp (*Lampochka Ilicha*),[9] illuminating the communist ABC book lying on every table in every cottage across the entire Soviet countryside, enlightening the Soviet people, finally turning them into New Soviet men and women.[10]

The question is: What happened to this ideologically loaded myth of the peaceful atom when reactor four at the Chernobyl plant turned out to be a threat to the lives and health of the surrounding population? A common standpoint, often put forward by Soviet and post-Soviet scientists, intellectuals, witnesses, authors, film directors, and politicians, is that the Chernobyl catastrophe became a harbinger of the upcoming fall of the Soviet Union. One example is the biologist and dissident author Zhores Medvedev, who in the forward to his book *The Legacy of Chernobyl* writes:

> We have known so little about accidents in communist countries because in the past even trivial problems were kept secret. [...] And true glasnost began to emerge gradually after the Chernobyl accident.[11]

Another example is Alla Iaroshinskaia, who during Gorbachev's glasnost worked as a journalist. When the newspaper she had been working for banned outspoken reporting on Chernobyl, Iaroshinskaia became a dissident author, traveling secretly into radiation-contaminated areas. In her book, published in 1992, entitled *Chernobyl: The Forbidden Truth*, she is among the first to reveal top-secret reports of the Politburo of the Central Committee. During the first meeting of the Central Committee addressing the Chernobyl catastrophe, the highly important topic "kak davat'

The myth of the peaceful atom was also about a man-made utopia. Man overcoming God.

informatsiu" [how to distribute information] was discussed.[12]

Yet another example is Vladimir Gubarev, the chief editor of *Pravda* at the time of the catastrophe, who has written both testimonies and fictions depicting Chernobyl. In his drama *The Sarcophagus* (1987), Gubarev blames the accident on the Soviet system, a system in which people were incapable of making independent decisions. The character called "Bessmertny" (the immortal) says to the "Physicist": "Who switched it [the emergency safety system] off? The *system* switched it off. The system which sees to it that nobody takes responsibility."[13] According to Gubarev, these and other negative aspects of the Soviet system were brutally uncovered in connection with the catastrophe, and it was therefore no longer possible to conceal them from the people.

The next question is: What technique do the authors use in order to represent Chernobyl as the major catalyst in relation to the fall of the Soviet Union? One recurrent strategy in the Soviet remembrance of Chernobyl is to invert the former positive connotations of nuclear power, symbolizing peace and the resurrection of a future, communist paradise, not seldom substantialized in Soviet, utopian nuclear cities.[14] Instead of representing peace and a communist utopia, these authors transform the atom or the nuclear city into its opposite: an apocalyptic threat towards this very utopia, causing hardships for the people living close to the Chernobyl plant, similar to those experienced during a war. In a step that follows, this inversion of the peaceful atom becomes a most important device for highlighting the need for a political awakening in the Soviet Union during the five-year period between 1986 and 1991.

Before I come to the main analysis of this article, in which I interpret the way in which the nuclear town Pripyat is depicted in Liubov Sirota's novel *The Pripyat Syndrome (Pripiatskii sindrom)*, and then conduct a brief study of contemporary online discussions, focusing on the toponymy and architecture of Pripyat before and after the catastrophe, I will take a brief look at post-Soviet culture today, in which it is very clear that the former connotations of the peaceful atom mentioned above have been inverted and turned into their binary opposite. One very clear example of this is the Russian contemporary artist Nikolai Kopeikin's satiric picture *Mirnyi atom* [The peaceful atom], depicting a furious cartoon atom, standing on top of a globe with a dead dove of peace at his feet on the right-hand side, and three smoking reactors on his left, as he desperately waves an olive branch in his right hand. The whole picture cries out with the question: Could this really be called *peace*?! No! *Ergo* – the Soviet propaganda was a lie!

"NUCLEAR SCIENCE WAS CONSIDERED, ALONG WITH THE SPACE PROGRAM, TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT IDEOLOGICAL SYMBOL OF THE COMMUNIST UTOPIA."

Another example shows the way in which the Soviet slogan "The peaceful atom in every home" has been used recently in order to represent the opposite message, thereby constituting one of the most prominent slogans *against* nuclear energy. When repeated, for example, on motivators depicting the sarcophagus built over the collapsed reactor, or in slogans with the word "Chernobyl" added: "Chernobyl – The peaceful atom in every home", it is crystal clear that its former Soviet content has been inverted, referring not so much to Lenin's utopian electrification plan as to the radiation spreading over the whole country after the Chernobyl catastrophe. Actually, it is enough just to repeat the slogan without any additional information, thus relying merely on the ironic effects produced against the background of the Soviet collective memory of Chernobyl. Printed on T-shirts, for example, criticizing nuclear energy, the slogan becomes an unequivocal ironic statement in relation to its former Soviet message.

There is yet another dimension relating to the questioning of technology and the supremacy of the Soviet man after Chernobyl, namely the fact that anti-nuclear activism, during the late Soviet era, was used as a tool by Soviet republics for expressing their independence from Russia and the Soviet Union. In her book *Eco-Nationalism: Anti-nuclear Activism and National Identity in Russia, Lithuania, and Ukraine*, Jane I. Dawson describes this phenomenon in terms of "eco-nationalism", which emerged in several regions within the Soviet Union after Chernobyl and Gorbachev's reform program. Dawson comes to the conclusion that while this linkage between anti-nuclear activism and nationalism is very strong in, for example, Lithuania, it is weak in Ukraine and almost absent in Russia, something which she explains by the fact that Russia and Moscow constituted the center of power during the Soviet era: "In contrast to the other republics, however, activists were unable to translate this anti-Moscow feeling into a pro-Russia movement".[15]

Notwithstanding the weakness or even absence of nationalistic traits within the Ukrainian and Russian anti-nuclear movement, it is still possible to associate both the Russian and Ukrainian Chernobyl experience with a strong anti-Moscow/anti-Soviet feeling. When Dawson states: "The poorly constructed and operated nuclear power stations were obvious symbols of Moscow's disregard for the welfare of its member nations",[16] this is highly relevant in relation to both Ukraine and Russia, given the centralized Soviet power's disregard for the welfare of all the *individuals* living in these nations, including Russia and Ukraine.

One frequently used symbol in the Soviet and post-Soviet memory of the Chernobyl catastrophe is that of the Revelation of St John, the last book in the Christian New Testament, and its depiction of Wormwood, the star named after the plant with a bitter taste, that falls down to earth, poisoning the rivers and pointing towards the approaching Apocalypse.[17] One reason why this biblical motif occupies such a central position in the Slavic literature on Chernobyl is related to the star's name in the Bible, and its connections with the wormwood plant. Actually, an Artemisia plant very closely related to wormwood (*polyn gorkaia*) – mugwort (*polyn obyknovennaia*) – is, in Russian/Belarusian, and also in Ukrainian, also called Chernobyl*nik* or *chornobyl*.

These etymological bonds between Chernobyl and the Wormwood star have contributed to the fact that the Chernobyl catastrophe has been so closely associated with Saint John's apocalypse in the Soviet collective memory. It is almost as if the star in the Russian translation of the Bible was not called Wormwood (*Polyn*), but Chernobyl (*Chernobylnik/Chornobyl*).[18]

One of the first to use Saint John's apocalyptic revelation in her interpretation of the Chernobyl catastrophe was the Russian émigrée author Julia Voznesenskaia, who, not in the Soviet Union but in New York, published her novel *The Star Chernobyl (Zvezda Chernobyl)* in 1987. The title of course refers to the star Wormwood (*Zvezda Polyn*), while the eschatological dimensions are projected onto the fatal decline of the Soviet people's trust in the Soviet system after Chernobyl. The plot of the book revolves around the lives of three sisters, among whom the eldest (a responsible Party member) is searching for her youngest sister, who is living in Pripyat at the time of the catastrophe. When the corrupt system withholds the truth from her, she gradually loses faith in the whole Soviet system. Eventually the Chernobyl experience and the desperate search for her sister lead her to a political truth: Irina becomes a dissident and returns her Party card. The Chernobyl catastrophe, in other words, is interpreted as an apocalyptic sign of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which actually became the truth four years after the book was published.

Aside from the etymological explanation of why Chernobyl has been interpreted in relation to the final apocalypse, the description of Russian culture by two semioticians, Iurii Lotman and Boris Uspenskii, as a binary structure that winds its way through history by inverting "the existing system of relationships, changing pluses into minuses", helps to explain this frequent use of apocalypse in the Soviet and post-Soviet description of Chernobyl.[19] The two semioticians explain this duality of the Russian consciousness by referring to the fact that, contrary to the Western church, the Russian Orthodox Church does not include purgatory, and that this absence of a third, neutral zone between Paradise and Hell has contributed to a historical development within Russian culture distinguished by radical, binary changes – changing from "plus" into "minus" – instead of the successive development distinctive of Western countries. This binary structure can explain the fact that Russian culture is often described as apocalyptic, moving from one extreme pole – a paradisiacal utopia – into another – an infernal apocalypse. [20]

One of the most obvious, apocalyptic outcomes of Chernobyl is what happened to the nuclear town of Pripyat located in the so-called "exclusion zone" (*zona otchuzhdenia*), which was established around the plant covering an area of 30 kilometers. The town is situated only 3 kilometers from the plant and at the time of the accident had nearly fifty thousand residents, mostly workers at the plant (*energetiki*) and their families. The binary structure of before and after the apocalypse becomes even clearer, because of the fact that this young town, only 16 years old at the time of the evacuation, was perceived before the catastrophe as an outstanding symbol of youth, modern technology, hard work, and happy

"ONE OF THE MOST OBVIOUS, APOCALYPTICAL OUTCOMES OF CHERNOBYL IS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE NUCLEAR TOWN OF PRIPYAT."

family life in the name of communism, often depicted with its many mothers, pushing their prams along the straight lanes surrounded by beautiful flowerbeds. This paradisiacal nuclear city fits very well into what Kate Brown refers to as a "plutopia", and when Pripyat was evacuated 36 hours after the catastrophe, it suddenly transformed into an apocalyptic ghost town; the binary opposite of the former, communist paradise.[21]

Another explanation as to why this eschatological theme is so deeply rooted in the Soviet collective memory of Chernobyl is related to the fact that the catastrophe was interpreted as God's and nature's revenge for mankind's hubris in general, and Soviet power's intention to electrify the whole country in the name of communism in particular. In fact, one wonders whether the memory of Pripyat may eventually evolve into a myth, comparable to the myth of St Petersburg, associated with Peter the Great's hubristic project of building a new city – "a window towards Europe" at the beginning of the 18th century, therewith transforming a more or less medieval, orthodox Russia into a rational, Westernized world power. During the first decades of the 19th century, that is, more than a hundred years after the birth of St Petersburg, this myth was already taking form in Russian literature, beginning with Aleksandr Pushkin's poem *The Bronze Horseman*, written in 1833. The title refers to the bronze statue of Peter the Great, raised on the initiative of Catherine the Great in 1784. The poem is partly inspired by the flood that took place in St Petersburg in 1824, depicted by Pushkin as nature's and God's revenge on Peter the Great and human hubris.

The parallels between St Petersburg and Pripyat become even more striking when we consider the fact that the symbol of the town of Pripyat was Prometheus, the Greek Titan who stole fire from Zeus and brought it to man. This was an unambiguous symbol of human hubris – to use technology to create paradise on earth. Before the accident, a heroic statue, depicting Prometheus, holding the powerful torch above his head, stood outside the *Kinoteatr Prometei* [Prometheus Cinema] in Pripyat. After the catastrophe, the statue of Prometheus was removed from the ghost town with the intention of preserving the monument, and today it stands at the memorial square in front of the main administrative building of the Chernobyl plant, right next to the memorial plaques, listing the dead liquidators and workers at the plant. The new position of this former symbol of human power and technology – in Pripyat used as a symbol for nuclear energy and communism's eternal strength – converts it into its opposite: a tragic reminder of the shortcomings of modern technology, and a

punishment for mankind's hubris. Another example of this kind of inversion of former symbols is made by the Ukrainian-American author Mary Mycio who, during one of her visits to the dead city of Pripyat, observes a Soviet sculpture of the Chernobyl plant, in which Lenin's light metaphor has lost all its former power, provoking instead associations with the apocalyptic star, Wormwood:

> **The Soviet-era sign read: "V. I. Lenin Chernobyl Atomic Energy Station", but I was stumped as to the monument's possible meaning. "It's a torch," Rimma explained. "It symbolizes the light that the Chernobyl plant produced." The Wormwood star also blazed like a torch, I recalled, although biblical symbolism doesn't get you far in understanding how the disaster happened.[22]**

On the website Pripyat.com, one of the organizers, Aleksandr Sirota, a former Pripyat resident and the son of the poet and novelist Liubov Sirota, whose novel I shall introduce below, does his best to promote this eschatological myth by distributing statuettes of Prometheus under the slogan *Simvol goroda Pripiati* [The symbol of the town of Pripyat]. The statuettes cost 27 dollars each, but for orders of more than 10 pieces, a considerable discount is offered.[23] Unlike the bronze statue of Peter the Great, this statuette is made of plastic, but you can choose between bronze and copper color, recalling both the actual statue of Peter the Great, still standing at the Senate Square in St. Petersburg, and the literal title of Pushkin's poem *Mednyi vsadnik* [literally: The Copper Horseman].

Considering that only 27 years have passed since the catastrophe, it is too early to decide whether the town of Pripyat will develop into a myth comparative to that of St Petersburg, but clearly it has the qualifications needed. One reason is that the town's binary structure between the past and present, paradise and hell, high technology and wild nature, human hubris and apocalyptic punishment, brings to mind the binary structure that is also at the heart of the St Petersburg myth, when the town in Pushkin's poem was imagined both as a proud chapter in the Russian history – "Metropolis of Peter, stand/Steadfast as Russia, stand in splendor!" – and as the victim of the flood of the Neva that raged against the antichrist Peter and his rational project.[24] The two "hubris towns" were, in other words, both haunted by a real catastrophe, and, in both cases, became the subject of apocalyptic interpretation by Orthodox believers in Russia. According to the Old Believers' doctrine of Moscow as the "Third Rome", Peter's nomination of St Petersburg as the capital of the Russian Empire would bring about the end of the world.[25] In fact, a similar argumentation has taken place in the wake of Chernobyl, and in her book *Wormwood Forest*, Mycio mentions one extreme measure to which this parallel between Chernobyl and Saint John's revelation has led:

> **Chernobyl's putative apocalyptic connection became so widespread, combining fears of radiation with apocalyptic dread, that the state-controlled Soviet media took the highly unusual step of running interviews with leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church to debunk it, largely by arguing that no man could know when the end of time was near.[26]**

However, the only end provoked by Chernobyl, according to Mycio, is the collapse of the Soviet Union.[27]

Another reason why Pripyat has the qualifications needed in order to develop into a myth is that, just like the city of Petersburg, it has become the battlefield for different political standpoints in contemporary post-Soviet society. Sarah D. Phillips draws attention to an interesting fight between state and private tour firms over Chernobyl, a fight that finally resulted in a state monopoly that "began with a series of strict rules imposed on tourists and private tour operators, and culminated in a legal challenge by the General Prosecutor and a temporary ban on all Chernobyl tourism".[28] The reason for this conflict is not only profit, Phillips claims, but also narratives, a claim which she substantiates with reference to the former liquidator Sergei Mirnyi, who started his company *Chernobyl Tour* in order to provide tourists with "life-changing" experiences. While the state tour focuses exclusively on Chernobyl's negatives, Mirnyi's company tries to present some of Chernobyl's positive dimensions: the disaster sped up the downfall of the authoritarian Soviet regime, and the nuclear power industry came under much needed, increased scrutiny, among other things.[29] Aleksandr Sirota, of Pripyat.com, also is taking up the fight against the state, underlining the need to defend the exclusion zone from both oblivion and exploitation. He has started a group at Pripyat.com insisting that the town will be re-opened for human habitation in the future. Phillips compares Sirota's and his counterparts' relationship to the dead city of Pripyat to the destiny of Snow White:

> **"Their" Pripyat is branded as a sort of post-Chernobyl Snow White: a poisoned and abandoned, but still young city that is not dead, but merely sleeping, and**

PHOTO: SOVFOTO/VIG/GETTYIMAGE

People are scanned for radioactivity before evacuating.

Monument and reactor 4, Chernobyl.

PHOTO: TIIA MONTO/WIKIMEDIA

> **needs looking after until it is ready to re-awaken.**[30]

An important text describing people's experiences in Pripyat after the Chernobyl catastrophe was written by Alexandr Sirota's mother, the poet and novelist Liubov Sirota. At the time of the catastrophe, she was a single mother living in Pripyat with her then ten-year-old son Aleksandr. The first version of her novel *The Pripyat Syndrome* was written at the beginning of the 1990s as a film manuscript, but due to the economic crisis at the time, the film studio did not survive, and the script was reworked into a novel.[31]

The Pripyat Syndrome is based on Sirota's own experience of the Chernobyl catastrophe in April 1986 – from the first hours of rumors, speculations and neglect until the urgent evacuation, problems with accommodation and, not least, severe health problems, plus the difficulty of convincing the doctors that her and her son's health symptoms were of a physical and not psychological nature, hence the title *The Pripyat Syndrome*. About 20 hours after the explosion in block four, Sirota's alter ego, Irina, walks home with her friend Sofia from *Dvorets Kultury "Energetik"* [The Palace of Culture called "Energetik"].[32] They see the festive illuminations in the streets paying tribute to Lenin, the united people and the Party. On the top of a nine-story high-rise block they see the four-meter-high letters in neon lights, presenting the Soviet slogan "Let the atom be a worker, not a soldier" (*Chai bude atom robitnikom, a ne soldatom*), originally a quote from Kurchatov. When a bit further down the street they see another slogan, "Long live Marxism-Leninism" (*Chai zhive Marxizm-Leninizm*) introduced with the Ukrainian words *Chai zhive* (long live) instead of *Chai bude* (Let [the atom] be), Irina says to Sofia: "Hey, Sofia, what do you think? Irina said with bitter irony, looking at the 'light'. Don't you think the same will happen with this 'Chai' as with our 'Let the atom be a worker, not a soldier!'?"[33]

Against the background of what has just happened at the Chernobyl plant, of which Sofia and Irina are already aware, the slogan "Let the atom be a worker and not a soldier", is loaded with highly ambiguous meaning. The "peaceful atom" is discovered to be anything but peaceful, and in fact, as this quotation indicates, threatens the whole ideology of Marxism-Leninism. It is also interesting that this ambiguity, associated with the once proud Soviet slogans following the catastrophe in Pripyat almost thirty years ago, is still a subject of intense debate on the website Pripyat.com. Today, these four-meter-high letters in neon lights have disappeared from the roof, and the question discussed is: What actually happened to them? One version, probably a rumor, is that before the letters disappeared the Ukrainian letter "a" in the first word chai was changed to the Ukrainian letter "u", which transforms the first word into an invective, chui (cock). Another version is that the letters have been removed by hooligans, yet another that they have collapsed by themselves, and finally, that they have been removed in accordance with instructions from the state, a version supported by the user "Alfa". Referring to his/her personal chat with the user "Monstr", addressed as an avtoritetnyi tovarishch [credible expert], he/she claims regarding the destiny of this and other Soviet slogans in Pripyat:

> **After the catastrophe, some Soviet slogans, which had acquired a highly ambiguous meaning, were taken down. In a town that had been evacuated just as in a war, the slogan "Let the atom be a worker and not a soldier" certainly looked suspect.**[34]

Interestingly, one of the most recurrent stylistic devices of *The Pripyat Syndrome* is the depiction of Chernobyl as a war, which thereby ironically protests against the Soviet system. Below, I give some of the many examples in the novel whereby war-mapping is used as a protest against the old political system, but first it must be said that this frequent mapping is also a consequence of the fact that the experiences of the citizens' of Pripyat had a lot in common with the experiences of war: evacuation, grief and loss, collective brotherhood, adventure, the opportunity to perform heroic deeds, war veterans. When, for example, Irina in the novel cries out: "Around us is peace, but we are in the middle of a war!" it is probably more an expression of what she actually experienced during those hours than a political protest.[35] The same could be said when an old lady on the train helps Irina, who is suffering from radiation sickness, and Irina draws her attention to some free seats, upon which the lady answers: "They are for war veterans", upon which Irina responds: "Okay, but what are we, if not war veterans?"[36]

However, there are also examples where the parallel with war

may be interpreted as a conscious inversion of the old system, pointing towards a new system yet to be born. For instance, it is hard to interpret Irina's and Sofia's absurd performance, acting like soldiers on the streets of Pripyat, as something other than an ironic play on the current war-like inferno through which they are living, and caused by nothing other than the so-called peaceful atom:

> **All of a sudden, Sofia straightened her back and commanded Irina with a loud voice: "Atten. . . tion!. . . . Ready!. . . . Front! Forward. . . march! One-two. . . ." And when the two friends had saluted, they firmly marched forward along the street.**[37]

Another example is when the well-known war song *Staraia soldatskaia pesnia* [The Old Soldier's song] by Bulat Okudzhava is quoted in the novel, slightly changed in order to fit the Chernobyl experience, and introduced with the cry: "Guys! If we have to die anyway, let us die with music! Okay, let's sing!"[38]

There is also another song quoted in the novel, *My – mirnyi atom* [We are the peaceful atom], written by the former Pripyat resident Volodimir Shovkoshitnii, who worked at the plant starting in 1978 and later became a liquidator in the zone. Today, he is a poet, bard, author, politician, and prominent figure in the Ukrainian environmental movement. This song depicts Chernobyl as a war but certainly not a heroic one. Just as during the previous Brezhnev era, when, as Viktor Erofeev states in his article "A wake in memory of Soviet literature" (1991), no socialist realist writer believed in what he wrote, but simply wrote in order to receive fat royalties, this song states: "We are all heroes, as long as we are well paid".[39] But the song also shows that the Chernobyl experience did nothing to revive this already degenerate myth of heroism, depicting instead a "foolish" hero who becomes impotent: "Our wives tell us: you are no hero, but an impotent fool".[40] An anti-hero taking part in an absurd and meaningless war, fighting against one of the most sacred symbols of communism: "We are 'fighting' for our Great Country by receiving roentgens in our testicles", roentgens that emanate from the so-called peaceful atom, one of the cornerstones of Lenin's communism.[41]

The most striking result of a comparison of Chernobyl to a war is not the many similarities but rather the differences uncovered by such a mapping, leading to a questioning of the values of Soviet heroism and war culture. Svetlana Aleksievich, author of the book of interviews entitled *Voices from Chernobyl*, is one of the several writers who interpret the Chernobyl disaster explicitly as the end of Soviet war culture. In an interview to mark the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the catastrophe, she portrays her first visit to the zone as a kind of revelation of the absurdity of war:

> **A soldier with a rifle in his hand. Whom was he going to shoot at and whom should he defend? Should he defend his people from the physics, from invisible particles? Shoot at the contaminated earth or tree? [...]. This was the image of war... It was the war culture that fell apart right in front of my eyes. I saw the pre-Chernobyl man transforming into the post-Chernobyl man.** [42]

By the concept "post-Chernobyl man", Aleksievich means a person more or less freed from the Soviet war culture and myth of heroism, the result of a cultural transformative process that eventually brought about the decline of the Soviet Union. The same ambivalence addressed by Aleksievich in her testimonial account above is present in Sirota's novel. On the one hand, it is *as if* the Pripyat residents in the novel are participating in a war, but on the other hand, this is a very strange kind of war. In contrast to a normal war, the enemy does not come from the *outside*, constituting a threat from an alien ideological and political system. Instead, the enemy is emanating from *within* the Soviet system, namely from one of its most sacred symbols, the *peaceful* atom.

According to Lotman and Uspenskii, the binary structure of the Russian culture does not only mean "a new system of values, *replacing* the old with the new" [*my italics*], but also that the old is *written* into the new, but "with a minus sign", as Lotman and Uspenskii note.[43] That is, the old system (the peaceful atom), is inverted into its binary opposite (the atom as a warrior), and then written, as the next step, into the new, but with a minus sign – thus *undermining* instead of *underlining* the Soviet communist system.

Bearing this in mind, the depiction of Chernobyl as a war becomes an effective device for making manifest political protest, ironically forcing former Soviet concepts to become loaded with their opposite value: "the peaceful atom" becomes a warrior against its own people, and Prometheus's utopian fire turns into an apocalyptic fire. This new value system, in turn, provokes existential doubt regarding the true nature of Soviet war culture and heroism: What does it actually mean to die for your country? What is a hero? Could it be called heroism to die in a "war" against one of the most sacred cornerstones of Soviet ideology? Or, is it more correct to address this as a senseless suicide?

Finally, this draws our attention to the fact that the people's mistrust of the Soviet system, enhanced by the Chernobyl catastrophe, was not only a consequence of technology's great impact on the ideological level, but also related to technology's close connection with the creation of the new Soviet man. And when reactor four at the Chernobyl plant exploded, it was not only the communist system that evaporated in the Soviet consciousness, but also the great myth of the new Soviet man, a heroic soldier and efficient worker, both in the name of communism.

johanna lindbladh

references

1 Other nuclear accidents in the Soviet Union had occurred, but their disclosure was stifled by the Soviet authorities. The most severe among these was the Kyshtym accident at Mayak in 1957, a plutonium production reactor. The disaster was measured as a level 6 disaster on the International Nuclear Event Scale, making it the third most serious nuclear accident after the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters, both measured as level 7 on the

INES. Zhores Medvedev, a biologist and dissident writer, who was exiled from the Soviet Union in 1973, was the first to report this and other Soviet accidents in his book *Nuclear disaster in the Urals* (1979).

2 Paul R. Josephson "Rockets, Reactors, and Soviet Culture" in *Science and the Soviet Social Order*, Loren R. Graham (ed.), (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990), 190.

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5 Herschel and Edith Alt, *The New Soviet Man: His Upbringing and Character Development*, Bookman Associates, Inc. (1964), 19

6 Lysenko is quoted from Mikhail Heller, *Cogs in the Wheel: The Formation of Soviet Man*, New York 1988, p. viii.

7 Paul R. Josephson, *Red Atom: Russia's Nuclear Power from Stalin to Today*, New York (1999), 3.

8 Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*, New York 2013. Igor Kurchatov was head of the Soviet atomic bomb project (1943-1960), and is often addressed as the father of the Soviet atomic bomb.

9 *Lampochka Ilicha* has its roots in Lenin's electrification plan and is still used (with irony) in Russia, referring to an ascetic light bulb without a shade, hanging from the ceiling.

10 This propagandistic way of highlighting the atom's peaceful qualities also existed in Western countries such as the United Kingdom, France and the United States, which both Brown and Josephson state in their books (Ibid). However, due to the symbiotic relation between ideology and technology in the Soviet Union, the Soviet concept "peaceful atom" received a much more fundamental import in the Soviet society compared to other countries. For instance, Brown notes that even the Soviet bomb was ascribed peaceful purposes by the Soviet citizens: "Soviet citizens believed their bomb was not a weapon of destruction but a 'nuclear shield' against capitalist aggression" (Ibid, 133).

11 Zhores Medvedev, *The Legacy of Chernobyl*, (Oxford 1990), x.

12 In her latest book published in Moscow 2011, *Chernobyl': Bol'shaia lozh* [Chernobyl: The Big Lie], Iaroshinskaia comments on Gorbachev's decision to classify most of the information on Chernobyl as follows: "What about perestroika and the new thinking? It didn't affect the Chernobyl catastrophe. Maybe this is the main reason why Chernobyl became a catalyst for the collapse of the communist empire." (Iaroshinskaia 2011), http://lib.rus.ec/b/429807/read. *My translation.*

13 Vladimir Gubarev, Sarcophagus: *A Tragedy*, New York, translated by Michael Glenny, (1987), 69.

14 It should be noted that this utopian aspect of plutonium was not only used in the Soviet Union, but also in the United States. This is shown in Kate Brown's recent book *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*, New York 2013, in which she studies the plutonium cities of the Hanford plutonium plant near Richland and the Mayak plant next to Ozersk in terms of utopian cities; a "plutopia".

15 Dawson claims that the historically close connections between Russia and Ukraine can explain the fact that eco-nationalism was almost absent also in Ukraine. Dawson, Jane I. *Eco-Nationalism: Anti-nuclear Activism and National Identity in Russia, Lithuania, and Ukraine*, Durham, (1996), 121.

16 Ibid, 163.

17 The Book of Revelation, Chapter 8, verse 10 and 11.

18 Another fateful interpretation of the plant's name Chernobyl draws attention towards its etymologic relationship with the words "black" (chornyi) and "legend" (byl').

19 Iurii Lotman and Boris Uspenskii, "Binary Models in the Dynamics of Russian Culture" in *The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History, Alexander Nakhimovsky and Alice Stone Nakhimovsky* (ed.) (Ithaca and London, 1985), 34.

20 See for example David Bethea's book *The Shape of Apocalypse in Modern Russian Fiction* (Princeton, 1991).

21 Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters*, New York 2013. The official information about the evacuation was distributed on local radio in Pripyat at 10 am, Sunday, April 28, and four hours later, 1,100 empty buses arrived and transported the nearly 50, 000 residents from the city. One reason why the evacuation of Pripyat was possible to carry through in this relatively efficient way was that the Soviet authorities had informed the citizens that the evacuation was only for a couple of days. See for instance Liubov' Sirota's autobiographical novel *The Pripyat Syndrome*, which I will get back to later in the text.

22 Mary Mycio, *Wormwood Forest* (Washington, D. C. 2005), 9.

23 http://vk.com/topic-42699175_27184827

24 Alexander Pushkin "The Bronze Horseman" in *The Complete Works of Alexander Pushkin*. Volume Five, Norfolk, (2000), 299.

25 "Third Rome" refers to the belief that Moscow and the Russian empire would succeed Rome and Byzantium Rome after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. At the beginning of the 16th century, the Russian monk Filofei stated his prophecy that Moscow is the Third Rome, and that there will never be a fourth Rome.

26 Mary Mycio, *Wormwood Forest*, (Washington, D. C. 2005), 8.

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28 Sarah D. Phillips, " "An Illustrated Guide to the Post-catastrophe Future" in *The Anthropology of East Europe Review,* vol. 30, no 1, (2012), 131.

29 Ibid, 131.

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31 Thanks to financial support from the international public organization Pripyat.com, it was finally published as a novel, first as a book (2009) and in 2011 electronically at the site Pripyat.com, as a gift to the readers on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe. The English translation of the book is published electronically at Amazon.com.

32 Palaces of Culture (DK) were large community centers spread all over the country during the Soviet era. Each DK had its own name, and the one in Pripyat was called "Energetik", meaning both "energetic" (vigorous, healthy) as well as "power plant worker".

33 pripyat.com/news/11-04-24/pripyatskii-sindrom. All the quotations from Sirota's book are in my translation.

34 http://forum.pripyat.com/showthread.php?t=2380.

35 pripyat.com/news/11-04-24/pripyatskii-sindrom.

36 Ibid.

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ECONOMIES OF FAVORS OR CORRUPT SOCIETIES?

by **Alena Ledeneva**

Exploring the boundaries between informality and corruption

For years, I have been working on issues of informality. Yet these issues are often also branded as corruption. The research question whether the boundaries between the two can be drawn cannot be answered by means of definitions. Analytical distinctions prove useless in the face of practices embedded in particular sets of constraints, practical norms, and "moral economies".[1] If I am asked to give a one-word clue to identify the missing piece in the puzzle of crossing boundaries between informality and corruption, I would say: ambivalence. In its sociological sense, ambivalence, according to the definition of Robert Merton, refers to incompatible normative expectations of attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. The incompatibility is assigned to a status and the social structures that generate the circumstances in which ambivalence is embedded.[2] The core type of sociological ambivalence puts contradictory demands upon the occupants of a status in a particular social relation. Since these norms cannot be simultaneously expressed in behavior, they come to be expressed in an oscillation of behaviors: of detachment and compassion, of discipline and permissiveness, of personal and impersonal treatment".[3]

The bi-polar definition of ambivalence

In the context of modernity, ambivalence is associated with fragmentation and failure of manageability. Zygmunt Bauman defines ambivalence as the possibility of assigning an object or an event to more than one category and views it as a language-specific disorder. The main symptom of disorder is the acute discomfort we feel when we are unable to read the situation properly and to choose between alternative actions.[4] Bauman lists ambivalence among "the tropes of the 'other' of order: ambiguity, uncertainty, unpredictability, illogicality, irrationality, ambivalence, brought about by modernity with its desire to organize and to design".[5] Ambivalence thus implies a form of disorder and negativity.

In my view, ambivalence can be singled out from Bauman's list for its bi-polarity, oscillating duality (both order and disorder; both positivity and negativity), and relative clarity of the polar positions. It is a social counterpart of emotional ambivalence in psychology (love-hate) or materials with ambivalent qualities in physics (semiconductors). In other words, it is a situation of coexisting thesis and antithesis, without the possibility and certainty of their synthesis, yet without uncertainty as to what coexisting views, attitudes, and beliefs are. The latter qualification would not apply to ambivalence in psychoanalysis, where it is often associated with ambiguity. For the purposes of the following discussion of substantive, functional, and normative ambivalence, I distinguish the concept of ambivalence from ambiguity in the following ways:

- Ambivalence is bi-polar, not multi-polar as is the case with ambiguity.
- The poles (thesis and anti-thesis) are clearly defined.
- There is little uncertainty as to what coexisting views, attitudes,

ILLUSTRATION: KARIN SUNVISSON

and beliefs are. The uncertainty is created by the unpredictability of their actualization.
- The incompatibility of constituents of the ambivalence is different from duplicity, from the deliberate deceptiveness in behavior or speech, or from double-dealing.
- When molded by the clashing constraints, ambivalence can result in the capacity for doublethink (the illogical logic), dual functionality (functionality of the dysfunctional), and double standards (for us and for them).
- The ambivalence is best understood through the paradoxes it produces, such as the role of hackers in advancing cyber security, for example, and can be identified by looking into the open secrets of societies.[6]

Blat

My interest in the theme of ambivalence originated in a study of *blat*; the use of personal networks for getting things done in Soviet Russia, or Russia's "economy of favors".[7] The latter referred not only to the circulation of favors – favors of access to the centrally distributed goods, services and privileges – but also to the sociability of blat channels, which friends and friends of friends routinely used for tackling shortages and problems. The pervasiveness of blat turned favors into an alternative currency of "mutual help and mutual understanding" needed for the functioning of the non-market economy, and embodied peoples' frustration with the non-consumerist ideology and political constraints of the centralized planning and distribution. On the individual level, favors delivered by friends, acquaintances, and friends of friends granted solutions to small-time problems. On a societal level, they represented a way out for the Soviet system that struggled to adhere to its own proclaimed principles. A discreet redistribution of resources within social networks – an implicit social contract, known as the "little deal" – became part of the solution.[8]

The contradictory nature of constraints, and informal practices needed to resolve them, are well reflected in the anecdote about six paradoxes of socialism:
- No unemployment but nobody works.
- Nobody works but productivity increases.
- Productivity increases but shops are empty.
- Shops are empty but fridges are full.
- Fridges are full but nobody is satisfied.
- Nobody is satisfied but all vote unanimously.

Each of these paradoxes hides a reference to an informal practice that helped the Soviet system to continue making its formal claims of superiority, yet also undermined the declared principles.

A Russian phrase "*nel'zya, no mozhno*" (prohibited, yet possible) offered a summary understanding of the Soviet society with its all-embracing restrictions and the labyrinth of possibilities around them (the shops are empty but fridges are full). Blat was an open secret for insiders, but a puzzle for outsiders unequipped to handle the "doublethink" associated with blat. It was not that a formal "no" necessarily turned into a "yes" after pulling some blat strings. The formula *no+blat=yes* is misleading, for it emphasizes the importance of blat but downplays the importance of constraints. In Soviet times, even outsiders could make useful friends and mobilize them and their networks to get things done. Yet there was always a limit to what friends could do. Sometimes blat worked and sometimes it didn't. Thus, its formula should grasp both ends of the paradox:

blat=no (shops are empty)
AND
blat=yes (fridges are full)

Blat and shortage

No coherent rules about blat economy of favors, which were predominantly associated with access to goods and services in short supply, could be deduced: it was both the formally prescribed "no" and the informally pushed "yes" that constituted an ambivalent outcome, somewhat dependent on the size and potential of the networks, while also being constraint-driven, context-bound, uncertain, and irregular. Moreover, under conditions of shortage (or rationing), a positive outcome for one was preconditioned by negative outcomes for the others. While the state monopoly of centralized distribution created shortages, the monopolization of blat redistribution by each particular gatekeeper further perpetuated these shortages further. The constraints of socialism drove people to outwit the centralized distribution system. At the same time, the harshness of these constraints made it impossible for the regime to fully enforce the existing regulations, which created opportunities for brokers to circumvent them. "Pushers" of constraints (*tolkachi* and *blatmeisters*) created value for themselves and their networks at the expense of less opportunistic players. Thus, functionally, blat softened the constraints of the Soviet system for some but was dependent on the continuing existence of constraints for others. Working with constraints to unleash their enabling power became the preoccupation of experienced brokers, who often functioned for the sake of the Soviet system but contrary to the system's own rules. Thus blat could function in both productive and non-productive ways.

Informal practices that make things work

Obtaining goods and services through blat channels provided just one example of the many informal practices that made the Soviet regime more tolerable and, at the same time, helped to undermine its political, economic, and social foundations. In his *Economics of Shortage*, Janos Kornai theorizes principles of rationing, or the non-price criteria of allocation, and forms of allocation of resources.[9] Each of these can be associated with an informal practice, serving specific needs at various stages in socialist development. For example, associated with queuing is the practice of absenteeism from a workplace (no unemployment, but nobody works), that in late socialism served people's consumption, but also served to alleviate the hardship of queuing and to reduce criticism towards the regime, which was incapable of tackling shortages. Because absenteeism had utility for late socialism and could not be ruled out completely, it was prosecuted by authorities only in selective campaigns, often to signal that the practice had gone out of proportion or to punish regional and local officials, on whose territories the raids for absentees in the shops' queues were

made. Selective enforcement, or under-enforcement, became the obverse of over-regulation.

The theme of ambivalence became similarly central for the postcommunist transition. In my next book, *How Russia Really Works*, I argue against the stigmatization of practices that replaced blat during Russia's dramatic break-up with its communist past. Contrary to the assumption that informal practices had to disappear once the oppressive system collapsed, I identified new practices that emerged and functioned ambivalently in order to serve the transition: they both supported and subverted the post-Soviet political, judicial, and economic institutions. Newly established in the 1990s, democratic and market institutions, including competitive elections, free media, an independent judiciary, and private property rights, became enveloped in informal practices that both facilitated their development and undermined it. Practices associated with manipulation of electoral campaigns (black public relations or *piar*), misuse of information and compromising materials (*kompromat*), use of informal control and leverage (*krugovaya poruka*) in the formally independent judiciary, circumvention of market-induced economic constraints with barter schemes, non-transparent ownership, and creative accounting were the most widespread in that period. [10]

Blat and sistema

My initial theorization of the ambivalent role of blat networks has also helped in the subsequent exploration of the network-based system of informal governance – *sistema* – under Putin. In periods of stability, the ambivalent workings of blat networks at the grassroots level are indeed similar to those of power networks in *sistema*, but one important distinction has to be emphasized. If the blat "economy of favors" had to some extent an equalizing effect on the chances of gaining access to resources for networked individuals, and thus reduced the privilege gap between insiders and outsiders of the centralized distribution system, the trickle-down effect of the present-day "economy of kickbacks" seems to be the reverse: it undermines competition, excludes the outsiders, and rewards insiders through network-based allocation and mobilization. If blat networks tended to operate on the basis of obligation perceived as "mutual help", power networks tend to operate on the basis of a hierarchical, patron-client logic, associated with practices of "feeding" (*kormlenie*) aimed to enhance the power of the ruler and leave his subordinates under his "manual control".[11] This difference also stems from the political and economic frameworks in which networks operate. Because the Soviet system was not economically viable due to its centralization, rigid ideological constraints, shortages, and the limited role of money, blat networks had some equalizing, "weapon of the weak" role in the oppressive conditions, and to some extent served the economic needs of the central distribution system. In Putin's Russia, power networks operate without those constraints and extract multiple benefits from the post-Soviet reforms, while undermining the key principles of market competition (equality of economic subjects and security of property rights) and the key principle of the rule of law (equality before the law). They are, in effect, the "weapon of the strong". The effect of dominance, omnipresence, pressure under which everyone has to live is often referred to as "sistema".

What it lacks in democratic graces, the *sistema* appears to compensate for with the effectiveness of its informal incentives, control, and capital flows operated by power networks and their impressive capacity to mobilize. Reliance on networks enables leaders to mobilize and to control, yet they also lock politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen into informal deals, mediated interests, and personalized loyalties. This is the "modernization trap of informality": one cannot use the potential of informal networks without triggering their negative long-term consequences for institutional development.[12]

The similarity of functional ambivalence of both blat and power networks points to an important dimension of modernization: in order to modernize, one should not only change the formal rules, but also modernize networks. Modernizing networks in the context of informality and corruption first of all means changing people's attitudes to favors of access for "*svoi*" at all levels. Networks through which favors are channeled, and their functional ambivalence, are essential for the understanding of economies of favors and their similarities with and differences from corruption.

Helping from whose pocket?

In the Soviet economy of favors, favors often involved redistribution of public (or non-personal) resources for the provision of personalized help, which placed such actions on the borderline with practices of embezzlement, pilfering, and routine misuse of resources. Yet the societal constraints, specifically the illegitimacy of the private property, legitimized the use of the public property. Blat favors were commonly aimed at obtaining food, goods, and services, to which people were entitled. It made such favors easier to receive, especially that they were associated with non-monetary incentives. Moreover, the sense of entitlement provided legitimacy to those involved in giving, receiving, or exchanging favors. Those who did not or could not become involved, however, emphasized the inequality and unfairness of blat. For participants, favors of access merged with patterns of care and sociability to such an extent that people were often unable to distinguish, for example, friendship from the use of friendship. Such dual nature of blat was preconditioned by subjective and objective, informal and formal constraints. The informal code of friendship in socialist societies (to give away your last shirt to a friend) made the boundaries between relationship and the use of relationship blurred. The formal constraints of socialism – where the public and private property balance was distorted, the money did not function fully, and the alternative currencies of exchange created symbiotic relationship with the economy of shortage – allowed favors of access to be exchanged at the expense of the public resources and served to compensate for the deficiencies of the centralized system of distribution.

The blurred boundaries between sociability and instrumentality

For the purpose of the ideal types, it is possible to establish a borderline to distinguish between friendship and blat (the use of friendship) – if help to a friend comes from one's own pocket,

To survive in a corrupt system imposed from above, one can create one's own system of favors from below.

it is help of a friend, if a help to a friend comes at the expense or through redistribution of public resources, it is a favor of access. The nature of formal constraints, the lack of private property or clear divisions between the public and the private in socialist societies, provides a degree of entitlement to whatever the economy of favors has to offer. As opposed to favors given, received, or exchanged at the expense of personal resources, an economy of favors implies that a favor-giver is not only a giver but also a gatekeeper or a broker benefiting from the position of access and discretionary powers. It is also often the case that a favor-recipient is not merely a beneficiary of a redistributed object or service, one delivered by a friend, a friend of a friend or a broker, but also a recipient of what s/he is entitled to have. In other words, a favor does not produce an outcome visibly different from that achieved in other ways (inheriting, rationing, queuing, purchasing on the black market), which makes defining the boundaries even more difficult.

To complicate matters further, the difference between sociability and instrumentality is defined not only by the source of resources (private or public) but also by the incentive (material or non-material). Thus, the intermediation of blat is essential to protect one's positive and altruistic self-image and to misrecognize one's own experiences: one helps a friend, not oneself, and that friend returns a favor eventually. Both parties maintain a "good friend" self-image while using public resources for "non-selfish" purposes. When the moral norms prescribe that one must help a friend but also that blat is immoral and unethical, the normative ambivalence – the partial "misrecognition game" – is the way out.

Selfless redistribution of public funds for a moral cause is not likely to be seen as self-serving, or corrupt. And yet, where there is a potential for mutuality, sociability breeds instrumentality. Selflessness of favors, or disinterested giving, is an essential feature of an economy of favors: "I favor your interests, you favor mine, and we are both selfless individuals not interested in material gain." Acting sociably, for a non-material and/or non-personal gain, allows the giver not to cross the borderline of a corrupt exchange, while the recipient of material gain is not in the position to re-direct public resources and technically does nothing wrong. Where a "favor of access" involves the misuse of public office, the self-image is "rescued" from being corrupt by an altruistic incentive and the lack of direct private gain.

In turn, non-material incentives may include all kinds of moral or emotional gains and losses. Apart from grace, noted by Julian Pitt-Rivers[13] and Humphrey[14], dignity and humiliation can certainly be brought into the discussion of non-material incentives. In literary sources, Eric Naiman observes, they seem to undergird just about every act of giving and receiving, and the recipient's sense of self-worth (dignity) and the degree of resentment he experiences, even – and perhaps especially – towards those who do the most for him, are essential components in the understanding of the meaning and consequences of any favor. The sense of daily frustration surrounding the material aspects of much late-Soviet life surely had an impact on the giving and receiving of favors, and their perception.

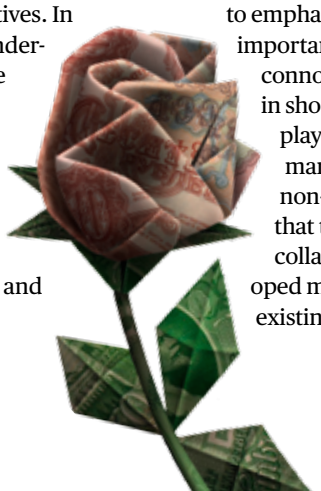
Clashing constraints beyond socialism

As mentioned in the introduction, the issues of blurred boundaries and clashing constraints are not exclusive to socialism[15] or post-socialism. In a wider sense, such issues can be reframed in terms of world religions, the emergence of an anonymous individual, market systems, or the transformation from limited access to open access societies, a transformation that implies that certain hurdles of law enforcement and limitations for the elites need to be overcome.[16] In a narrower sense, in order to understand the contexts conducive to economies of favors, one should find oneself in a situation, where due to its formal and informal constraints, it is impossible to be a good brother and a good bureaucrat simultaneously, or where it is possible for a favor to have contradictory outcomes (good for one, bad for another; good in the short term, bad in the long run; to alleviate but also to aggravate shortages). The clashing constraints certainly reinforce the functional ambivalence of social networks, which operate differently under different constraints and certainly play a key role in mastering mutually exclusive constraints.

When gate keeping is associated with a position in official hierarchy (with access to public resources), granting a favor is not defined by personal choice. It is shaped by the dual pressure on a bureaucrat: on the one hand, formal responsibility to perform certain duties and follow rules according to organizational or professional code, delegated by the principal, and on the other hand, informal responsibility for personal networks, friends, family, and the peer pressure of the social circle. A cross-country variation in the combinations of formal and informal constraints is substantial. There are societies where it is possible to be a good bureaucrat and a good brother at the same time, but there are societies where this is not possible, and one has to navigate around both sets of constraints in order to keep both the job and the network. Economies of favors tend to develop in circumstances of conflicting formal and informal constraints, so that social networks not only become instrumental for individuals but also ease the workings of institutions.

Favors of access in other societies

I argue that constraints associated with central planning, shortages, and rationing produce an "economy of favors" that is essential for the functioning of political, economic, and social systems, and thus is different in scale and functionality from other systems. Some pointers to such conditions are hidden in a popular proverb "do not have hundred rubles, have hundred friends". It is meant to emphasize the non-material (moral and emotional) importance of relationships, but it has also developed connotations involving access to goods and services in short supply. In the planned economy, money played a limited role because of the underdeveloped markets, which placed additional emphasis on the non-market transactions. But this does not mean that the informal dimension disappears with the collapse of planned centralized economies. In developed market economies, favors for circumventing the existing constraints are also both relationship-based



and instrumental,[17] yet it is the nature of constraints that makes a difference. Although the concept of "favor of access" has emerged from the context of state-centralized distribution systems, it may become relevant in other types of regimes where the state plays a central role in the bailout of private financial institutions (the 2008 financial crisis in Russia has certainly put businesses in a queue for a bailout). In full-fledged markets, as portrayed by Jeremy Rifkin[18], the institution of ownership gradually transforms into the life-long access to services, so one can envisage the relevance of economies of favors for access to nearly every aspect of human life.

Whether driven by scarcity or surplus, there are pockets of society where friends, friends of friends, and other gatekeepers capable of sharing access are all-important, and where favors of access are routinely provided and channeled by social networks. It can be envisaged as a social network of gatekeepers, who either open their gates of access when needed by those they care about, or use their own time and resources for sociability, thus also creating or maintaining their social networks. The hidden part of such sociability is its potential to generate a return, to create incentives for keeping the gates shut unless there is a prospect of a return, and to generate divisions into "us" and "them", thus entailing exclusion and unfairness.

The blurred boundaries between favors of access and corrupt transactions

The resemblance of blat favors aimed at circumventing formal rules and procedures – manipulating access to resources through direct purchase as in bribery or the diversion of public resources for personal gain – makes them a member of a wider family of informal practices and complicates the matter of drawing the boundaries between favors and corrupt exchanges.[19] It also raises the question whether blat was in fact a dysfunctional corrupt practice. This may be the case in certain contexts but it is also misleading, for neither blat nor corruption have a clear or single meaning, nor are these terms independent of normative, context-free judgment.[20] According to Lampert[21], cases of corruption have a ranking specific to the society. The Soviets clearly felt that bribery was a worse form of corruption than a small-scale use of public resources for private ends (such as using workers to do private jobs). Cultural connotations of money as "dirty" made non-monetary transactions fairly legitimate.[22] This was in tune with the distinction drawn between various forms of offense in the criminal code and the different penalties for engaging in them.[23] Blat was not on the criminal scale at all and could not, strictly speaking, be characterized as illegal (by reason of its small scale or acknowledged necessity (*voiti v polozhenie*)), thus falling in the category of "good" or "ambiguous" corruption.[24] The oppressive nature of the communist regime, and its centralized way of distributing goods and privileges, introduces another twist in interpretation of the nature of blat practices: if blat corrupted the corrupt regime, can we refer to it as corruption? With these considerations in mind, to equate blat and corruption in a Soviet context is to misunderstand the nature of Soviet socialism.

It is tempting to argue that blat subverted the Soviet system, and thus should be held responsible for undermining its principles and foundations, leading to the ultimate collapse of the Soviet Union. Yet blat also served the needs of the socialist system, and thus supported its existence, operating contrary to the system's own acclaimed principles. Such functionality of the dysfunctional, or ambivalence, applies, for example, to the role of hackers in advancing cyber security.[25] Apart from the ambivalent relationship (subversive/supportive) with the Soviet institutions, blat produced a similar bearing on personal relationships – people were forced to use their personal networks instrumentally, and that instrumentality helped to sustain those networks. People were made to want to be "needed": blat is certainly missed by former *blat meisters* these days, and *babushki* mind being replaced by professional babysitters. The ambivalence of social networks is an interesting angle to explore as it helps identify similarities and differences in those conditions that make people use their networks for getting things done in different societies.

For example, patron-client networks are known for their parasitism on state resources and abuse of administrative power everywhere. Yet in Russia, they are perceived as more stifling for business than in China (this line of argument links to Robert Klitgaard's conception of an "optimal level" of corruption, which has been taboo in contemporary anti-corruption studies).[26] Chinese networks are monitored better (there is a system of checks and balances, hotlines, and letters that are taken seriously by the Communist Party) and may be managed internally with more awareness of *guanxi*.[27] Chinese regions enjoy much more independence than Russian ones, and that also has implications for local growth, rather than centralization of resources. Cultural and historical differences are also important: a sense of measure is a key Confucian value that can be contrasted with the Russian soul's aversion to moderation.

Crossing the boundaries with a smile

The blat exchanges of early socialism have matured into a full-fledged economy of favors and become an open secret of late socialism, alongside its other competences: "to read between the lines", "to see through the façade", "to beat the system", that enabled the reproduction of daily interactions without pressure of recognition of one's own compromised behavior or the failures of the system. It allowed people to get on with their daily lives and helped the system to reproduce itself. A society of double standards and open secrets was thus formed.

Although the social competence of handling open secrets, and dealing with situations of moral ambiguity or ethical squeeze are largely invisible to outsiders, I argue that the normative ambivalence can be spotted in what I call a "knowing smile".[28] I have seen many of these while researching the economy of favors. Knowing smiles are partially about smiling, partially about knowing; partially about knowing, partially about not knowing yet being able to go on without questioning. A knowing smile signals the competence

that includes a certain degree of cynicism, tacit knowledge about what is normal, the so-called ability "to go on", enhanced by skills of doublethink, misrecognition, and the ability to turn formal constraints to one's advantage. A knowing smile implies ambivalence about the idea of being honest, upright, and dedicated to official goals, holding these values, while also maintaining a distance from them. Independence, individualism, civic rights in totalitarian societies are channeled through doublethink. "Someone who readily believes whatever official discourse says has no independent thought".[29]

The knowing smile – whether as a sign of recognition, misrecognition, or both – indicates some release from the grip of totalitarian ideologies, which are aimed at the transformation of human nature[30], yet it could also be seen as a sign of such transformation. It becomes irrelevant whether people believed official ideological messages or not. Instead, the relation to the officialdom became based on intricate strategies of simulated support and on "nonofficial" practices.[31] Individual doublethink develops into collective double standards that imply the ability to hold contradictory views in private and in public and the capacity to switch between them smoothly, when applied to "us" and "them", to "ordinary citizens" and to the Party leaders, to one's personal circle and to society as a whole. Double standards continued to dominate in the post-Soviet era.

When I did my fieldwork in Russia in the 1990s and asked people to talk to me about blat – Russia's economy of favors – they smiled knowingly but then almost universally responded, "Why ask me?" Reassured that I only want to know "what everybody knows", most of my respondents were happy to discuss blat matters frankly, talking mostly about others, or about the way things used to be, but eventually also coming up with personal stories. An understanding of the *misrecognition game* and the ambivalence of my respondents has informed my methodology of research on favors: speak about generic practice, not personal experience; let the experience trickle down through narrative; speak about others (neighbors, other firms, friends); speak about the past, and inquire about know-how that is no longer in use.

Ambivalent methodology

It would seem that one cannot study societies' open secrets with a straightforward tackle. Approaching sensitive subjects requires an observant and patient researcher, keen on details and willing to take detours. Detours are in fact essential and are not without paradoxes. One should not look for it to find it; one should go at a distance to see closer; one should use the "rear mirror" to move ahead; and one should get out in order to notice what was in. In other words, the most direct way of studying sensitive subjects is to study them indirectly. One of the side effects of researching an economy of favors is that one becomes unfit to participate in it: once its misrecognition game is analyzed, it becomes impossible to play it, once its ambivalence is understood, the habitual use of double standards becomes inhibited. Reflection distorts practice.

Studying economies of favors allows one to assess the most profound features of societies through seemingly trivial aspects of everyday behavior, but it requires methodologies for grasping ambivalence. Sensitivities displayed in people's accounts and explanations of favors provide insights into their own view of the divisive nature of favors and the double standards surrounding them, as well as into relationships within their networks. Understanding such cleavages can be hugely assisted by fortuitous historical circumstances. In the beginning of the 1990s, for example, it became possible to ask people to articulate their views on the Soviet past without constraint, just as in the 1950s, those who left the Soviet Union were able to describe their blat experience in the Harvard Interviewing Project. The collapse of the Soviet Union has made blat a matter of the past and thus enabled people to articulate it.[32] Yet asking people about private matters, such as favors, will always take them out of their comfort zone.

Years of fieldwork in post-Soviet Russia has helped me to develop a "slow cooking" methodology and assemble ethnographic evidence on hidden aspects of informality, strategies of misrecognition, and ambivalent qualities of economies of favors alongside other qualitative research. I relied on people's willingness to share their experiences and started framing the most interesting ones as case studies. When I was researching *Russia's Economy of Favors*, it was a case of a doctor, Natalia, who was an effective blat broker, exploiting the system but also being exploited by it. Her story exemplified the experience of the inner workings the Soviet economy of favors at the grassroots level. In *How Russia Really Works*, it was the story of a banker, Tatiana, that best illustrated the ambivalence of the business practices of the 1990s, with their criminality, unlawfulness, and unfairness, on the one hand, and their functionality for the transition, on the other.[33] As I looked for a story to illustrate the profound changes that have taken place in Russia in 2000–2008, I knew it should be associated with the increased importance of the judiciary and Russia's integration into the international legal order. I was particularly keen to explore gender aspects – the majority of judges are women – and their relevance to the analysis of the key feature of *sistema*. The first decade of the twenty-first century produced a "whistle-blowing" trend among the Russian judiciary, with a number of judges speaking out about the fear they felt and the administrative pressure they had experienced. Several judges testified went on record to report that, at a higher level, influence with judges and prosecutors can yield desired results in criminal, commercial, and civil trials, and that, even if unfavorable judgments are handed down, there are ways to ensure that they are not enforced. When Olga Kudeshkina was dismissed from her position as a judge in the Moscow City Court for her non-compliance with informal commands, she took her case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg and won.[34] Her life story has become the case study for *Can Russia Modernise*,[35] illustrating the constraints that turn a "whistleblower" of *sistema* defects into a "traitor".[36]

Knowing password for open secrets

In my ethnographic fieldwork, I have searched for signs of recognition of matters one does not need to spell out: the semi-taboos about economies of favors, the complicity in leaving things unarticulated, the ambivalence of attitudes towards sensitive subjects. These are all pointers to potentially innovative research.

Observing the near ubiquitous exchange of knowing smiles in everyday contexts has pointed me to the niches of informality. Such exchanges form the basis of normality and routine interaction that are so fundamental for the *modus operandi* of societies, according to Goffman.[37] Smiling about blat has prompted me to look at other open secrets and their intricate relationship to power.[38] I argue that economies of favors constitute the societies' open secrets. One might think that an open secret is not a secret at all, since it concerns things that "everyone knows", whether within a particular group or more widely in a society. This view would mistaken, however, because open secrets are only partly open. Open secrets are *secrets* in the sense that they are excluded from formal or official discourse but they are *open* in the sense that they are familiar and referred to in idioms and language games, though these often require explanation for outsiders. Their ambivalence is a real and significant one. There is a tacit acceptance that what is known should remain unarticulated. Open secrets, as is certainly the case with double standards, occupy areas of tension, where a public affirmation of knowledge would threaten other values or goods that those involved want to protect. This point is noted in Georg Simmel's discussion of secrecy, which reveals its complexity and subtlety. Simmel defines secrecy as "consciously willed concealment" – open secrets are clearly still secrets according to this definition.

From ethnography to the next generation of indicators

As societies' open secrets, economies of favor have great research potential in most societies. The "oblique" methodology outlined above fits with the logic of triangulation: "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint".[39] Qualitative data on economies of favors should ideally be supported by other methods of "cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data".[40] However, there are inevitable obstacles to the study of ambivalence, whether substantive, functional, or normative.

Quantitatively, the size of economies of favors is even harder to assess than that of non-quantifiable forms of corruption, such as nepotism, conflict of interest, or hospitality.[41] The subjectivity of value of favors, their cross-cultural incomparability, and ambivalence make it impossible to measure the size of economies of favors objectively. Rather, one could assess a spread of the phenomenon, following the methodology of measuring perception, as in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI).[42] It should also be possible to measure the gap between the perception of others' use of favors and self-reported experience of giving and receiving favors. Given that perceptions of favors are ambivalent and experience is misrecognized, risks of quantification can be mitigated by a triangulation that gives a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation. Given cultural specificity of economies of favors – there are often no exact translations of related idioms, slang, or jargon from one language to another – qualitative research is essential to establish the facilitating conditions, main gatekeepers, principles of inclusion and exclusion, multiplicity of norms, needs satisfied, degrees of obligation and codification, influence of kinship, tradition and religion, social inequality and other divisive narratives. The main challenge, however, is to create novel indicators for the "immeasurable" that would grasp ambivalence, misrecognition, doublethink, and double standards, and that could potentially be comparable across societies.[43]

Comparability of economies of favors can be seriously contested. Due to their substantive ambivalence, they are hard to study even within one setting (specificity, secretive nature, dependence on respondents). They are inscribed into formal frameworks – political and economic systems – which are themselves non-comparable and rooted in different historical/social contexts.[44] Due to their functional ambivalence, they both subvert and support political and economic systems, social norms, and standards of sociability. Due to the normative ambivalence towards favors, the collected data may be difficult to interpret. Rather than following a coherent set of principles, the provision of favors is in line with some but contrary to the other widely held norms and values, which causes the ambivalence with which it is regarded: it is usually condoned by some and condemned by others, and/or condoned and condemned by the same people, depending on context. It takes an ethnographic and, possibly, interdisciplinary approach to identify an ambivalent subject, such as an economy of favors, but further research and comparison cannot be fully developed without the disciplinary methods, integrating the angle of ambivalence and adapting to it.

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Traveling through the German historical landscape

A talk with Mary Fulbrook

by **Anders Björnsson**

Mary Fulbrook (b. 1951) is dean of the Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences, professor of German history and director of the European Institute at University College London (UCL). She is a fellow of the British Academy and a member of its Council. She has served as chairperson of the German History Society and was one of the founding editors of its journal, *German History*.

Professor Mary Fulbrook and the present writer belong to the same club. They are not particularly fond of *Das Leben der Anderen* (The Lives of Others), Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's much acclaimed film from 2006 about Stasi monitoring under Communist Party rule.

"It is a terrible film," she says. "It tells a story with which nobody can disagree."

It portrays just a small and unrepresentative fraction of intellectuals, and "fails to present the GDR in all its complexities". One of the main characters figures both as chief and as agent within the Stasi system, which is historically an "impossible combination".

Her critique of the director is sharp and principled: von Donnersmarck does not raise interesting questions, although it took him six years to make the film. "Manipulative", is her judgment, because the moral of the story is impossible to question, yet the historical portrayal is inadequate.

The film does not help us understand more broadly how the system worked. It is "historically unsound", Fulbrook argues, because it does not sufficiently contextualize the narrow cultural milieu it portrays, and yet it suggests this picture of the Stasi can represent broader GDR society.

Artistic freedom?

"Some degree of ethical responsibility, a film director should also have."

Over the years, she has dealt intensively with the political culture and everyday life of the former GDR in her own research. And she has come to the conclusion that people in that society had experiences that varied with age and generation. There were gaps that separated citizens when it came to attitudes and values.

"We have the generation of 1929, people born in or around that year. Christa Wolf was one of them. They were deeply ashamed of the past, of what Nazism had brought about and how so many people had been supportive of the Nazi regime. As young people at the end of the war, they sought a vision of something better, and although they were not able to change the basic parameters they nevertheless tried to improve conditions as best they could." The next generation, born under Nazi rule and in the war years, might be called "the absent generation": they could not find their place in the new society. In contrast, the first postwar generation was less aware of alternatives and tended at first to take the GDR for granted, along the lines that "this is the way the world is structured". Only later did many of these become critical of the way the GDR failed to live up to its official ideals, and, by the 1980s, some became engaged in so-

Was the final GDR generation really happy? Or in a brighter light do they merely remember what's been lost?

PHOTO: CRAIG BAXTER/UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

Mary Fulbrook, in front of photographs from an exhibition showing the upgrading of buildings in the former East Germany after German unification.

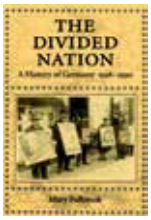
cial reform movements. In turn, many of those born in the late 1960s and 1970s developed a happy childhood nostalgia particularly when seen retrospectively, after unification with the West in 1990.

In her seminal book on the German 20th century, subtitled *The Divided Nation*, written in the years before and completed immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Mary Fulbrook points to parallels between social and political movements in East and West Germany in the eighties. These obviously irritated the men in power in the GDR, since they had no clear idea how to handle a political mix that included humanistic Marxists and "Third Way" intellectuals; religious dissenters, both Protestants and Catholics; and what she calls "unorthodox views" among peace activists, environmentalists, and adherents of alternative cultures.

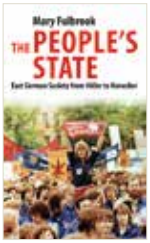
About such expressions of protest and disapproval that never took on a mass character, let alone formed an opposition, Fulbrook writes:

> **Although the regime tried frequently to downplay dissenting views and denounce them as Western-instigated or -inspired, none of these three broad groups (each of which contained many differences of opinion within it) could be simply interpreted as supported by or supporters of the West. Frequently they were as critical of the consumerist materialism and social inequalities of capitalist society as they were of the bureaucratic authoritarianism of "actually existing socialism" in the East. They were generally seeking, not to abandon the East for a presumed Utopia in the West, but rather to transform the East into more desirable directions from within. There were also, of course, considerable numbers of disaffected GDR citizens who simply wanted to leave; and even larger numbers who engaged in a variety of demonstrative acts, such as minor unofficial strikes (downing tools, walking off the job), daubing graffiti, making political jokes.**[1]

On the other hand Fulbrook reminds her readers of how relatively successful both the German states were during the Cold War era in "sustaining and reproducing their respective systems" and avoiding "the development of powerful anti-system oppositions of the sort that helped bring about the collapse of the Weimar Republic".[2] They both had rather harmless elite groups, the majority of whom never challenged the fundamental principles of the society in which they lived. The breakdown of the GDR and the subsequent regime change was, in Fulbrook's analysis, only made possible by



The Divided Nation: A History of German 1918–1990 was written in the years before and completed immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall. 3rd ed. (Blackwell: 2008)



In her book on the East German experiment, *The People's State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker*, Fulbrook launched a concept that owes a lot to her life-long preoccupation with Max Weber's theories of Herrschaft. (Yale University Press, 2005)

changes in external circumstances, above all by what had happened in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev.

Stability was crucial in both parts of Germany, although in the GDR, "from the late 1970s onwards there appeared to be a greater willingness among grassroots members to express differences from the official party line". In the Federal Republic as well as in the German Democratic Republic there was certainly widespread popular resistance at that time to official policies of deploying nuclear missiles on German soil, with unofficial peace movements "becoming thorns in the flesh of established governmental politics on both sides of the Iron Curtain".[3]

I have quoted rather generously from her printed words, in order to reveal something of the character of Fulbrook's scholarly prose; how precise and varied she expresses herself; how reluctant she is to make ideological categories into analytical instruments. I read her German history, the *whole* story, as an attempt at *Historisierung*, and an attempt to understand historical epochs with all their flaws and merits, all their shortcomings and all their progress, rather than to glorify achievements or to condemn a bad system that lasted a mere forty years.

The historian must not be a judge or a lawyer; he or she is as interested in why something worked at all as in why it finally failed – since almost all things eventually fail.

Why, for instance, did the GDR perform better than most of the other societies that practiced some form of central economic planning and one-party rule?

One feature of the SED regime over the years was its ability to impose its will without relying solely on fear, coercion, and repression. After the crushing of the popular uprising in June 1953, there had been no upheavals in the socialist state, and no mass terror. The state in itself was both state and society, and it managed to function as a consensus building mechanism, by diffusing power and authority to many layers and segments of society.

In her book on the East German experiment, *The People's State*, Fulbrook launched a concept that owes a lot to her life-long preoccupation with Max Weber's theories of *Herrschaft*. She calls it "participatory dictatorship". An unbelievably large proportion of the population – roughly one in six, she calculated – took an active part in activities that had to be carried out to uphold the political system as such. These people could be found in responsible positions in the organizational structure of the party state and its apparatuses, in many spheres and on different levels. They gave authority to the system as a whole and in turn gained prestige, pride, and privileges from it. Fulbrook talks of a widespread participation "in the multiplicity of little honeycomb cells of the many overlapping and intersecting elements in the GDR networks"[4], whether it be the promotion of Sorb regional identities in the country or the protection of small gardeners who had their own recognized organizations.

Naturally, the contacts with the security organs are part of this picture, since the Stasi was a mass phenomenon in itself, with 91,000 fulltime employees out of a population of roughly 16.5 million in 1989, and a total of as many as 180,000 unofficial informants at its all-time high.

There were limits and boundaries to this involvement in political affairs, says Fulbrook:

"The lack of freedom of speech and association was non-negotiable. People were unable to get out of the system, but they tried to make the best of their lives under the circumstances."

And they benefited?

"In the GDR misery was spread rather broadly", answers Fulbrook. "If some people got advantages it was not, as in the Third Reich, at the radical (even fatal) expense of another section of society that was excluded, humiliated and degraded."

"The lack of freedom of speech and association was non-negotiable."

That is also, I suppose, why Fulbrook reacts so strongly to my question concerning the extent to which her concept of "participatory dictatorship" bears any resemblance to the idea by German historian Götz Aly, developed in a controversial book from 2005, that the German *Führerstaat* under the Nazis can best be perceived as a "mehrheitsfähige Zustimmungsdiktatur"[5].

"Firstly, the polarization between repression and acclamation is a false one. In Hitler's Germany, they were both present to different degrees and in different ways throughout the twelve years. Enthusiasm rose and fell among certain groups under changing economic and foreign policy conditions; violent repression was targeted variously at different groups, and became ever more brutal and murderous, particularly during the war years. Secondly, there were individual Germans who benefitted from robbery and the exploitation of others, those who were being excluded, the victims – but that does not make all of them responsible for the crimes. Thirdly, there were many Germans who did not in the least benefit at the expense of others – those who sought to resist and ended up in the hands of the Gestapo, for instance."

Both extremes – brutality and support – were more accentuated in the Third Reich than in the GDR, a Soviet satel-

lite state which was never capable of waging war or murdering six million, Fulbrook says: "In the Third Reich you had at times enthusiasm for the system with great conviction. In the GDR, you could not see much of such enthusiasm. But nor were there concentration and extermination camps on the scale of the Third Reich."

In her writings, Fulbrook, unlike many other historians of her generation, has always paid attention to both Germanys. A prevailing belief in the West before 1989 that, after Auschwitz, there should never be a German nation again "was central to liberal language", she says. Unification did not come up on the agenda, since it was not regarded as "proper". So the project was given up – rhetorically.

I myself recall a meeting in the summer of 1985 with another German historian, Peter Brandt, the son of Willy Brandt, former West German Chancellor. Peter Brandt had cowritten a book on the left and the German question (*Die Linke und die nationale Frage*). In our interview he strongly maintained that the *Ostpolitik* of Brandt's government was not to be seen as an abandonment of the policies of national unity, a trademark of the SPD in the forties and fifties, but rather as a method of coming closer to that goal.

"In the Third Reich you had at times enthusiasm for the system with great conviction."

"Brandt's policies made a big, big difference", answers Fulbrook. "It really facilitated the collapse of the system in the East. The step-by-step policy encouraged contacts across the border and assisted the rise of unofficial social movements in the GDR. It was just a CDU propaganda claim that Brandt had renounced unification. His policy of Ostpolitik instead led to a growing interaction between East and West. It promoted self-organization and led to a degree of partial loosening up. In this context, for example, the Church-state agreement of 1978 gave churches a semi-autonomous role allowing them to act as a protective umbrella for dissident voices in the GDR.

"So it wasn't harmful at all. If anyone was propping up the GDR, it was the CDU/CSU Kohl government. It was even Franz Josef Strauss of the CSU who, in 1984, gave financial support to the ailing economy in East Germany."

Retrospectively, unification seems to have been the more or less inevitable outcome, after the demise of the old regime. To many Easterners of those days, obviously, it was not. They started to write a new constitution for a democratic GDR. Was that a silly idea?

"No, the silly idea was the one-to-one rate of exchange in the single currency reform. In the course of a few weeks, people lost their jobs all over the country. One-to-one wasn't economically viable. Without this it is perfectly possible that there could have been a longer period of debate on constitutional matters and on the future of the state."

In an interview not long before my discussion with Fulbrook, Helmut Schmidt, Brandt's immediate successor as SPD Chancellor during the 1970s, admitted that many mistakes had been committed by the conservative Kohl government in the process of unification. "Ohne es wirklich zu wollen, haben wir die alte DDR-Industrie plattgemacht", he declared. And he warned about an "Entleerung ländlicher Räume".[6]

"Yes, there occurred a sudden rise in unemployment, and worst hit were women in their mid-forties. They lost their child care support, they were too young to take early retirement, and too old to be retrained for new jobs."

In well-paid positions, for instance in the academic world, Westerners came and took over. Christa Wolf, in one of her lamentations (*Ein Tag im Jahr*, from 2003), spoke of a wave of colonization.

Fulbrook wants to differentiate: "The West were imposing a system that worked much better. The subjective experience of being colonized is one thing; that doesn't mean you can make a widespread feeling into an analytical tool."

Reading German history, one is struck by the large share of British specialists, which runs counter to common wisdom that British historians only bother about Britain. Mary Fulbrook is accompanied by many other outstanding representatives of her trade, such as Ian Kershaw, Richard J. Evans, Jane Caplan, Christopher Clark, Lyndal Roper, Nick Stargardt (albeit the last three of Australian extraction).

"I think it is a combination of biography and the shadow of the war", says Fulbrook. "Often there is a Continental European family background, in the parental generation at least. The second generation starts to think things over."

She remembers having been appointed to an US-based committee, the Joint Committee on Western Europe (JCWE) of the American Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). Five committee members, from different disciplines, were gathering for a meeting at the Wissenschaftszentrum in Berlin. During a coffee break looking out from the window of the WZB, Fulbrook realized and commented that this part of the city, the Kulturforum near Potsdamer Platz, was the place where her mother grew up. Three Americans on the committee suddenly also spoke up: they too had roots in Germany: one had a mother from Hamburg, two others had fathers from just the same area of Berlin; all were refugees or survivors of Nazi persecution. Only the fifth member of

the committee had no central European roots: he was Canadian. Fulbrook has increasingly noticed the prevalence of "second generation" colleagues with a similar background.

So: what is professional often turns out to be personal, though the linkage is not always easy to find. I came to London to talk to Fulbrook about a book that hasn't yet been mentioned in this article. It is a book that has meant a lot of pain to her – shock and pain. Now, we shall have to wait a little further. Not only her family background, but also her professional training and academic skills are vital for my understanding of her approach and reactions when she wrote that book.

It turns out that German studies was not her first choice of subject. She started as a student in Cambridge. Her parents were both academics: her mother a criminologist, German by birth; her father, a crystallographer of Canadian origin ("he never learned to speak German fluently"). Her mother wanted her to study economics. Fulbrook quickly discovered that economics was meaningless to her, so she turned to other subjects: archaeology and anthropology, then social and political sciences. As a graduate student, she went to the US and another Cambridge, to the Department of Sociology at Harvard, where Barrington Moore was a major intellectual influence at the time. She did her PhD in comparative history under Daniel Bell and, perhaps more significantly, Theda Skopcol. There she studied both Max Weber – in fact, there is a nice collection of Weberiana on the shelves of her office at Gordon Square – and Karl Marx ("though I was never a Marxist; I didn't find Marxism to be either a coherent body of theory or a politically acceptable program of action"). Continental neo-Marxism at that time and place was nevertheless a "very special" subject, and Fulbrook smiles, which she often does, when she comes to think of how "perhaps six copies of Louis Althusser's book *For Marx* were smuggled into the US" when she had been on a trip to London and the book was unavailable for purchase in the United States.

"What is professional often turns out to be personal, though the linkage is not always easy to find."

Having returned to Britain, she completed her dissertation on religion and the rise of absolutism in England, Prussia, and Württemberg during the early modern period. That landed her smack in the middle of a heated debate on the English Revolution, or Civil War, in the mid 17th century. At New Hall (nowadays Murray Edwards) College, Cambridge, she encountered Margot Heinemann, who taught literature ("a committed communist who never left the Party"); and the Marxist historian Christopher Hill, a former Master of Balliol, would now and then "come over from Oxford for lunch". However, before she could publish her thesis as a book (*Piety and Politics*, 1983), she had to defend herself against revisionist historians such as John Morrill who questioned the interpretation of the events in England as the outcome of social conflict and revolutionary upheaval. Fulbrook comments, "he originally savaged my thesis", but it emerged much strengthened by having to respond explicitly to his criticisms.

Starting in her childhood she had traveled a lot in Germany, spending holidays in Bavaria, coming to love Germany, the language – it happens, in the course of our interview, that we pick a couple of German words as the most appropriate expression. That made her wonder "why nobody was looking to the other Germany, the GDR". There was a blind spot. And beside the love of Germany, she had felt, "for very long", the "inexplicability" of the German destiny: "There was no time in my life that I didn't know about the Holocaust."

In 1983, she was fortunate enough to give birth to a son, followed in 1987 by twins. In the late 1980s, as she continued to travel around Europe, now with small children in tow, the demise of socialist Germany was imminent. The first drafts of her *Concise History of Germany*, as well as the *Divided Nation*, were completed during the remarkable year of 1989, the year of collapse. With minor amendments of tense, putting the GDR into the past, they appeared shortly after unification.

Indeed, there are many Germanys. The Germany of her mother was that of the Weimar Republic and the early Nazi years. Her mother grew up in Berlin as a German and a Christian – but she also came from an assimilated German-Jewish family background. In April 1933, after the Nazi takeover, Fulbrook's mother was forced to leave school and was never allowed back again. Having married a practicing Jew, she left Berlin to live in Spain. When the marriage broke up she briefly returned but, as an active socialist and a committed Christian, soon realized that she had to leave for good and emigrated to England. Her mother had a best friend from her schooldays, Alexandra, who was to become Fulbrook's godmother. Alexandra had an aristocratic background, and in matters of race and politics the girls were in sharp disagreement, for instance over how to judge Hitler's Nuremberg Rally speech in 1935, and so they decided to avoid topics that were too sensitive for the friendship to withstand. Though geographically separated, they retained an emotional bond, exchanging letters until the war broke out. World War II interrupted their communication, but a few years after the war they reestablished relations.

"A precondition for continuing the friendship was never to talk politics again", comments Fulbrook.

That silence allowed the development of a family myth. Fulbrook later in life was to discover the real story in the most terrifying way.

"I was physically shocked", she says. "My mother had always thought that the conservative Alexandra, my godmother, had been in the Resistance. I discovered after her death that Alexandra's husband, a man whom I knew well, had in fact been a middle-range Nazi functionary. We had known nothing about his Nazi party membership, or that he as a civil servant had actually been part of and supported the Nazi system."

Alexandra's husband, Udo Klausa, was born in 1910, in the Prussian area of Silesia, near Katowice. His career goal was to become a regional administrator, just like his father who was a *Landrat* in the town of Leobschütz (today: Głubczyce). In early 1940, Udo Klausa himself was appointed *Landrat* in the Polish town of Będzin (renamed Bendsburg under Nazi occupation) in a border region in Eastern Upper Silesia, a few months after the German occupation of that part of Poland. His mission was to "Germanize", to "cleanse" this land from its Jewish inhabitants, integrating it into the new expanded Greater German Reich. Right from the start this was a dirty and murderous task, and Fulbrook, in her book called *A Small Town Near Auschwitz*, is very keen to stress that large-scale killings in the East did not begin only with the German assault on the Soviet Union in 1941 but was an integral part of Nazi policy from the very first days of the war in 1939:

> **In Poland in 1939 it was clearly the case that violence against civilians, indeed mass murder of civilians, was planned, premeditated, and carried out right from the very start, but perhaps with some passing pretence at quasi-militaristic "legitimation" through notions of "partisan warfare", "provocation", or "reprisal".**[7]

Będzin, a town of 54,000 people, of whom almost one half were Jewish, had been both an economic and a cultural center of Jewish life in Western Poland before the war. All that came to a brutal end in the course of a few years, with the burning of the synagogue filled with people, followed by the humiliation, degradation, deportation and eventually mass murder of its Jews. And all that was carried out not only by military *Einsatzgruppen* but also as a result of the policies enacted by civil servants, of which the *Landrat* was the most important one in the town of Będzin and the surrounding county of the same name. He was on the frontline; he knew perfectly well what was going on in nearby Auschwitz. And he certainly did not protest; on the contrary, Klausa helped pave the way for the atrocities: he pursued and supported policies of the expropriation, ghettoization, and starvation of the Jews, easing the eventual process of deportation and murder. Nazi policies in this area had tragic as well as grotesque consequences: at one stage Jews were evicted from their homes in Auschwitz and forced to settle in the ghetto in Bedzin – just to be "re-transported back to their home town to be murdered in the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau".[8]

Fulbrook's book is a detailed study of how this enterprise was completed, and actually one of the first ever to focus on the middle-level bureaucracy within the Nazi hierarchy.

It has been possible only through meticulous archival research, but not everything could easily be looked up in the archives of official institutions. Fulbrook found to her dismay that Udo Klausa, her godmother's husband, had joined the NSDAP in February 1933, just three weeks after Hitler's coming to power, and at the same time became a member of the SA, having applied for membership in December 1932. In 1936 he wrote an ugly tract, *Rasse und Wehrrecht* (Race and Military Law), which obviously promoted his career, and he became a *Landrat* at the young age of thirty – often behaving in a highly conformist manner to demonstrate his loyalty in order to become a permanent official. Fulbrook quotes from the '36 tract:

> **Today there is barely any nation that is made up of a pure race any more [...]. The law must contribute to the process by which the more valuable hereditary elements are constantly secured. This takes place through positive furtherance of the racially most valuable people, and through negative selection of the degenerate.**[9]

It goes without saying: nobody is forced to write such rubbish.

But how did she find out?

"It would not have worked without Google", answers Fulbrook. "The only hard copy I could find belonged to the old *Staatsbibliothek* in what had been East Berlin, and it was the Internet that made that finding possible. Otherwise it would have been a lost publication."

What had been concealed in Udo Klausa's history, or had been a "lapse of memory", now came to the fore. After the war, Klausa went to great efforts to diminish his role as a key figure in the regional administration, having been, he

In *A Small Town Near Auschwitz: Ordinary Nazis and the Holocaust*, Fulbrook stresses that mass killings in the East were an integral part of Nazi policy from the very first days of the war in 1939. (Oxford University Press, 2012)

The first drafts of her *Concise History of Germany*, were completed during the remarkable year of 1989, the year of collapse. 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2004)

maintained, one of the "decent" Nazis, for instance when he claimed that he had joined the party in order to fight the "riffraff" from within when it became impossible to do it from outside the party. However, Fulbrook is able to discredit him on point after point. He did not simply pay lip service to the cause of National Socialism. He took advantage of his position, and even if he was not a fanatic, a leading player, or a policymaker, he was without question an energetic and loyal administrator. "Not everyone was a perpetrator in the obvious sense of committing direct acts of physical violence", Fulbrook states in her book, "or directly giving the orders that unleashed such violence."[10] Apart from perpetrators, victims and bystanders, you have to include functionaries and beneficiaries in the socio-political scheme. They were more than mere fellow travelers. Alexandra and her husband moved into a villa that had been robbed from its owner – "the Jew Schein, a big industrialist who fled in time" (Alexandra in a letter to an acquaintance).[11] A *Landrat* in annexed territories, following directly after the outbreak of war, writes Fulbrook, "had to oversee crucial issues related to population planning, the mapping, expropriation, and acquisition of confiscated estates and properties, strategies for the 'Germanization' of previously Polish territories, and implementation of a whole gamut of racial policies"[12]. And she can demonstrate that Klausa willingly did exactly that.

The Klausa story is full of horrifying facts. It plays out in a corner of Europe that had been contested – not least militarily contested – throughout history, by Austrians, Prussians, and Poles alike. In the vicinity are the partly destroyed sites of the Counts of Henckel von Donnersmarck, a once fabulously rich family in Imperial Germany in the 19th and early 20th centuries, who owned castles, land, mines, and ironworks here – and who, by the way, were the ancestors of the film director who appears on the first lines of this article.

But the story continues. After the war, Udo Klausa miraculously escapes the justice of the victors by hiding.

"He should have been placed in an automatic arrest category", explains Fulbrook. "Instead he hid for the first years after the war, then when it was safe to emerge started his efforts at self-exculpation. It is a sickening story. It made me very angry."

It seems that the Klausa family took rescue at the palatial moated estate of an aristocratic friend to whom Alexandra, Fulbrook's godmother, had connections. Alexandra's children also received tutoring along with the children of Marion Gräfin Dönhoff, who was to become the renowned editor-in-chief of the leading West German weekly *Die Zeit*.

Even so, Alexandra sent letters to Mary's mother complaining about the lack of food in postwar Germany – not mentioning that this was in part because her husband Udo was in hiding, and thus without a ration card. "My mother was sending care packages to them."

And what happened to Udo Klausa himself?

"It is the very typical story: a Nazi conformer becoming a democratic conformer."[13]

In 1954, he is back as a regional administrator, without having been interrogated, fined or put in prison; nor was he banned from reentry into the civil service. He then takes up the post as director of a recently created *Landschaftsverband* in North-Rhine Westphalia, a governmental body with a staff, eventually, of some 12,000 employees.

He was "clearly uncomfortable about his past", writes Fulbrook. Klausa himself claimed, in retrospect, that, in the thirties and forties, he became "increasingly uncomfortable with the political context in which he had sought to pursue his long-held dream of following in his father's footsteps as *Landrat*".[14]

His family defended him with silence and excuses. They trusted him, and believed his stories about the past. In this too, this is a typical German family tale.

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5 *Hitlers Volksstaat: Raub, Rassenkrieg und nationaler Sozialismus* (Frankfurt/M: S. Fischer Verlag, 2005).

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7 The full title of Fulbrook's book is *A Small Town near Auschwitz: Ordinary Nazis and the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) quoted from page 58.

8 Ibid., 143.

9 Ibid., 74.

10 Ibid., 47.

11 Ibid., 117.

12 Ibid., 78.

13 One of Klausa's regiment comrades was Fritz-Dietlof Graf von der Schulenburg, a 22nd of July conspirator who was executed by the Nazi regime. Klausa, however, never thought of entering the Resistance (if there ever was a movement of resistance in the Hitler state). Could this personal connection explain why Mary Fulbrook's mother was so mistaken with respect to her friend's stance?

14 Ibid., 94.

by **Kristian Petrov**
illustrations **Ragni Svensson**

THE CONCEPT OF TRANSITION IN TRANSITION

Comparing the postcommunist use of the concept of transition with that found in Soviet ideology

The fall of the Soviet Union (USSR) also spelled the virtual death of Sovietology – the Cold War era area study of Soviet-style societies and politics.[1] If Sovietologists were not to throw in the towel, it would seem they had to face the choice of either refocusing on the few remains of communism outside Europe or continuing to apply their older theories to the new realities emerging within the post-Soviet bloc.[2] However, some Sovietologists, notably of a younger generation, identified a third option. This involved contributing to what within the social sciences at the time was evolving as a new interdisciplinary research field, concerned with countries defined to be in a state of economic, political, legal, and social "transition". By assimilating a new paradigm, one could renew one's position within the academic infrastructure in which new journals, conferences, textbooks, curricula, and research centers started to capitalize on "transition" – the new catchword of the day.[3] The "Kremlinology" characteristic of much of traditional Sovietology, in which one had tended to compensate for the scarcity of data by extensive theorizing, often with a predilection for retrospective and "totalitarian" perspectives, was thus exchanged for explanatory models of a more empiricist kind, some of them having been applied to post-authoritarian regimes in Southern Europe and Latin America some fifteen years earlier.[4]

The lion's share of the new "transitologists" was not, however, made up of reforming ex-Sovietologists, but more so of new scholars who did not, like the previous area specialists, necessarily have a background as experts on communism, the former Eastern Bloc, or Slavonic languages, but rather were included by being comparativists in a more general sense.[5]

Postcommunist transitology could be characterized as a more or less autonomous interdisciplinary social science approach,[6] albeit inspired by an anticipating *global* transitology of so-called *third wave* democratization.[7] The process of change in the postcommunist world could, according to many of the new transitologists, instructively be compared with earlier cases of "transitions", but was also seen to exhibit unique characteristics (implying a trajectory from totalitarian communism rather than authoritarian capitalism), suggesting a need for organizing new academic platforms and networks.

THE AIM OF THIS ESSAY is two-fold. In part, the purpose is to critically analyze manifestations of 1990s postcommunist transitology, and to a lesser extent the postcommunist transitology of the early 2000s. Furthermore, the intention is to critically compare the

postcommunist concept of transition to the concept of transition in historical materialism prevalent in Soviet ideology up until 1991. On the basis of the conceptualizations that are being reconstructed, I go on to reflect upon the development around the fall of the USSR. I do this by looking at the postcommunist concept of transition from the viewpoint of its communist equivalent. In so doing, I attempt to give an account of a research program of the social sciences from the viewpoint of the humanities, trying to demonstrate a reciprocal need for *historical* reflexivity. An analysis of the conceptual foundation of transitology, it is argued, permits a better understanding of the premises of the conceptualization of the post-Soviet bloc, and how these condition the "pre-understanding" of development in this particular area.

Defining (teleological) transitology

When applied to the post-Soviet bloc, the term *transition* has functioned as part of an explanatory framework for conceptualizing, standardizing, and analyzing the changeover from autocratic communism to democratic capitalism.[8] If the Western scholar initially was able to present the authoritative theory about the *purpose* of the process, his Central-Eastern European colleague was instrumental for its transmission and implementation,[9] besides providing a helping hand in the accumulation of empirical data.

Talking about (postcommunist) transitology as a unitary phenomenon is, however, not unproblematic. Jordan Gans-Morse has convincingly demonstrated that research on transition generally has not been carried out within one and the same paradigm, other than in the eyes of some critics.[10] Accordingly, the analysis undertaken in this essay does not concern transitology in general but is restricted to manifestations of "transitology" which could be seen as teleological, and special attention is paid to the more radical approaches. *Teleological* transitology is here understood as transition research in which regime change appears as purposeful, preordained and therefore predictable, virtually unstoppable, and impelled by a future goal. The essential feature of teleological transitology is that it structures analysis from the viewpoint of a defined end of the transition process.

TELEOLOGY MIGHT THUS be understood as reversed causality. In Aristotelian physics, ultimately the *final*, not the mechanical, cause drives development toward its end (*telos*).[11] Teleological tendencies will hopefully become evident by examining cases in a number of frequently cited sources of political and economic transitology, written by some renowned scholars.[12] In order to analyze the conceptual foundation of transitology, a hermeneutic method has been chosen, one that consists of a close reading and a contextualization, the former, however, being more critical than empathetic. The method is further characterized by historical comparisons of a few authoritative philosophical works along with theoretical reflections on the conceptualizations of transition which are expressed therein. These conceptualizations are then related and contrasted to the examples from postcommunist research on transition, within the framework of a general ideological contextualization.

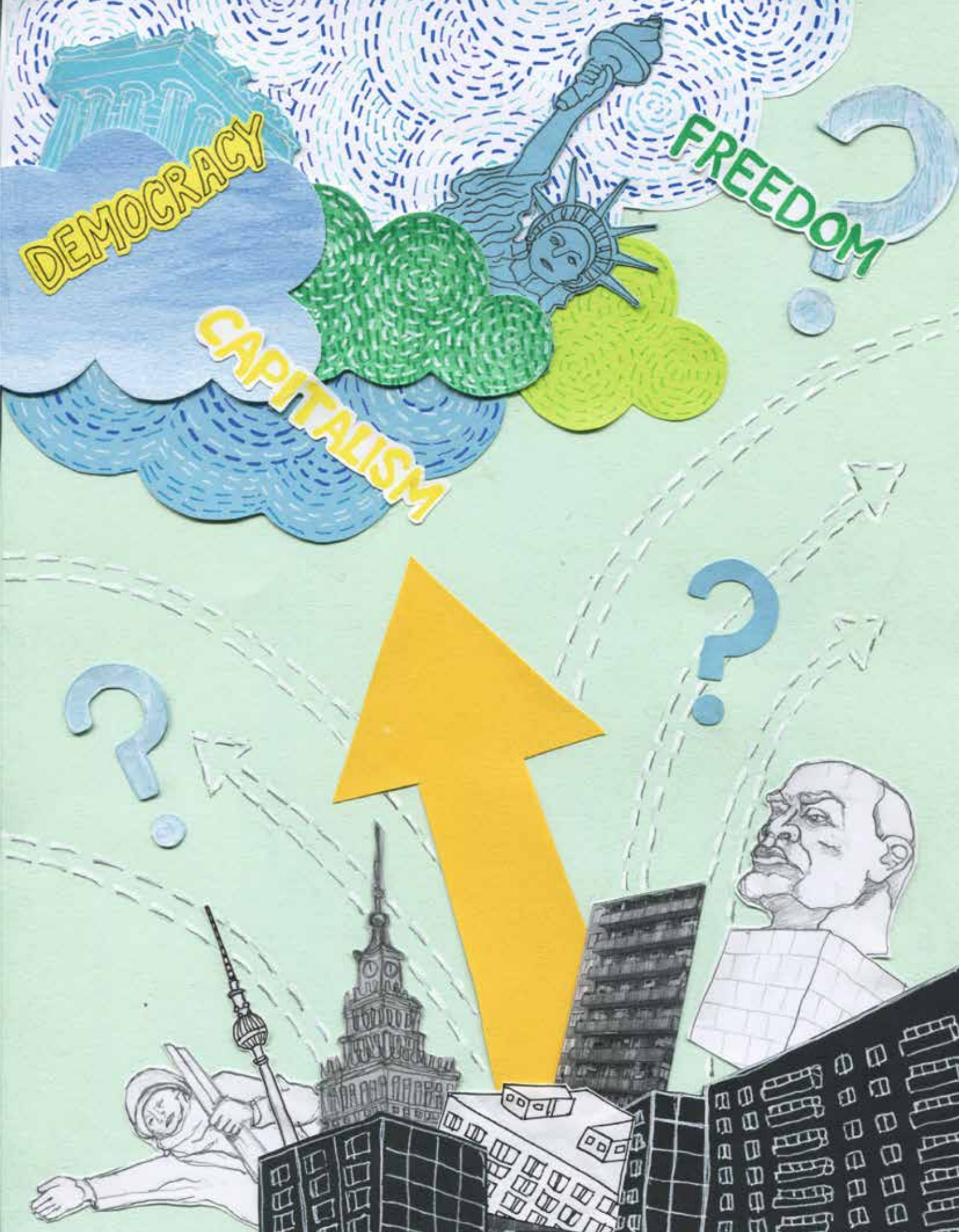
Usually, economic and political transitions are studied from different disciplinary horizons, characterized by specific theories and methods. Although political transitology might have produced a more extensive meta-theoretical discussion and less orthodox teleology,[13] here I will try to assimilate economic and political transitology in order to demonstrate their similar implications. This analytical collapse, it is argued, is partly justified not only by the fact that economic and political transitologists both structure their study object by means of concepts such as breakdown, reforms, liberalization, breakthrough, *transition*, stabilization, and consolidation. Transitologists of both disciplines, besides focusing on the same area and period, generally equate command economy and the one-party state, as well as market economy and democracy, although they don't necessarily regard the equivalencies as internally linked.[14] Regarding economic transitology, I am particularly interested in scholarship with a bias toward what has been characterized as (neoliberal) shock therapy.

In the present text, however, it is not only political science and economic science which are brought together. Sometimes it is hard to maintain a distinction between transition scholarship and politics. This ambiguity arises partly from the fact that the difference is not always maintained by the transitologists themselves, not to mention their critics, who can fluctuate between the different roles of analyst and agitator. Sometimes, but far from always, the one who is *thinking* the transition is also *doing* the transition.[15] Various forms of transitology have been constituted academically in conjunction with policy-making.

During the last decade, a substantial body of literature has emerged that is critical towards not only transitology's supposed positivist ethos but also its theoretical premises, notably the alleged Western bias and an unconditional commitment to democratization, as well as a privileging of structures and the game-theoretic focus on the maneuverings of elites.[16] However, my point that transition models retain continuities with the past has also been made before, in various contexts. The argument that the seemingly neoliberal project of the post-Soviet transition from communism to capitalism is basically Bolshevism in reverse has perhaps been made most vehemently by Peter Reddaway and Dmitri Glinski.[17] Even so, my claim that postsocialist transitions have parallels in previous Soviet transitions is qualified differently. Instead of simply stressing resemblance in supposed ideological fanaticism, rhetorical intransigency or catastrophic outcomes, I try to trace the common *philosophical* roots and reconstruct the *structural* similarities between communist and postcommunist transitology's theoretico-ideological claims, on a deeper conceptual level. In so doing I try to cite some instructive examples which many times tend to be absent in common critiques of transitology.[18]

Reconstructing the meta-theory of postcommunist transitology

The concept of transition has been used as a tool not only to describe but also to guide[19] a particular, sometimes purposive process, occurring during the so-called "Transition Era",[20] in certain kinds of countries that traditionally have not followed the liberal road of modernization toward pluralistic democracies and free markets. The concept of transition implies an expectation of


DEMOCRACY
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democratization and marketization and can thus only be meaningfully applied to countries in which there is, or recently has been, a substantial mandate for Western modernization. A semantic characteristic of transition is that it tends to be defined in several discourses from the viewpoint of the objectives to be realized, which is one reason why it might carry teleological connotations. If the endpoint signifies the fulfillment of a certain number of formalized criteria, the starting point represents an absence of these.

In some cases, perhaps not representative for the study of transition among political scientists in general, but nevertheless illustrative of a transitological approach taken to its extreme, the transition to democracy and capitalism appears as "quite simple, even natural" and can in essence only be obstructed temporarily and then by external force – much in line with Fukuyama's seductive prediction of the end of history.[21]

A more cautious and nuanced view on transition, with an emphasis on inherent uncertainties, contingent alternatives, and variations in outcome, was expressed in the studies of the early phase of "third wave" democratization,[22] and has certainly been passed on to many researchers who have studied transitions of a later phase, postcommunism. Within this part of transitology, development is not exclusively judged from the point of view of its end, in terms of success (or non-success).[23] From this perspective, the Eastern European *transition* does not necessarily imply a hypothesized, *utopian*, closed-ended destination, but is rather conceptualized in terms of what critics of teleological transitology would like to see as *actual*, open-ended, processes of *transformation*, in which the introduction of new elements always takes place "in combination with adaptations, rearrangements, permutations, and reconfigurations of existing institutional forms [...]".[24]

TRANSITOLOGY NOT ONLY presupposes a movement between a preceding and a succeeding state, but also contains a global or holistic dimension. Even if transitions usually are not considered natural, the notion is not uncommon that it is advantageous to compare them, since they are posited to correspond to, or alternatively diverge from, a general transition *pattern*, for example the third "wave". Thomas Carothers holds that the social scientists' alleged transition paradigm includes a presumption that the transition from authoritarianism to democracy progresses in a particular sequence,[25] which, one might add, also is valid for many transition studies within economics. First there is an *opening* (cracks within the dictatorial regime appear accompanied by limited attempts at liberalization). Then follows a *breakthrough* (the regime collapses and a new system emerges), which finally evolves into a *consolidation* or stabilization (democratic forms turn into democratic substance through parliamentary reforms and a strengthening of civil society and market institutions). Carothers is not only critical of a supposed inclination to jump into an analysis of the (teleologically defined) consolidation phase. He is also generally critical toward the model's alleged sequential and predictable character.

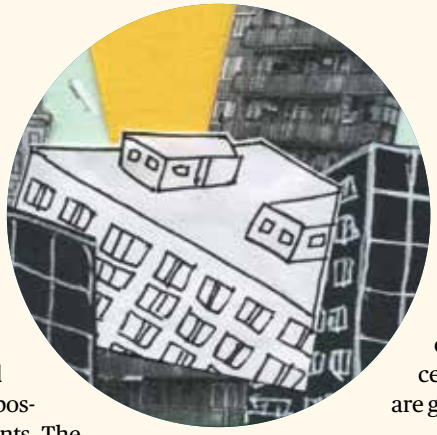
The collapse of communism constituted an unparalleled resource of political and economic comparative possibilities. The metaphysical approximations put forward in the classics of political economy could now be converted into operationalizable hypotheses, which could be tested directly against an experience continuously unrolling in front of the eyes of the transitologist. However, due to the force of tradition, development in some countries of the post-Soviet bloc appeared to be either particularly facilitated or obstructed. Nevertheless, it was the *lack* that many times remained a constant, while the prerequisites for transcending it may have varied. In the long run, the question was, in some cases, not so much about how much as how *little* country x had become a consolidated democracy and market economy.[26]

Eastern Europe in Western intellectual history

Lack, shortage, or absence, as representational forms, are worth noting, since the image of "Eastern Europe", with its roots in the secularist degradation of a supposedly static, despotic, and oriental Byzantium during the 18th century, is often contrasted to Western European advances that Eastern Europe on the whole supposedly lacks.[27] These advances are usually thought to consist in knowledge of Roman law, civil society institutions, individualism, the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, the early modern economic expansion, and the Enlightenment. The prominent historian Philip Longworth exemplifies this tendency in his thematic representation of Eastern Europe. He characterizes a number of institutions and traditions that are associated with Western Europe, and asks what the consequences are of their absence for development in Eastern Europe.[28] Consequently, if one accepts the conclusion drawn by Lucan A. Way, it is not surprising that "non-democracies [in transitological literature] have often been defined more in terms of what they are not than of what they are".[29]

In this way, teleological transitology encourages counterfactual historiography. The desirable institutions ultimately appear to be thoroughly homogenous and, consequently, transplantable to other contexts. The perspective, which is congruent with Adam Smith's idea of an invisible hand, forces, by necessity, a production of alternative explanations for the fact that some of the countries under scrutiny do not develop with sufficient speed or even go astray: If only they would have had this or that tradition, or implemented this or that reform, or if they would not suffer so much from corruption, then it would have been possible to achieve a vibrant democracy and a prosperous market economy much faster.[30]

Transitology's methodology has been likened by some to making a checklist.[31] Searching for empirical indices in relation to standards of monitoring organizations such as Freedom House seems to work fine when documenting *progress* on an externally defined trajectory (as is the case when EU candidates try to meet the union's convergence criteria), but fares worse when one is analyzing non-teleological change and the sustainability of new forms of semi-authoritarian "hybrid" regimes. The quantitative nature of transitology, reflected in its dependence on the accumulation of vast amounts of data produced by international monitoring, auditing, and scrutinizing organizations,[32] is, I would suggest, to a certain extent reinforced by the tangible semantics of *transition* itself, and may, possibly, have facilitated certain ideological perspectives at the expense of others.[33] The teleological focus on *absence*, char-



acteristic of thinking in terms of a checklist, has likely delayed the impact of alternative theories, such as those about (post-authoritarian) hybrid regimes.[34] Several more or less authoritarian, or at least semi-authoritarian, post-Soviet countries have for perhaps far too long been described by some researchers as "transitional countries", that is, democracies in the making.[35] Mono-linearity and the taking for granted of a closed-ended development have, I contend, encouraged *ad-hoc* hypotheses about temporary hindrances and opposing forces, thus concealing an alternative logic of the events. The language of transition may therefore have amplified indications of democratic and market economy potentials and trends. The political scientist and international relations expert John Mueller contended in 1996 that "most of the postcommunist countries of central and eastern Europe [had] essentially completed their transition to democracy and capitalism […]". They were in fact, he continued, "already full-fledged democracies […]".[36] What was on the agenda now, he concluded, was not radical change but actual *consolidation* of already existing democracy and capitalism. Paradoxically, it has sometimes appeared as if the projected transition to democracy and a market economy not only was on the horizon, but also was achieved, at least hypothetically or anticipatorily.[37] The idea of a completed transition thus seems to be strengthened by its very prediction or even articulation. In the words of the renowned American sociologist Edward A. Tiryakian, the post-1989 transition to liberal democracy, if one excludes China and does not take into account variables of fundamentalism and nationalism, "is truly a miracle of epic historical proportion".[38]

Communist "transitology"

– What is socialism? It's the painful transition from capitalism to capitalism. This joke was widely spread in Eastern Europe during the collapse of communism. It certainly reveals some historical irony but also indicates a characteristic circularity and terminological continuity. Although the concept of transition, as it is applied to East-Central Europe, has essentially become synonymous with a postcommunist development, it is instructive to note that the Soviet project, according to its own self-characterization, was defined in terms of transition. The Soviet state was a "transitional" one (*perekhodnoe gosudarstvo*), and socialism as such constituted a transition from capitalism to communism.[39] This definition had a polemical intent, with respect to the view supposedly held by the bourgeoisie of the social order as natural and everlasting.[40]

Perestroika, as well, from 1985–1991, was frequently officially defined as a *transition* between different historical stages.[41] Ironically, perestroika was increasingly perceived by its liberal critics during 1990 and 1991 as something that restrained the *real* transition, that is, the transition toward a market economy.[42] The very concept of transition, figuratively speaking, was hence undergoing its own transition, alongside so many other Soviet concepts.[43]

The representation of transition, as is obvious in the Soviet case, possesses a quality which in a sense accelerates development and, as we are about to see, transforms the present into a potential past, whose possible *raison d'être* lies in its capacity to be at the service of the future. Transition thus *destroys* (the past), but also *produces* (the future). Whoever successfully applies the concept of transition to a given situation achieves the privilege of formulating the agenda and defining the common problems. When the concept finally takes off, our expectations are given a special structure.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that Vladimir Lenin, upon his return to Russia after the February revolution in 1917, defined development in terms of transition.[44] According to Lenin, the distinguishing characteristic of the situation at the time was that it consisted of a *transition*, a transition *from* the first stage of the revolution – where the bourgeoisie had taken power in the absence of an enlightened proletariat – *to* its second stage, where power needed to be transferred to the lowest social strata (or, one might add, their self-proclaimed representatives), who by then must, in one way or another, have improved their revolutionary consciousness.

The persuasive metaphor of transition is well chosen since it sanctions development without necessarily recognizing its current status. The (condemned) past and the (praised) future are positioned in an oppositional relation. Lenin's audience is thereby placed within a process whereby the present – as actuality – is emptied of justification, which naturally affects the newly established bourgeois order. It is hence not only the past that is negated. Even if actual development achieves an epic dramaturgy, with a beginning and an end, it also loses some of its authenticity. Gorbachev's definition of perestroika as transition rendered the contemporary institutions originating from the Brezhnev era, which he criticized, obsolete. If the concept is articulated successfully, the present is emptied of significance. It is then only perestroika (or its content) – in Lenin's case the second, transitional, stage of the revolution – that can give the unsatisfactory present new direction and legitimacy. Meaning is thus created by locating the present in the shadow of a dark past, which is negated by the promise of a brighter future.[45]

LENIN LABELED THE PASSAGE between capitalism and socialism with the word *transition* (*perekhod*).[46] Later on, the concept of transition was used in order to comprehend the passages between the internal stages of socialism and, finally, the qualitative change of socialism into communism. Indeed, the whole "science" of historical materialism might, if one likes, be rendered as a form of "transitology" in its own right.[47] With this taken into consideration, it is argued that the (temporary) success of implementing the *term* transition among post-Soviet citizens, in connection with the fall of the USSR, denoting a change from a command economy to a market economy, should be seen in relation to the previously omnipresent communist usage of the term "transition". Even some structural aspects of the *semantics* of the *Soviet* concept of transition, as we are about to see, seemed to survive the collapse of com-

munism and the Soviet system and were to constitute influential connotations of the postcommunist transition in the early 1990s.

Communism and neoliberalism

The USSR was ultimately a project of transition, socialism in itself being something provisional. The transitory character was cited by the early Bolsheviks in order to legitimize a repressive order "temporarily" allowed to oppress capitalists, intellectuals and other petty-bourgeois elements, that is, the so-called oppressors from the *ancien régime*, until the day that actual communism could be realized.[48] Likewise, several postcommunist politicians, and to some extent also scholars with a neoliberal bias, seemed willing to defend virtually any social cost of development with reference to the omnipotent "Transition". (Naturally, this should have been more common among those who essentially affirmed a particular political agenda only in the *name* of transitology.) The massive flight of capital, the plundering of natural resources and the nepotistic relocation of state property in Russia during the first half of the 1990s – which hardly can be said to agree with market economy ideals – were legitimized as a part of the "Transition".[49] In Soviet rhetoric it is not surprising that words like "turning point" (*povorot*), "overturn" (*perevorot*), "revolution", "acceleration", "progress", "stage", "level", and "leap" were so common. This kind of transitional conceptualizing sanctions frequent albeit abrupt movements where it is possible to overcome the past and irreversibly commit to the future – something that always necessitates some degree of sacrifice. Even if this idea has to some extent been an integral cognitive structure of the modern project in general since the 18th century,[50] it played a particularly constitutive role in the Soviet project. Perhaps, then, it is not by accident that post-Soviet economic and political rhetoric of the 1990s has often employed a terminology that reflects a structural analogy with traditional Marxist discourses: *The future will become radically different, although real change only occurs in great leaps. With the help of knowledge about the laws of economic or political history, development can be accelerated.*

WHAT IS BEING SUGGESTED here is the idea that this structural similarity may have facilitated a neoliberal discourse on transition to achieve a hegemonic status, perhaps particularly among the post-Soviet political elite in Boris Yeltsin's Russia. Certainly, an abundance of persuasive aphorisms were used not only by political advocates of shock therapy, but also by transitological economists in the early 1990s, which might well have appealed to a Lenin or a Stalin (when justifying revolution or collectivization). Phrases like "you cannot cross a chasm in two jumps" and "you don't pull teeth slowly",[51] are congruent with the denotation of transition, that is, the irreversibly absolute and essentially abrupt passage from one condition, location, or earlier stage of development, to another.

Perhaps not coincidentally, Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, two prominent transitologists, once attempted to "canonize" Machiavelli as transitology's progenitor. First and foremost, they attributed this position to Machiavelli by virtue of his modern perception of political outcomes as essentially artifactual and contingent, albeit uncertain, products of human action.[52] Additionally, one could emphasize his rationalist understanding of the actor-centric, intentional, "possibilistic", calculable, and directed character of regime shifts.[53] Even though political change, according to Machiavelli, is 50% subject to unpredictable fortune, the latter can, to a certain extent, be manipulated by virile and adventurous statesmen. This formula expresses a kind of reconciliation between voluntarism and determinism that we also find in modern transitology.[54] However, also Machiavelli's analytical split between what in retrospect could be seen as *raison d'état* politics and common sense ethics,[55] is instructive in the genealogy of postcommunist, as well as communist discourses on transition, many of which could be expressed in the formula: "Whatever helps in the struggle is good; whatever hinders, is bad."

THE ABOVE MAXIM could certainly have been voiced so as to release an Italian Renaissance prince from the restrictions of Christian conscience and pity, but it was, in fact, actually written 400 years later by the Bolsheviks to legitimize the brutality by which the Russian proletariat should establish its dictatorship.[56] The neoliberal interpretation of the process of economic transition also presupposes an idea that moral ends can excuse immoral means. "Hard" and "undemocratic" measures in Russia during the 1990s were, according to the influential transition economist Anders Åslund, not only necessary practically in the process of reform implementation, but also historically legitimate, with the increasing *expectation* of future democratization taken into account. The lack of political freedoms and rights were, as presented by Åslund, excused with the notion that these freedoms and rights would eventually follow in the wake of the economic freedom currently being implemented. The faster the short-term transition in the present, the lower the long run social costs.[57]

What could appear as undemocratic decision-making should according to Åslund be understood in the context of Russia's undemocratic past. A culture of democratic compromise, presumably in contrast to a real market economy, needs time to develop. Russia's traditions hence called for a more "robust and radical approach" than what was needed in for example East-Central Europe. In Russia's case it would have been, according to Åslund, "lethal to hesitate or move slowly".[58]

Hegel — and the negation of negation

The Soviet concept of transition, denoting the *change* from quantity to quality, not only has an *indirect* origin in Hegel by virtue of its occurrence in Marx (the latter being a disciple of the former). When, in 1914, Lenin conducted his close reading of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, he didn't simply implicitly plea for the integration of the great idealist into the Soviet canon, but also identified Hegel's concept of *Übergang* (transition) as perhaps the most important concept in dialectics.[59] Lenin claims, as does Hegel, that every-

thing in reality is *mediated* and linked together through transitions. According to him, it is when one understands the *transitions* that the radical element in Hegel's thought appears, namely the possibility of thinking negation – or contradiction – as an immanent part of the system.[60] Although it is possible – if one does not take into account Machiavelli's sixteenth-century doctrines on how to obtain and maintain power – to draw a relatively straight line from Condorcet's eighteenth-century idea of social progress, Lamarck's and Darwin's nineteenth-century teachings on natural evolution, through 1950s modernization theories, to the 1970s democratization concept of Dankwart Rustow, it is precisely in Hegel's work that some of the premises of the Soviet usage of the concept of transition, from Lenin to Gorbachev, become visible.

Transition is essentially a relation, which is constituted by opposition. In a transition, we find the later condition's negation of the former. Ontologically, the most fundamental categories, that is, being and non-being, constitute an inseparable unity, which gives rise to permanent transition and becoming. According to Hegel, any single entity contains its own opposite. Since being, which in its pure form is empty of determination, also includes non-being, *becoming* constitutes a kind of a determined synthesis.[61]

Transitions arise through dialectical tensions. A common characteristic in transitions is that they lead from the lower toward the higher.[62] In a transition, a qualitatively *new* state of things is at stake. Communism, the final goal of the Soviet project, does not, however, if we are to believe its ideologists, contain any dialectical or qualitative transitions. This is due not only to cessation of the class struggle, but also to oppositions and negations becoming totally alien, since there is no longer any need to make class-based distinctions between human beings.[63] The transitions during slave society, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism are, according to historical materialism, brought about by the tensions and demands of class society. For that reason, communism does not know of any transition, and therefore signifies the end of history.

GIVEN THAT ANY TRANSITION, at least in Lenin's interpretation of Hegel, is about the later condition's negation of the previous one, it becomes intelligible why Gorbachev, like all his predecessors, was so obsessed with criticizing previous mistakes – the "mistakers", however, being represented in an Aesopian language. If for Gorbachev the flaws were conveyed as the "deformations" and "stagnation" of socialism,[64] tacitly attributable to the rule of Brezhnev, Brezhnev himself had repeatedly preferred to talk about "voluntarism" and "subjectivism",[65] thereby putting the blame on Khrushchev. In Khrushchev's case, what prevented the building of communism had been the "personality cult" of Stalin, and those atrocities it had concealed and begotten.[66]

In a notoriously critical assessment of late Soviet reforms, the chemistry teacher and Stalinist Nina Andreyeva exclaimed the following:

> **I would very much like to understand who needed to ensure, and why, that every prominent leader of the party Central Committee and the Soviet government – once they were out of office – was compromised and discredited [...]? Where are the origins of this passion of ours to undermine the prestige and dignity of the leaders of the world's first country of socialism?**[67]

Andreyeva's call not only reflects resentment or frustration but also reveals the negative nature of the dialectic of Soviet transitions, which in turn can be seen as a way of coping with a universal condition of modernity. Modern temporality namely contains a paradox: Why doesn't history develop linearly in accordance with its immanent forces and in line with scientific prognoses? In all revolutions, there has been a problem that those who are to build the new order were socialized during the *ancien régime*.[68] During one of his many moments of tactical retreats, Lenin proposed that socialism's dependence on capitalism was to be re-interpreted as a positive resource: The future could only be built "with the hands of one's enemy".[69] Rather than neglecting (or extinguishing) all cadres of bourgeois engineers, one should make use of their competence for one's own purpose. As I see it, transitology, communist and postcommunist alike, provides a solution to the problem of non-linear temporality, since development is believed to be dependent on its antitheses. A transition must take its beginning in the position it negates, and therefore continuously reproduce it – most importantly, for the sake of its own legitimacy. In the case of communist transitology, in contrast to its postcommunist counterpart, one is also trying to persuade oneself that the remains of the energies of the earlier system, in a somewhat mysterious way, can be selectively transformed and channeled into the new system.

HENCE, DIALECTICAL transitions can only be brought about if they are loaded with antagonistic energies. One of the essential meanings that Gorbachev extracted from perestroika, while simultaneously defining it as a "transition", was precisely "negation", as well as "negation of negation".[70] That which was negated was the deformations of socialism, which should set the present free from the problems which had been generated in the past. Ironically, postcommunist transitology as well has often adopted an attitude of pure negation toward the order it has transcended in its analyses, and a hierarchy between different historical stages has been established, which I see as reminiscent of Marx's historical materialism as well as Hegel's dialectical logic. The antithesis must by definition be *criticized* but also reproduced. The roots of current problems – that is the antithesis – are, accordingly, derived and defined backwards not only in communist, but also in postcommunist transitology. According to Åslund, it is when the prevailing paradigm (of the old generation) *appears* as out-of-date that the public's acceptance for shock therapy can increase.[71] The old knowledge producers appear obsolete only when they are confronted by the *new* producers of knowledge, and vice versa. Furthermore, a similar kind of symmetry between a "presentist" historiography and a teleological "futurology" could be identified. Perhaps in jest, but also, in a historical sense, ironically, more than a few post-Soviet transitological studies have been modeled on older narratives, indicated in their titles.[72]

A transition from theory to experience: Problems of anachronism

The concept of transition not only functions as, to use a term from discourse theory, the "nodal point" in an explanatory framework which structures and standardizes empirical data; it also has turned into a historiographical signifier, which encompasses a defined period after the fall of communism. The teleological implications, however, might carry a risk whereby we would tend to understand history backwards and reduce the complexity of development to a simplified narrative, with notions of a beginning, turning point, climax, and sense morale, which essentially reflect the contemporary standards of our own cultural horizon.

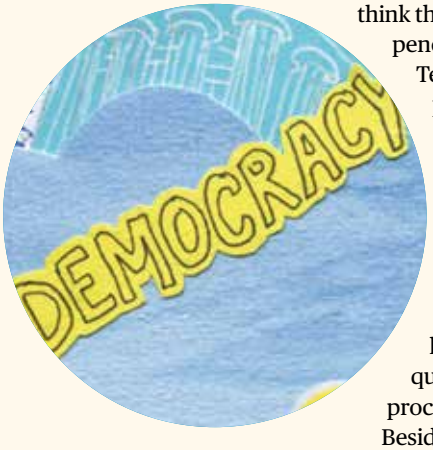
Traditionally, Marxism has been ascribed a notorious preference for reducing the reproductive sphere of the family to an epiphenomenon, that is, seeing it as a function of the productive sphere, which is where the seeds of industrialization and ultimately revolution lie. In an analogous manner, during the 1990s and early 2000s, empirical hypotheses about micro-level social change in the lifeworld were on occasion notably influenced by nomothetical discourses on macro-level change in economics and politics.[73]

YET IF SCHOLARS DO not distinguish between their concept of transition as an explanatory and historiographical construct on the meta-level, and a lived experience of the actors in the empirical world, they might be misguided. The discourse and project of "transition", justified by Hegelian dialectics and the Marxian philosophy of modern history, was something that Soviet Man had been subjected to since the October Revolution. The problem acquired contemporary relevance when sociologists and anthropologists started carrying out fieldwork in the post-Soviet bloc, in the wake of the paradigmatic (political and economic) articulation of transition. In a qualitative study on how the Kyrgyz people carry on with their everyday lives – during the *Transition* in the macro world – one of the respondents produced an answer, that, in its simplicity, may be used as a corrective for some of our prevalent presuppositions: "How we perceive the transition? We've lived in transition for 70 years."[74]

During the 1990s, transition was one of the strategic keywords within postcommunist research. As outlined by teleological transitologists, the transitional movement is, at least in theory, asymmetrical and progressive. As a historiographical device of postcommunist studies, transition can either comprehend development after the fall of communism generally, which leads to our own present, or also include the Gorbachev era in this process.[75] When scholars apply the concept retroactively to the preceding Gorbachev era, they should, however, note the fact that the horizon of expectation of *that* era was not primarily characterized by an irreversible movement forward.[76] Political and cultural *retrospection* – the fixation with counterfactual alternatives and choices of destiny as well as the rehabilitation of "people's enemies"[77] – indicated a common hope of the ability to *return* backwards and enter alternative, previously ignored or suppressed paths of development, which were assumed to have been crystallized in the domestic past. The concept of transition might in this context conceal that the perestroika matrix was essentially horizontal and symmetrical. It was only in 1990, if not 1991, that a change of system eventually became a part of the general agenda in Soviet Russia. The idea that the USSR should follow a Western model was thus not yet ubiquitous. On the contrary, there were even prominent scholars in the West who believed that Soviet perestroika instead should be spread to the rest of the world.[78] The historiographical assimilation of perestroika into the 1990s logic of events is problematic since the former is a *bygone* past in our very present. That era was the scene of a staging of a political project irrevocably exhausted. The perestroika project was launched in a context and a historiography in which "communism", for example, still enjoyed some, albeit small, sense of international legitimacy, which it indisputably does not today. The point is that if perestroika is understood as the first stage of *post*-Soviet *transition*, one must take into account that history is reconstructed backwards and that development is reduced to a formal, if not teleological scheme. When applying the postcommunist concept of transition to (late) Soviet conditions, there is a dual risk of blurring our own concept of transition with the Soviet equivalent and tending to substitute the authentic horizon of expectation of the Gorbachev era with our own, which is essentially different, and that makes many past actions and policies appear as irrational. The *results* of the historical process, or its retroactively defined goals, have come to determine how we perceive the *process* as such.

ANDERS ÅSLUND, who will be taken as an example in the following, is a Swedish scholar and an internationally renowned transition economist who has used the concept of transition teleologically. In a widely cited work, the Gorbachev era is portrayed as an embryo.[79] The reform policy is described as essentially insignificant, although innovations such as the introduction of free speech played a role in Russia's "real transition".[80] It is worth dwelling on that latter expression. The period 1985–1991, on the one hand, and 1992 and onwards, on the other, are hence separated by an ontological barrier. The former period serves as a temporal prelude to the latter. Even if Åslund's image of Gorbachev also contains significant elements of sympathy, Gorbachev is generally represented as someone who obstructed positive development – while a politician like Yeltsin facilitated it. All the following evaluative judgments[81] are to some extent symptomatic of a teleological transition perspective that conceives history anachronistically: Gorbachev made "naive" statements, had "little to offer but platitudes", contributed only to a "half-hearted" democratization and made "almost every conceivable mistake". Gorbachev was a master of "peaceful destruction", which facilitated making the world a better place, but he did not present any alternative to the old system and did not understand the intrinsic value of economic reforms. In contrast to Yeltsin, who appeared as dynamic and receptive to younger advisors, Gorbachev was a politician with "flaws" and "shortcomings", he was non-pragmatic, non-flexible and uneducated, "very much a product of [the] system". These judgments are probably conditioned by the fact that during the first half of the 1990s Åslund acted as an adviser to the Russian government under

Yeltsin, Gorbachev's archenemy. However, they could also be seen as symptomatic of the teleological implications of a *retroactive* perspective. What makes Gorbachev's actions impossible to explain with reference to theories about rational choice is that he, according to Åslund, delayed development, by neglecting the optimal alternatives that history had placed at his disposal. These optimal alternatives are, nonetheless, only relevant, one may conclude, in relation to a referential horizon created retroactively. If the final objective already during perestroika would have been spelled out as the kind of liberal market economy that Åslund recommended during the 1990s, then it would be natural to think that what eventually actually happened *needed* to have happened. Teleology thus risks concealing possible alternatives. The fall of the USSR appeared as "inevitable" in Åslund's view; the system was impossible to reform, and the question was actually never *whether*, but "how and when it would fall". Gorbachev's actions, particularly concerning the nationality question, simply "speeded up the process".



Besides a historiographical anachronism, which I have tried to illustrate with examples from anthropology and economics, there is a peculiar *ideological* dimension of teleological transitology. This implication becomes evident by the fact that the questions of whether the transition has been launched, *which* transition has been started, and whether it should be continued or is completed, ultimately are political ones. Andrew C. Janos proposes that the development in East-Central Europe can be described as a change from one international, albeit Soviet, hegemonic regime to a new regime, externally imposed as well, equally international in form but "Western" in content.[82] Janos's conclusion is drastic and possibly too generalizing but points to the changeable context within which the "real" transition is defined and evaluated, hence illustrating the contestable character of the concept.

Concluding remarks

If a particular conceptualization of transitional change is not informed by its wider historical context, there is a risk that a teleological bias will be reproduced, which in extreme cases manifests itself as an inverted mirror of communism. Another problem with a teleologically conceptualized transition is that the standardized goal might prove to be a self-fulfilling prophesy. The starting point, in a number of heterogeneous countries, has in many cases been reduced to a monolith, analytically positioned at the service of the objective. The starting point, along with the endpoint, thus become generalized abstractions empty of ontological content. The end – perfect democracy or market economy – as well as the outset – totalitarian communism – are constructed into ideal opposites. Although he is aware of the risks of generalization and simplification, Åslund holds that the direction and end of the transition are best understood by means of a reconstruction of the "typical features" and "key characteristics" of the communist system, per se.[83] According to Archie Brown, however, the USSR more or less ceased to be "communist", at least in any qualified sense (except when it came to official self-definition), in 1989.[84] If Brown is right, Åslund's approach could be seen as symptomatic of a tendency in radical versions of teleological transitology to reconstruct the starting point of transition dialectically, re-presenting it as negated negation, so that the imagined outcome not only would be able to legitimize continuous development away from negativity, hence making it possible for the researcher to conveniently tick off the items on the "checklist", but also, in its turn, would be able to justify itself by the constitutive *lack* that is characteristic of the starting point.[85]

With the above taken into consideration, one is tempted to ask whether there really can be such a thing as non-teleological transitology. I believe there can be, although it might appear as puzzling that even Gans-Morse, who more or less denies the existence of an academic *teleological* transitology, nonetheless emphasizes the analytical and comparative advantage of hypothetically approximating a closed *endpoint*.[86] In so far as any kind of *transitional* thinking, teleological or non-teleological, implicitly refers to the modern project's cognitive structure of temporality, reflected in, although not equivalent to, Hegelian dialectics, "transition" seems, to one extent or another, to connote progress (or, alternatively, degeneration), hypothetical or not.

A more problematic question arises, however, as to whether the transition *to* socialism is at all commensurate with the transition *out* of it – a commensurability which indeed has been assumed in this essay – not least since the entirety of practices and the political rationale in the respective transitions were very different. The designs of political-economic transformations may have been legitimized by a common language, but nevertheless, some would object, they were also specific responses to particular situations at unrepeatable historical junctures. Both "transitions", the communist and the postcommunist, if one may conflate different processes in different countries during different periods, denote a qualitative social conversion but were based on different philosophies of history. The socialist as well as the capitalist transitions have been conceptualized as movements from necessity to freedom, although necessity and freedom were understood in diametrically opposed ways. The end of the process is equated with either freedom to be part of a collectivistic system or freedom *from* such a system. The postcommunist realization of the individual's, or consumer's, free choice, would from a communist viewpoint probably be depicted as the deployment of blind market forces. The planned economy and one-party state, designed to maximize the collective's "positive" freedom, might from a postcommunist viewpoint be interpreted as an institutionalization of the shortages and dependencies always characteristic of the kingdom of necessity. If the communist aspires for freedom *from* the market, the capitalist conceives of freedom as unthinkable without the market. In politicized postcommunist transition discourses, negative freedom was usually promised almost immediately, while conditions

of an equally distributed material empowerment were seen as something of an eventual consequence. The short-term and long-term aims of socialist transition were, in relation to capitalism, different in content although similar in form. What was promised immediately after the revolution was *positive* freedom. Positive material resources, for example reprographic technology, would be placed at the hands of the workers, while "negative" liberties, such as freedom of speech, were reserved for the future, when socialism was supposed to develop autonomously without capitalist or foreign intervention.[87]

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE substantial differences between the projected transitions' respective contents, the argument in this essay is that there are commensurate elements in their form as well as logic. In both the imagined transitions, if communist historico-philosophical transitology is compared to postcommunist *economic* transitology, economy is seen as superior to politics, and development could be accelerated if the political "superstructure" is put at the service of the economic "base". In the early 1990s, it seems, some influential economists were able to formulate a broader political agenda. A rapid marketization was in their eyes a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for growing the fruits of political freedom.[88] Although essentially different, one can see that historical transitions also from a communist viewpoint appeared as asymmetrical, irreversible and unconditionally progressive. In the words of the Marxist historian Raphael Samuel, they were during the middle of the 20th century perceived as "being 'identical' in content everywhere".[89] And albeit understood as necessities, they could be hastened by human effort. These claims were, unconsciously, passed on into the post-Soviet era. One further example is that the leading role of the "working class" during Soviet times, in Yeltsin's Russia was taken over by the so-called middle class – virtually indefinable but increasingly attractive to identify with – which was analogously represented as the vanguard of transition, that is, the subject of history. Considering postcommunist transitology's emphasis on competing elites within the regime and the opposition, it is, however, perhaps better to characterize it as voluntaristic rather than deterministic, which, in a sense, would make it more "Leninist" than orthodoxly "Marxist", to use an analogy.

IN THIS ESSAY, I have focused on "Soviet" and "post-Soviet" transitions in particular, but have also tried to encompass "communist" and "postcommunist" ones in a more general sense. I see the conflation as being, if not justified, so at least tentatively excused for historical reasons, in particular since the "Soviet bloc" and the "Communist" or "Eastern bloc" were used synonymously during the Cold War, indicating a general asymmetry of *Soviet* influence. This being said however, the *expectation* of a postcommunist transition must certainly have taken different forms within the late-Communist bloc, with respect not only to historical and social factors but also to the nature and scope of the previous area-specific *experience* of *socialist* transition. Further studies are needed on the *heterogeneity* of cold war era communism in order to critically assess postcommunist development.

In a postmodern academic climate where it becomes increasingly custom to ironically or reflexively write words like "transition" in quotation marks, one should bear in mind that the competitive paradigms in which one claims to identify a dynamic *stability* of post-authoritarian "hybridization", sometimes presuppose a negative variant of the check-list thinking found in transitology, that is, looking for the *failure* of democratization rather than its success.[90]

Turning to Hegel, we find that even the concept of stability presupposes change. When a particular political or economic definition of "transition" becomes hegemonic, however, there is a risk of evaluating diversified aspects of social reality from a homogenizing point of view, which also might be anachronistically obscured. History without doubt contains elements of revolutionary, but also hesitant and contradictory, transition, side by side with an equally contradictory dynamic stability. These features cannot be justly comprehended if we do not try to see their immanent historicity, and dialectics between continuity and discontinuity, within the past as well as the present.

references

1 See Aryeh L. Unger, "On the Meaning of 'Sovietology'," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31 (1998).

2 In the latter case one is approaching contemporary problems of the "East" by virtue of an area-based knowledge of the past, interpreting development from a model of exceptionality. See for example Stefan Hedlund, *Russian Path Dependence* (London: Routledge, 2005).

3 An organizational example illustrates this peculiar paradigm shift. Research at the Dept. for Soviet and East European Studies at Uppsala University, with roots going back to the early 1970s, was marked by the Cold War and characterized by "Kremlinological" hermeneutics, inspired by linguistic findings in Slavistics. In the early 1990s, "Soviet" was dropped from the department's name. The re-naming corresponded to a radically new research program, communicated on the department website, in which one was looking toward the future, in a comparative way, more than idiographically focusing on the past, although the center housed essentially the same group of teachers and researchers. "Om oss" [About us], DEES, Uppsala University, accessed June 28, 2005. http://www.east.uu.se/om_inst.html.

4 Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), xv.

5 Archie Brown, "The Russian Transition in Comparative Perspective," in *Contemporary Russian Politics: A Reader*, ed. A. Brown (Oxford: Oxford University

Press), 457; Rudolf L. Tőkés, "'Transitology': Global Dreams and Post-Communist Realities," *Central Europe Review* 2 (2000). http://www.ce-review.org/00/10/tokes10.html. When it came to Russia, the fall of communism triggered a paradigm conflict between what appeared as older and younger Western scholars. In polemics with the new generation's universalistic concepts of transitology, some of the former Sovietologists persisted with traditional theories where the concept of totalitarianism was still significant. See Anders Åslund, *How Russia Became a Market Economy* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1995), 312, with Kristian Gerner and Stefan Hedlund, *The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993). Since Russia would be determined by cultural factors radically differing from Western ones, the latter predicted a failure of quick-fix Westernization. In short, one could generalize by saying that the new generation was criticized for attributing too much significance to the political changes, while the old generation was mocked for not being able to predict or explain change at all.

6 One should note that the term *transitology* (sometimes *transitionology*), which I here use heuristically, has hardly been used self-referentially with any great frequency (as in the case of Phillipe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Attempt to Go?" *Slavic Review* 53 (1994): 174), but has indeed been used rather pejoratively by its critics, e.g. Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade: America and the Tragedy of Postcommunist Russia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), 21. In order to avoid a connotation of "scientificity", methodological unity, or essentialism, potentially inherent in any "ology", one could perhaps simply speak of "transition studies", which might be associated more with multidisciplinarity and reflexivity, e.g., Furio Honsell, "The Times They Are A-Changin': Research Networks for Understanding and Disseminating Transition and Innovation," *Transition Studies Review* 11 (2004).

7 Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). Even if fragments of a theory of regime shifts can be detected in Plato, *The Republic*, trans. R. E. Allen (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), VIII; Aristotle, *Politics*, ed. R. F. Stalley and trans. Ernest Barker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), III; and Polybius, *The Histories*, 12 vols., ed. E. Capps et al. and trans. W. R. Paton (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1922–1927), the birth of modern transitology is usually not dated until the early 1970s. Dankwart A. Rustow is often referred to as the "father" of transitology. See Dankwart A. Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," *Comparative Politics* 2 (1970). His theoretical framework was corroborated by empirical case studies from the mid 1970s and onwards, in pace with the fall of the authoritarian regimes in the "South". Schmitter and Karl, "Conceptual Travels," 173–174. See also Guillermo O'Donnell, Phillipe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian rule*, 4 vols. (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1986). It is, however, a matter of debate whether postcommunist transitology was ever assimilated into global transitology. See for example Jordan Gans-Morse, "Searching for Transitologists: Contemporary Theories of Post-Communist Transitions and the Myth of a Dominant Paradigm," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 20 (2004). Nevertheless, during the 1990s, the postcommunist countries appeared as *transitional* countries *par excellence*. It should, also be stressed that a postcommunist transitology, and its supposedly autonomous character, is significantly less identifiable today, after the admission of many former socialist states to the EU and NATO.

8 Cf. Honsell, "Times," 1.

9 Cf. Brown, "Russian Transition," 457. N. B. also the striking ratio of Western to Eastern European authors writing about postcommunism in the most prestigious social science journals. Vassilis Petsinis, "Twenty Years After 1989: Moving on From Transitology," *Contemporary Politics* 16 (2010): 308.

10 Gans-Morse, "Transitologists," 323, 334, 338–340. Even if excellent academic research on transition usually is not characterized by teleological bias or even reflecting a common theoretical framework, as Gans-Morse has it, this would not contradict that a meta-theoretical ground, and with it a teleological (if not radically teleological) transition concept, have been mediated within other structures of academia. Besides exemplary academic research, curricula, course designs, and research networks, are also essential components of what constitutes a "paradigm". See Tomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 177. The 1990s and early 2000s saw the creation of many an academic school dedicated to the study of development in the former communist bloc, understood as a transition process, the knowledge thereof being defined as the key to society's prosperous future. E.g. "Mission Statement," SITE, Stockholm School of Economics, accessed January 15, 2014, http://www.hhs.se/SITE/AboutUs/Pages/MissionStatement.aspx; "About CREECA," CREECA, University of Wisconsin-Madison, accessed January 15, 2014, http://www.creeca.wisc.edu/about.html.

11 In Aristotelian physics, a change in nature or society is explained by taking into account *four* kinds of causes. Aristotle, *Physics* (Sioux Falls, SD: NuVision Publications, 2007), E-book, II, chap. 3. The *final* cause is the most significant but presupposes the three other ones. Besides the *material* and *efficient* causes – the only two to survive the Scientific Revolution – there is also a formal cause – a remnant of Plato's metaphysical doctrine of forms. According to Aristotle, the *formal* cause of the octave in music is the mathematical relation 2:1. For Aristotle, the full answer to the question "why" a thing has come into being must thus take into account the change's inherent plan or design (form). Accordingly, insofar as a part of it can be considered "teleological" in Aristotle's sense, transitology should not necessarily conceive development only deterministically. Although the validity could be questioned, one could perhaps ask whether this is not exemplified when the transition economist Anders Åslund suggests that certain key actors possessed the original plan *beforehand* according to which the transition in Russia accomplished its final goal. Åslund, *Market Economy*, 312.

12 In this essay, economic transitology will above all be represented by the internationally renowned transition economist Åslund.

13 Gans-Morse, "Transitologists," 334.

14 John Mueller, "Democracy, Capitalism, and the End of Transition," in *Post-Communism: Four Perspectives*, ed. (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996), 140; Åslund, *Market Economy*, 312; See Gans-Morse, "Transitologists," 323; Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2002).

15 See for example Åslund, *Market Economy*, 12; See János Kornai, "Ten Years After *The Road to a Free Economy*: The Author's Self-Evaluation," in *Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics 2000*, ed. Boris Pleskovic and Nicholas Stern (Washington: The World Bank, 2001), 61.

16 See Carothers, "End of the Transition Paradigm"; Maksym Zherebkin, "In Search of a Theoretical Approach to the Analysis of the 'Colour Revolutions': Transition Studies and Discourse Theory," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 42 (2009); Tomas Kavaliauskas, *Transformations in Central Europe Between 1989 and 2012: Geopolitical, Cultural, and Socioeconomic Shifts* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2012). However, the earliest critique of post-Soviet transitology dates back to the early 1990s. See Gerner and Hedlund, *Baltic States*; Sarah Meiklejohn Terry, "Thinking About Post-Communist Transitions: How Different Are They?" *Slavic Review* 52 (1993).

17 Peter Reddaway and Dmitri Glinski, *The Tragedy of Russia's Reforms: Market Bolshevism Against Democracy* (Washington: The United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001). See Cohen, *Failed Crusade*, 23–30, 151–155; Michael Burawoy and Katherine Verdery, introduction to *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Postsocialist world*, ed. M. Burawoy and K. Verdery (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield), 4.

18 Cf. Gans-Morse, "Transitologists," 335.

19 *Transition Report: Economic Transition in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union: Ten Years of Transition* (London: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD], 1999); *Transition Report: Growth in Transition* (London: EBRD, 2008). Cf. *Democracy Index 2010: Democracy in Retreat* (London, *The Economist* Intelligence Unit, 2010).

20 Honsell, "Times," 1.

21 Mueller, "Democracy," 104. Cf. Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest* No 16 (1989).

22 Guillermo O'Donnell and Phillipe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, vol. 4 (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 3.

23 See, e.g., Michael McFaul, "The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World," *World Politics* 54 (2002).

24 David Stark, "Path Dependence and Privatization: Strategies in East Central Europe," *East European Politics and Societies* 6 (1992): 22. In this paper, I understand *transformation* more broadly than transition, comprising also non-teleological and relative change, including processes of "hybridization", and focusing on practical social outcomes more than on preconceived models and policies.

25 Carothers, "End of the Transition Paradigm," 7.

26 See Michael McFaul, "The Second Wave of Democratic Breakthroughs in the Post-Communist world: Comparing Serbia 2000, Georgia 2003, Ukraine 2004, and Kyrgyzstan 2005" (Danyliw/Jacyk Working Papers, No 4, Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Toronto, 2005), 1. http://www.utoronto.ca/jacyk/files/wp4-mcfaul.pdf.

27 Cyril Mango, *Byzantium and its Image: History and Culture of the Byzantine Empire and its Heritage*, vol. 1 (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), 37–38; Mats Andrén, *Att frambringa det uthärdliga: Studier till idén om Centraleuropa* (Hedemora: Gidlund, 2001), 35–36.

28 Philip Longworth, *The Making of Eastern Europe* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1992).

29 Lucan A. Way, "The Evolution of Authoritarian Organization in Russia under Yeltsin and Putin" (Kellogg Institute Working Paper, No 352, The Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame, 2008), 2. http://kellogg.nd.edu/publications/workingpapers/WPS/352.pdf.

30 Cf. Marie Lavigne, "Ten Years of Transition: A Review Article," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (2000): 476. Linz and Stepan, who for long carried out transitological research on the "South", but eventually extended their scope to include the "East", have used their accumulated knowledge in order to derive a generalized corrective. They draw conclusions from the "Southern" examples about how the "Eastern" transition *should* have been carried out. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems*, 436.

31 Carothers, "End of the Transition Paradigm," 18; cf. Joakim Ekman, "Political Participation and Regime Stability: A Framework for Analyzing Hybrid Regimes," *International Political Science Review* 30 (2009).

32 Cf. Matilda Dahl, "States under Scrutiny: International Organizations, Transformation and the Construction of Progress" (PhD diss., Stockholm University, 2007).

33 In the 1990s, several competing notions prevailed as to the nature of the *ideal* economic transition. *Shock therapy* was virtually hegemonic, at least initially, but *theoretically* challenged from the viewpoint of *gradualism*, which paid attention to institutional development rather than to mere scale and speed of privatization and liberalization. Jozef M. van Brabant, *The Political Economy of Transition: Coming to Grips with History and Methodology* (London: Routledge, 1998), 102–105. The division between shock therapy and gradualism was, however, greater in the beginning. Eventually, one might suggest, a kind of practical, yet also theoretical, convergence occurred.

34 See Larry Diamond, "Thinking About Hybrid Regimes," *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2002); Ekman, "Political Participation."

35 See Thomas M. Nichols, "Putin's First Two Years: Democracy or Authoritarianism?" *Current History* 101 (2002); Elena A. Korosteleva, "Party System Development in Post-Communist Belarus," in *Contemporary Belarus: Between Democracy and Dictatorship*, ed. E. A. Korosteleva, Colin W. Lawson and Rosalind J. Marsh (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); McFaul, "Second Wave."

36 Mueller, "Democracy," 102–103.

37 E.g. Åslund, *Market Economy*, 3.

38 Edward A. Tiryakian, "The New Worlds and Sociology: An Overview," *International Sociology* 9 (1994): 132.

39 Vladimir Lenin, "Gosudarstvo i revolyutsiya," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 33, by V. Lenin (Moscow: Politizdat, 1962), 90.

40 Nikolai Bukharin and Yevgeni Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1969), § 69.

41 E.g. Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika i novoe myshlenye dlya nashei strany i dlya vsego mira* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1987), 48.

42 "Perekhod," in *Slovar perestroiki*, ed. V. Maksimov (St. Petersburg: Zlatoust, 1992), 157.

43 In retrospect, Gorbachev's reform concepts may appear as "vanishing mediators". As I have written elsewhere, the continuing practice of rhetorical redescription helped mobilize and radicalize his policy but also drove an irreconcilable wedge into official ideology, which undermined the foundation of the system. The Hegelian-style accelerating "Aufhebung", of, e.g., *glasnost* to *freedom of speech; socialist pluralism* to *pluralism* alone; the *transition to communism* to a *transition to capitalism*, and of *planned economy* to *socialist market* (then to *market socialism*, *mixed economy*, and, finally, *market economy*!), is instructive for the logic of the Soviet collapse and indicative of the dialectics between political and conceptual change. Kristian Petrov, "Construction, Reconstruction, Deconstruction: The Fall of the Soviet Union From the Point of View of Conceptual History," *Studies in East European Thought* 60 (2008): 196–197.

44 Vladimir Lenin, "O zadachakh proletariata v dannoi revolyutsii," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 31, by V. Lenin (Moscow: Politizdat, 1962), 114.

45 Cf. Reinhart Koselleck *Vergangene Zukunft: Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979), 34.

46 Lenin, "Gosudarstvo," 86.

47 Immanuel Wallerstein, "From Feudalism to Capitalism: Transition or Transitions?" *Social Forces* 55 (1976).

48 Lenin, "Gosudarstvo," 89; cf. Bukharin and Preobrazhensky, *ABC*, § 48.

49 Brown, "Russian Transition," 456.

50 Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 167–168.

51 Brabant, *Political Economy*, 102–103.

52 Schmitter and Karl, "Conceptual Travels," 174.

53 Cf. Donald R. Kelley, *Faces of History: Historical Inquiry from Herodotus to Herder* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1998), 147–148.

54 For Åslund, the fall of communism, i.e., the starting point of transition, appeared as inevitable, but the fulfillment of the transition's goal was essentially "a manifestation of idealism". Åslund, *Market Economy*, 35, 312. In other words, there indeed seems to be an inherent contradiction between universalism and voluntarism in this version of transitology, which might cause problems when, for example, it comes to generalizing the results. Cf. Paul Kubicek, "Post-Communist Political Studies: Ten Years Later, Twenty Years Behind?" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (2000): 296.

55 Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. W. K. Marriott (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1908), 78, 86, 120–122.

56 Bukharin and Preobrazhensky, *ABC*, § 23.

57 Anders Åslund, *Därför behöver Österuropa chockterapi* (Stockholm: SNS Förlag, 1993), 45-46; Åslund, *Market Economy*, 11-12, 314.

58 Åslund, *Market Economy*, 11-12.

59 Vladimir Lenin, "Konspekt knigi Gegelya 'Nauka logika'," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 29, by V. Lenin (Moscow: Politizdat, 1963), 162.

60 Lenin, "Konspekt," 92, 159, 190, 203.

61 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Wissenschaft der Logik: Erster Band die objektive Logik," In *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 11, by G. W. F. Hegel (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1978), 43-44.

62 Lenin, "Konspekt," 128, 162, 249.

63 "Programma kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskogo soyuza: Novaya redaktsiya prinyata XXVII sezdom KPSS," *Kommunist* No 4 (1986): 101-102.

64 Mikhail Gorbachev, "Revolyutsionnoi perestroike – ideologiyu obnovleniya," in *Izbrannye rechi i stati*, vol. 6, by M. Gorbachev (Moscow: Politizdat, 1989), 65.

65 Cf. "Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeyevich," in *Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, 3rd ed., vol. 28, ed. A. Prochorov (Moscow: Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, 1978).

66 Nikita Khrushchev, "O kulte lichnosti i ego posledstviyakh: Doklad Pervogo sekretarya TsK KPSS tov. Khrushcheva N.S. XX sezdu [KPSS]," *Izvestiya* TsK KPSS No 3 (1989).

67 Nina Andreyeva, "Ne mogu postupit'sya printsipami," Sovetskaya Rossiya, 13 mars, 3. Author's translation.

68 Cf. Marci Shore, *Caviar and Ashes: A Warsaw Generation's Life and Death in Marxism, 1918-1968* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

69 Vladimir Lenin, "Otchet Tsentralnogo komiteta 18 marta," in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 38, by V. Lenin (Moscow: Politizdat, 1963), 142.

70 Mikhail Gorbachev, "Prakticheskimi delami uglyublyat perestroiku," in *Izbrannye rechi i stati*, vol. 5, by M. Gorbachev (Moscow Politizdat, 1988), 210; Gorbachev "Revolyutsionnoi perestroike," 63, 66.

71 Åslund, *Chockterapi*, 45-46, 52.

72 E.g. David Lane and Cameron Ross, *The Transition from Communism to Capitalism: Ruling Elites from Gorbachev to Yeltsin* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); Anders Åslund, *Building Capitalism: The Transformation of the Former Soviet Bloc* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Anders Åslund, *Russia's Capitalist Revolution: Why Market Reform Succeeded and Democracy Failed* (Danvers, MA: PIIE, 2007).

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76 Cf. Kristian Petrov, "Russia in the European Home? Convergence, Cosmopolitanism and Cosmism in Late Soviet Europeanisation," *Europe-Asia Studies* 65 (2013): 323.

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78 Ernst Gellner, conclusions to *Perestroika: The Historical Perspective*, ed. Catherine Merridable and Chris Ward (London: Edward Arnold), 237; Wolfgang Fritz Haug, *Gorbatschow: Versuch über den Zusammenhang seine Gedanken* (Hamburg: Arkiv, 1989.

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80 Åslund, *Market Economy*, 26.

81 The following quotes in this paragraph all appear in Åslund, *Market Economy*, on pages 27-28, 31, 34-36, 38, and 51.

82 Andrew C. Janos, "From Eastern Empire to Western Hegemony: East Central Europe under Two International Regimes," *East European Politics & Societies* 15 (2001): 222.

83 Åslund, *Market Economy*, 3.

84 Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism* (London: Vintage Books, 2010), 105.

85 It is, as we have seen, with the help of the argument about Russia's undemocratic past that Åslund recommends "hard measures" (i.a. regarding price liberalization). Åslund, *Market Economy*, 11-12. The historical lack of democracy is referred to in order to legitimize what some would perceive as the new elite's *undemocratic* control of the old elite. The validity of the argument is comfortably reassured if one ignores the democratization within the parliamentary (Congress of People's Deputies) and the journalistic (glasnost) sphere, whose first steps of consolidation *de facto* were taken during the USSR's last years.

86 Gans-Morse, "Transitologists."

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88 Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia and the Russians: From Earliest Times to 2001* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), 596.

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SHALAMOV REDISCOVERED: WHEN A POET WRITES PROSE

PHOTO: MANITOU/WIKIMEDIA

Shalamov's house in Vologda. It was confiscated after the October Revolution.

The idea to hold the first conference outside of Russia dedicated to Varlam Shalamov was initially suggested by Jan Machonin, the Czech translator of Shalamov's work. The National Library of the Czech Republic, the Slavic Library in Prague, the website Shalamov.ru, and the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes succeeded in bringing together thirty-four scholars and translators from all over the world for a three-day conference in the Czech capital September 17–19, 2013. Under the broad title *Zakon soprotivlenia raspadu* ("The Law of Resisting Disintegration"), concerns of several sorts central to our understanding of Shalamov could be addressed: the literary (his language, poetics, and questions of intertextuality), the historical (his works as documents of events and individuals), the cultural (the translation and reception of his works in several countries over the past four decades), the archival (the disclosure of previously unknown archive materials), and the psychological (theories of trauma narratives). The conference thus integrated various dimensions of Shalamov studies to emphasize that for contemporary scholarship the task is no longer primarily discovery, but rather rediscovery.

This year's International Shalamov Conference made the daring move from theory to practice in a most literal manner: from discussing literary works about the Gulag to visiting the physical site of an actual camp, *Vojna*, an experience that left all of us deeply moved.

Jan Machonin presented his Czech translation of Shalamov's *The Left Bank*, which was accompanied by a discussion of Valery Esipov's acclaimed 2012 biography of Shalamov and by John Glad's tale of the journey of Shalamov's manuscripts to the West. The most remarkable cultural dimension of the conference was without a doubt the Vologda Chamber Drama Theater's performance of *Our Father*, a play based on selections from Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales*.

THE LAST DAY of the conference witnessed the presentation of the seventh volume of Shalamov's collected works; the awareness of unknown texts will undoubtedly add new layers to both Shalamov's well-known works and to the established view of Shalamov as primarily a writer of prose. Several papers presented in Prague shed light on the less-known dimensions of Shalamov as a creative writer, particularly Shalamov the biographer and Shalamov the poet. This broader perception of the author of *Kolyma Tales* might not only invite new discoveries, but perhaps also instigate a shift in paradigm. For example, Shalamov's six volumes of poetry entitled *Kolyma Notebooks* have not yet received due scholarly attention and his voice as a poet has not yet been integrated with his prose. The significance of the poet's voice for Russian culture encompasses a long and vital tradition; but how does this legacy resonate in the works of a writer such as Shalamov, if we are to grant him the coveted status of Russian Poet? This question was posed during this year's conference, and although it is as yet without a conclusive answer, it has created a poetical subtext to be addressed by scholars as well as translators, both implicitly and explicitly.

THUS IT APPEARS symptomatic that the conference opened with a paper by Valery Petrochenkov on one of Shalamov's most powerful and nearly programmatic poems, "Avvakum in Pustozyorsk". Through a historical allegory, Shalamov attempts a poetical recuperation of two painful pasts – a religious one in the seventeenth century and a political one in the twentieth – and to articulate his own unwavering stance as an artist of the written word: the inability *not* to speak. Silence is not an option for Shalamov; neither in poetry nor in prose. Robert Chandler, the English translator of

What I saw and learned in the Kolyma Camps

Excerpt from Kolyma tales

1. The extraordinary fragility of human nature, of civilization. A human being would turn into a beast after three weeks of hard work, cold, starvation, and beatings.
2. The cold was the principal means of corrupting the soul; in the Central Asian camps people must have held out longer – it was warmer there.
3. I learned that friendship and solidarity never arise in difficult, truly severe conditions – when life is at stake. Friendship arises in difficult but bearable conditions (in the hospital, but not in the mine).
4. I learned that spite is the last human emotion to die. A starving man has only enough flesh to feel spite – he is indifferent to everything else.
5. I learned the difference between prison, which strengthens character, and work camps, which corrupt the human soul.
6. I learned that Stalin's "triumphs" were possible because he slew innocent people: had there been an organized movement, even one-tenth in number, but *organized*, it would have swept Stalin away in two days.
7. I learned that humans became human because they are physically stronger, tougher than any animal – no horse endures work in the Far North.
8. I saw that the only group that retained a bit of their humanity, despite the starvation and abuse, were the religious, the sectarians, almost all of them – and the majority of the priests.
9. The first ones to be corrupted, the most susceptible, are the Party members and military men.
10. I saw what a forcible argument a simple slap could be for an intellectual.
11. That people distinguish between camp chiefs according to the power of their punches, their enthusiasm for beatings.
12. A beating is almost irresistible as an argument ("Method number three").
13. I learned the truth about the preparations for the cryptic trials[1] from masters of the craft.
14. I learned why in prison you get political news (arrests, etc.) sooner than on the outside.
15. That prison (and camp) rumors [known in Russian prison slang as *parasha* – "the slop bucket"] always turn out to be anything but slop.
16. I learned that one can live on spite alone.
17. I learned that one can live on indifference.
18. I learned why a man lives neither on hope – there are no hopes at all, nor on will – what will?, but only on the instinct of self-preservation, the same as a tree, a rock, an animal.
19. I'm proud that at the very beginning, back in 1937, I decided never to become a foreman if my decision could lead to another man's death, if my will would be forced to serve the authorities oppressing other people, prisoners like myself.
20. My body and spirit proved to be stronger in this great trial than I thought, and I am proud to have betrayed no one, sent no one to their death, nor to the camp, to have denounced no one.
21. I'm proud to have made no requests until 1955[2].
22. I saw the so-called "Beria amnesty" there and then – it was something to behold.
23. I saw that women are more honest and selfless than men - there was not a single husband at Kolyma who came after his wife. But wives did come; many did (Faina Rabinovitch, Krivoshey's wife)[3].
24. I saw the amazing northerner families (civilians, former prisoners) with their letters to their "lawful husbands and wives", etc.
25. I saw "the first Soviet Rockefellers", underground millionaires, and heard their confessions.
26. I saw the hard laborers, and also the large E and B contingents, the Berlag camp.
27. I learned that one can achieve a lot (a hospital, a work transfer), but at the risk of life – at the cost of a beating and the isolation cell cold.
28. I saw an isolation cell carved out in rock, and spent one night in it myself.
29. The lust for power, for unpunished murder is great – from big shots down to regular police operatives with rifles (Seroshapka[4] and his ilk).
30. I learned the unrestrained Russian lust to denounce, to complain.

1 "Cryptic trials" – the show trials of the Great Terror of 1937.

2 In 1955 Shalamov made a request for rehabilitation.

3 See Shalamov's "Green attorney".

4 See Shalamov's "Berries".

Published with the permission of Shalamov.ru. Original translation by Mikhail Oslon and Dmitry Subbotin, slightly modified here. Written 1961. Translation from *A New Book: Memoirs, Notebooks, Correspondence, Police Dossiers – Eksmo*, 2004: 263–268.

Shalamov's poetry, soon to be published in an anthology of Russian poetry, continue d the poetical line through his subtle take on Shalamov's personal history of Russian poetry from Pushkin to Pasternak. Chandler's intensely poetic translations of separate poems demonstrates not only his own gift as a translator, but also the as of yet untapped riches contained within Shalamov's poems. Valery Esipov's paper contributed to the research of Shalamov's poetry by stressing the complex philosophical meaning of such "collisions" of the past with the present for Shalamov as a poet, not only in "Avvakum in Pustozyorsk", but also in other poems written in a similar vein.

The shift from a primary focus on Shalamov's prose to a more comprehensive approach which includes his poetic, biographic, and dramatic works informed the conference throughout its three

days. The poetic dimension was perhaps the most illuminating: it is not simply a new field, but one capable of altering prior conceptualizations of his texts in various genres. Unlike prose, poetry does not have to go "anywhere": rather, it strives to return. However, just as one cannot step in the same river twice, poetry rarely produces the same reading twice. Poetry is a different vehicle for transmission of human experience. It may be less suitable than prose for communicating the immediacy of testimony to atrocities, yet it has the ability to heal like no other form of art. Poetry affects us not only as we read, but in our memories of previous readings, because it is always the same and yet somehow continually different. Such a view on poetry may be an allegory for Shalamov's prose. Just as it is difficult to read Shalamov the same way twice, reading one of Shalamov's short stories on its own gives a much different impression than reading it within the context of his six prose cycles. Shalamov repeats himself: he revisits tropes, reuses plots, gives similar characters different names, shifts the perspective, and leads his reader, as it were, in a circular movement – not forward, but back again. This creative collision between the prosaic and the poetical at the core of Shalamov's poetics was addressed by Efim Gofman, who showed how subtly, even musically, the short story "Nadgrobnoe slovo" ("Funeral Oration") is constructed. His paper gestured at the possibility of a successful fusion of future scholarship on Shalamov's prose and poetry. Shalamov's works do not exhibit animosity between the two verbal art forms; rather, his poetics inhabit an exceptional space which allows for their harmonious coexistence.

As we continue to explore camp narratives, we perform a task similar to that of those who fed, bathed, clothed, and cared for the survivors of Auschwitz, as described by Primo Levi in the beginning of his memoir *The Truce*. After all, the history of humanity is not solely a history of survivors and perpetrators – it is also a history within which those who were neither can choose to play their part. Where there is a victim of trauma, there needs to another human being willing to listen, and who can therefore also participate in the crucial act of continued remembrance.

I believe that the continued strength of Shalamov scholarship at the beginning of the 21st century suggests a sustained willingness to both listen and remember. Unlike the survivors of Auschwitz of whom Levi writes, the majority of the survivors of the Gulag did not receive a similar greeting of human kindness and compassion upon their release from the camps. We as readers can grant this through our attentive reception of the works of Shalamov, but only if we never stop *reading* – although we at times wish to divert our eyes from the horrific stories he has to tell.

josefina lundblad

Through the Snow

How are roads beaten through virgin snow? A man walks in front, sweating and swearing, barely able to place one foot in front of the other, constantly getting stuck in the deep, powdery snow. He walks a long way, leaving behind him a trail of uneven black pits. He gets tired, he lies down on the snow, he lights a cigarette, and a blue cloud of makhorka[1] smoke spreads over the white shining snow. The man has already gone on further but the cloud still hangs where he rested – the air is almost motionless. Roads are always beaten on still days, so that human toil is not erased by the winds. The man chooses markers for himself in the snowy infinity: a cliff, a tall tree. He pilots his body through the snow, just as a helmsman steers a boat down a river, from headland to headland. Shoulder to shoulder, in

Wood carving by Russian artist Nikolay Kalita.

a row, five or six men follow the man's narrow and uncertain track. They walk beside this track, not along it. When they reach a predetermined spot, they turn round and walk back in the same manner, tramping down virgin snow, a place where man's foot has never trodden.

The road is opened. Along it can move people, strings of sleighs, tractors. If the others were to follow directly behind the first man, in his footsteps, they would create a narrow path, a trail that is visible but barely walkable, a string of holes more impassable than virgin snow. It's the first man who has the hardest task; when he runs out of strength, someone else from that vanguard of five goes out in front. Every one of them, even the smallest, even the weakest, must tread on a little virgin snow – not in someone else's footsteps. The people on the tractors and horses, however, will be not writers but readers.

Written in 1956; first published in 1978
Translated by Robert Chandler and Nathan Wilkinson. *Russian Short Stories from Pushkin to Buida* (Penguin Classics, 2007).

MUSIC OF THE REVOLUTION: FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS?

"With all your body, all your heart, all your conscience – listen to the Revolution".

Alexander Blok. Intelligence and Revolution (1918)

When and how did the Euromaidan protests begin in Ukraine, a country that experts recently called an "immobile state",[1] and an "incomplete state"?[2] We may date the beginning to November 21, 2013, when Mykola Azarov, the prime minister of Ukraine, announced the possible suspension of the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement,[3] and several thousands of people, mainly students, went out in the central square of Kyiv, known as Maidan Nezalezhnosti (literally "Independence Square"), to show their disagreement with the suspension. The sounds of the Maidan platform at that time consisted primarily of slogans supporting a political course towards Europe (e.g. "Yanukovych – sign it!") and music. Another initial date of significance is November 30, 2013 – after the suspension of the agreement and consequent brutal dispersal of the people gathered at the Maidan. During the dispersal, some protesters were severely beaten by the special troops known as "Berkut", while others managed to run away, and found a hiding place inside the Mykhailivsky Cathedral[4] not very far from the Maidan. Its bells tolled during that night announcing that danger was looming. The main reason for the dispersal was the need to install and decorate the New Year's Tree (which later became the visual symbol of the protests).

The latter date, November 30, marked the beginning of truly massive protests, more heterogeneous in their goals than the protests that took place before the dispersal. The declared aim of integration with Europe evolved into a multipronged agenda: sanctions towards those responsible for the violent actions, a replacement of political elites associated with bandits (one of the most popular slogans is "Bandu get'!" – "Gang get out!"), and freedom for Yulia Tymoshenko, whose portrait was put on a New Year's Tree on the Maidan. Despite the expansion of the goals, the chain of events was called "Euromaidan" in order to symbolize the initial intention of the gatherings, and to be connected to the events of the "Orange Revolution", which took place in late 2004 in the same location, then known simply as Maidan.

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE involved in Euromaidan in December 2013 was extraordinarily high, especially during the "Viche" ("People's Gathering"), conducted every Sunday (according to the assessments of experts, there were up to 500,000 people present during some Viches).[5] The sounds of Maidan were initially concentrated on its main stage, reconstructed after the dispersal, and backstage (the voices of listeners, or "Maidan people"). Despite the gradual transfer of some aspects of the protest away from the Maidan (hiking while picketing ministries, courts, the prosecutor's office, etc., and the activities of the automobile branch of Maidan called "Automaidan"), Maidan has continued functioning as the main source of sound attracting protesters. Speeches, slogans, public prayers, and concerts intertwine with one another and bring one another into sharper relief, all the while creating everyday chains of tunes. Some of them were as routine as singing the national anthem every hour, while others served as "special attractors", e.g. the concert of the popular music band Okean Elzy, which gathered about 100,000 people on December 14.[6] At the same time, such a unified picture of peaceful sounds underwent tremendous change, including even military sounds. We cannot ignore the fact that Euromaidan has become a platform and inspiration for its internal "anthems", all connected with national ideas and civic consciousness – the first one, "Brat za Brata" ("Brother for Brother"),[7] emphasized pacific integrity, while the second one, "Gorila shyna" ("The tire was on fire"),[8] focused on the wartime group dynamics. On February 1, 2014, all the radio and TV channels in Poland broadcast a song of support for Ukraine "Podaj Rękę Ukrainie" ("Give a hand to Ukraine")[9] which could be interpreted as the first international "anthem" of the struggling Maidan.

PHOTO: ALLA MARCHENKO

It must be admitted, however, that the sounds of war were heard near the beginning of the first protests – on December 1 near the administration building of the president of Ukraine. There, some unrecognized people (later called extremists and provocateurs) threw stones and used stun grenades in their attempts to push back the policemen guarding the building. Such actions were followed by mass arrests (including arrests of some random, innocent spectators) which simply gave an impulse to the protest activity and stimulated its demands ("Impeachment to President Yanukovych!", "Change of the regime!"). Another unexpected sound was heard on the evening of December 8: a monument of Lenin was toppled and crashed into the asphalt not far from the Maidan.[10] Some of the protesters connected to the right-wing political party "Svoboda" took responsibility for the action and announced it as an action designed to help get rid of the Soviet totalitarianism.

The bells of Mykhailivsky Cathedral started tolling for the second time during Euromaidan on the night of December 11. The detachments of police and special troops called "Berkut" came closer to Maidan and tried to remove some barricades that were erected illegally, and possibly disperse the protesters once again. Nevertheless, the only damage was minor injuries to some of the protesters; Maidan was defended and quantitatively supported by the presence of other people who heard the cathedral bells and online alerts. Several straight days were punctuated by gripping announcements about the undermining of three central subway stations in Kyiv close to the place of the protests – the trains did not stop at those stations, which provoked rumors about the expected dispersion of all the activities, and lots of jokes about bombs (meaning they were located only in minds of the prime minister and the president).

However, due to the length of the vacation period in Ukraine that time of year (Catholic Christmas, New Year, and Orthodox Christmas), passions of Maidan had time to calm down, and speeches were mostly substituted by concerts and Christmas carols. The quantity of active protesters was significantly diminished, so it seemed that Maidan had finally transformed into cultural performance with rather vague relation to the protests.

TENSIONS GREW IMMENSELY after the sudden adoption of laws restricting civil liberties – it happened during the session of Ukraine's Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) on January 16 when the deputies, mainly belonging to the Party of the Regions which supports the president and government, voted "by hands" (that is, without debate, and without a formal vote count).[11] The laws were rapidly signed by the president and published in specialized media. At the same time, attacks on Euromaidan activists increased (the most extreme cases were the attacks on Igor Lutsenko and Dmytro Bulatov, kidnapped and tortured by unknown people). Such attacks were widely covered in Ukraine's mass media, which focused on the arrest of injured people at hospitals, or kidnappings in the streets. The most perceptible shift of Maidan sounds happened on the day of Epiphany (January 19, 2014) when the active center of Euromaidan moved to Hrushevskogo Street. After finishing a regular Viche, some of the Euromaidan protesters decided to picket the parliament and were stopped by the police troops. Tuneful carols of the ongoing holidays were suddenly changed into the revolutionary strikes against metal and explosions of Molotov cocktails, on one side (initiated by the so-called Right Sector, then supported by the other protesters), and, on the other side, there were the sounds of stun grenades, along with the clatter of shields.

It is difficult to identify why Maidan took a violent, military turn. Among the main possible reasons we might first note the inability of three opposition leaders (namely Vitaliy Klychko, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, and Oleh Tyahnybok) to settle on just one Maidan leader, and the absence of any visible, concrete accession to the demands of the protesters by the authorities. In spite of the initial demand of Euromaidan protesters to punish people from "Berkut" for their actions during the night of November 30,[12] not one of them has actually been punished (and some have even been rewarded by the authorities for a job well done). Moreover, a Ukrainian journalist, Tetiana Chornovil, was severely beaten on the Eve of Orthodox Christmas, which mobilized the activities of the population as well. The sounds of shots on January 22 finalized the era of the peaceful Maidan, and opened the milestone of victims (symbolically again, on the Unity Day of Ukraine).[13]

THE PERIOD OF so-called truce could be characterized as the sound mosaic. The protesters stormed Ukrainian House, a strategic place near the square and Hrushevskogo Street, previously taken by the police. Sounds of smashing windows and fires burning on the premises of Ukrainian House signaled the fragile nature of the armistice. The protests spread into different regions of Ukraine where local protesters started occupying the regional state administrations. In light of the situation, a special emergency session of parliament was called on January 28 to repeal recently enacted laws on civil liberties.[14] The president accepted the resignation of the prime minister and signed a decree dismissing the government (which, however, had to continue working until the parliament approved its new composition). At the same time, dozens of cars in different districts of Kyiv were set on fire during the nights. The tunes of piano played in the frosty street near Kyiv State Administration or inside of Ukrainian House were reminiscent of the previous, peaceful stage of the protests.

The third time when the bells tolled was on February 18, resounding with the beginning of the sharpest battle of the winter, another suspension of Maidan with stun grenades, shots and fire. All the stations of Kyiv subway had been closed several hours before which made atmosphere even more tense due to the transport collapse in many parts of Kyiv and made it impossible to come to the city center (for the first time in the history of Ukraine). Moreover, repeated announcements from the police loudspeakers near Maidan about the need

"THE SOUNDS OF SHOTS ON JANUARY 22 FINALIZED THE ERA OF THE PEACEFUL MAIDAN."

for women and children withdraw from the place "because anti-terrorist operations would be commencing in the center of Kyiv" added a lot to the atmosphere of fear and rumors not only during that evening, but also during the ensuing days. The headquarters of Maidan, called the Trade Unions Building, was set on fire and burned down along with the main clock of Kyiv that sat in a clock tower on the building. This was a kind of symbol of the end of old times on the Maidan and in the country as a whole.15 Indeed, the dozens of people killed, mainly the protesters' side, during these nighttime clashes made these winter days mournful. The atmosphere of mourning brought a degree of silence and peace, though this was cruelly broken by unknown snipers' shots on February 20 and 21. This interruption resulted in numerous random victims on the Maidan. According to the official information of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, as of March 7, 100 people are reported dead in connection with the Maidan events that started on February 19, while more than 1100 people have needed medical treatment.[16] The main stage of Maidan was transformed into a burial service, as some people injured in the February clashes died in March. The most repeated song of the mourning period was "Plyve kacha po Tysyni (A small duck is swimming in Tysyna)"[17] which became a kind of "Requiem". A popular slogan "Geroiam slava!" ("Glory to Heroes!") as a usual answer to "Slava Ukraini!" ("Glory to Ukraine!"), used often from the very beginning of the protests, seemed to transform from a metaphor into something more substantive – dead people were proclaimed heroes and acquired the name "Nebesna sotnia" ("The Heaven's Hundred").[18] In such a melancholy atmosphere, supported by continuous prayers from the main stage of Maidan, even breaking news about the Parliament's voting for impeachment of Yanukovych, new Presidential elections on May 25, and the release of Tymoshenko from prison on February 22,[19] did not result in euphoria among the people. Moreover, Yanukovych's escape from his country house called Mezhyhirya (and later – from Ukraine to Russia), questionable appointments in different branches of the government, and an absence of punishment of those guilty of the deaths of the protesters, became catalysts for discontentment and the decision of people to stay on the Maidan. It was clear that such discontentment and the general mood of protest was located not only in Ukraine's capital and could result in marauding on a massive scale – though, the most visible damage was done, again, to. . . Lenin's monuments. They were destroyed one by one all over Ukraine in several days[20] – such a phenomenon was called "Leninopad" ("Lenin's falling down"). Another form of reaction to psychological stress caused by recent events on the Maidan was found in a sudden possibility for everyone to visit the residence of Yanukovych in Mezhyhirya,[21] a top secret, restricted place. Thousands of people tried to visit the residence as soon as possible which resulted in traffic jams and long lines of wishful visitors. The sounds of a piano played by the protesters in the residence this time symbolized a kind of victory over Yanukovych, the "Runaway King" with an exclusive collection of musical instrument.[22] However, the symbolic victory of Maidan in Ukraine faced a new danger, now from Putin's policy in Crimea. Pro-Russian demonstrations with the help of "Night Wolves" bikers and other Russian movements added to the threat.[23] Soldiers without easily identifiable uniforms occupied the Crimean Peninsula, blocking main points and forcing the Ukrainian troops to surrender to "Crimean authority" which actually meant rejecting authority from Ukraine itself. Occupants fired "warning shots" towards weaponless Ukrainian troops[24] in order to demonstrate new power, identified as Russian. In this way, at the beginning of March the main stage of Euromaidan in Kyiv lost its place as a main center of decision making processes and became rather a decorative stage for approving decisions of the new Ukrainian authorities as well as for traditional gatherings, while main social activities and political tensions "migrated" to Southern and Eastern Ukraine. As a decorative form, however, the Maidan remains a symbol of united Ukraine which was emphasized, for instance, in multilingual speeches and citations of Taras Shevchenko during the Viche on March 9, the day of Shevchenko's birth 200 years earlier.

THUS, EUROMAIDAN IN its recent form didn't seem to be so much about signing the agreement with the European Union as much as it was a battle with the system established by Viktor Yanukovych, which had been seen as repressive and lawless. The ideology behind Euromaidan had been formed by the right-wing political force called "Svoboda", though it would be a mistake to consider the protesters at Maidan as predominantly right-wing activists. It must be noted that in early December, Maidan consisted of mainly young, educated people (average age – 36 years; and 64% of them have a higher education), mostly from the Western and Central Ukraine, though there were representatives from all over Ukraine (50% of the protesters present at the beginning lived in Kyiv).[25] Recent surveys demonstrate that Ukrainian citizens have rather sophisticated attitudes towards Euromaidan (e.g., results of "Sociolopis" survey conducted in the "military part" of January 2014 showed that the views are split in half – almost 50% are Euromaidan supporters, and 46% are opposed;[26] similar results were obtained by another survey by the "Democratic Initiatives" Fund and the Razumkov Center in December 2013, during the more peaceful phase of protests).[27] Mirroring these results was the recent "Research and Branding Group" polls, which showed that 50% of Ukraine's citizens opposed Euromaidan, while 45% supported it;[28] similar findings were published as representative of inhabitants of the regional centers of Ukraine in late January.[29] In general, the attitudes towards the overall geopolitical future of Ukraine remain more pro-European (for nearly 43% of people) than Pro-Russian (nearly 30%), shown both by "Socis"[30] and Research and Branding Group[31] polls. Later research on the make-up of the Maidan protesters, conducted by the "Democratic Initiatives" Fund at the beginning of February, showed that regional representation of Maidan remained heterogeneous, with a slight prevalence of people from the Western part of Ukraine (55%), with the average age and education being similar to what was present at the beginning of the Maidan protests, while gender structure tended to be more homogenous (88% men, 12% women)[32] Such a gender shift can be

explained by the turn from the peaceful Maidan to the Maidan of struggle.

In such a convincing sociological symphony, many questions nonetheless remain obscure. Who shapes different sectors of Euromaidan now? When and how will Euromaidan be resolved in Ukraine? Will the bells toll again, and if so, for whom? Therefore, while not discarding the necessity to re-tune the melody in the internal politics of Ukraine and the still thriving Euromaidan, the intervention of a foreign factor into the process seem to be the most important challenge influencing the music of Ukraine after the Maidan victory over Yanukovych's regime. . . .

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Note: The content in commentaries expresses the views of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of Baltic Worlds.

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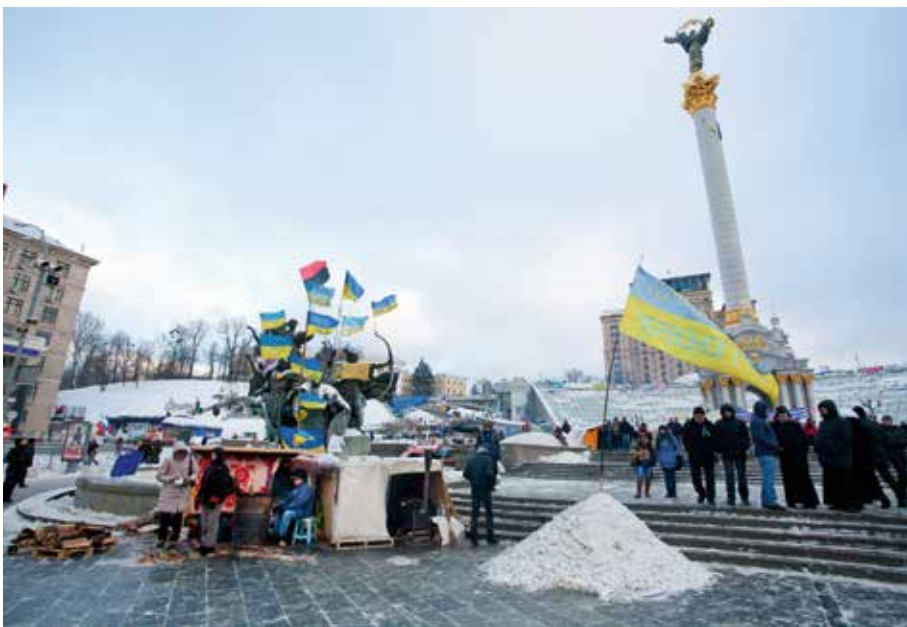
PHOTO: VADIM KULIKOV



PARALLEL WORLDS IN UKRAINE

"They are living in an illusion!" This, I overheard from a neighboring table at the Internet café on top of the post office on Maidan Nezalezhnosti.[1] The following week was filled with demonstrations, and hope was in the air that Yanukovych, with his increased presidential power, would be able to – and would be smart enough to – act in contrary to the announcement of the government and actually sign the agreement, return to Kyiv, and triumphantly regain legitimacy for his presidential post. None of my closest friends was particularly convinced that these demonstrations would be able to change the president's mind, but the minor chance that they would, together with the festive and energetic atmosphere, drew them constantly to the Maidan.

WHEN BY THE eve of November 28, Yanukovych had not signed the agreement, the president's apparently schizophrenic behavior drew even more people. In the early morning hours, Berkut forces stormed the Maidan, and protesters (mainly students) and journalists were beaten. The protests intensified, and December 1 brought over half a million people downtown and ended in clashes on Bankova Street between some of the protesters and the police. After the beating of the journalist Tanya Chornovil on December 23, protests accelerated once again. The laws that were passed on January 16, which entailed extraordinary constraints on basic freedoms – prohibiting, among other things, participation in large demonstrations, driving more than five cars in a row, wearing helmets or masks in the streets – evoked new protests, which now turned violent. Four protesters died during or shortly after the clashes on Hrushevskoho Street, and over 100 were injured, around January 22. Among those killed was a 20-year-old farmer of Armenian descent from Dnipropetrovsk, and a young Belarusian man. Protesters threw stones and Molotov cocktails and several policemen were injured. A 50-year-old geophysicist from Lviv was found dead in the forest after he had been abducted from a hospital and tortured.

What started as Euromaidan had turned into a protest movement against the country's corrupt leadership, which was now seen as responsible for deadly violence against its own citizens.

AS WE GO to press, Russia has launched a military intervention in Crimea, and eastern Ukrainian cities such as Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, and Donetsk are being subjected to Russian "tourists" and other provocateurs trying to take control of the city administration offices. Ukraine, indeed the whole world, is in shock; most analysts never thought this would unfold as it has, only a week after Yanukovych was removed. But the Olympic Games were over and it was time for Putin to show his dislike of the new Ukrainian government. Following a successful revolution against the corrupt regime, the new Ukraine is now faced with an even more dangerous post-Soviet tyrant. The external threat from Putin's expansionist Russia has become the next fight for the Maidan movement. This creates an extremely serious obstacle for the new Ukrainian regime to take on the reforms and changes that the Maidan movement so desperately wanted to see. Banners are being changed from "Ukraine is Europe" to "Stop regime violence" to "Ukraine united".

WHEN I VISITED Kyiv again in late January, Yanukovych was on sick leave, and on the Maidan, the surface was calm, but the atmosphere tense. I climbed up the barricades of sand bags on Hrushevskoho Street to see the burned-out vehicles I had watched in flames a week earlier via video streamed online; I saw a Maidan self-defense group, and 50 meters in the distance, the line of policemen with their shields. A group of mothers with banners saying "Regime, don't kill our children" were heading through the barricade to try to get the police to switch sides.

I meet Oleksandr Zheka, 24 years of age, from Kyiv, just graduated from law school at Kyiv Mohyla Academy, on the Maidan in late November. When I met Oleksandr in January, two of his friends who were involved in AutoMaidan, a movement organizing anti-government car processions, had gotten their cars burned the night before.

"I was there at the beginning of these protests, and honestly, I thought that the level of the rule of law and protection of human rights was much higher than what has now been shown over and over again. There are no means whatsoever for holding those in power accountable; they can thus use any methods they want to sup-

press the protests; it doesn't have to be legal. This is what I found the most frightening during these protests. It is now clear that you are not safe, not in the slightest."

Oleksandr supports the protests fully. When asked why he says:

"Because people understand that this current situation is completely unacceptable. Constitution and laws exist as if in a parallel world. Many have been accused of participation in mass demonstrations, which can be penalized with up to fifteen years in prison. Some of those accused are simply journalists or camerapersons, so this is really ridiculous."

He continues:

"People are fed up with the complete inequality in Ukrainian society. Those in power are two levels higher than average people. That is what keeps people outside in -20° C weather. For the protesters, integration with the European Union is not on the agenda at all right now. What is motivating the movement right now is the desire to change the fundaments of our society."

Later I meet Oleg, a retired engineer, 63 years old, in the occupied Ukrainian House. He is listening to a saxophonist and a pianist play for a gathered group. He also has supported Euromaidan since the beginning, his reasons for doing so being mainly to protest the increasing corruption in the country.

"Corruption has grown like a cancer and spread all over Ukraine. Corruption has always existed, but never on this scale. It is impossible to solve any problem without it," he argues.

After two months of standing out in the cold without reaction from the regime, protesters were clearly disappointed with the opposition leaders. The head figure of AutoMaidan, Dmytro Bulatov, took the stage and proclaimed that they now would go to the residency of the president in Mezhyirya outside Kyiv, and invited people to join them. Right Sector *(Pravyi Sektor* in Ukrainian), a far right group consisting of several organizations, was keen to take command. They announced that they were not against taking the lead in using violence on Hrushevskoho Street. Opposition leaders tried to stop this but failed.

Sasha commented "these were not provocateurs, but people desperate and angry about the situation".

"Personally, I did not participate in those street fights. I was close to the European square, not more than 200 meters from where the epicenter of the fights was. It was really scary, there were explosions, shots could be heard, and there was tear gas everywhere."

"MONEY WAS ALSO OFFERED DURING THE ANTI-MAIDAN COUNTER-DEMONSTRATIONS IN SUPPORT OF YANUKOVYCH."

RIGHT SECTOR PRESENTS itself as a right-wing Christian revolutionary patriotic movement, striving for an independent, united Ukraine, and assures the public that they are not racists, fascists, or Nazis. During the protests, they claimed that their only interest was for the revolution to succeed, but that they had no particular intention to claim any posts in whatever comes after Maidan. Right Sector was formed, they themselves claim, during the months of revolution. Thus, it was not easy for Maidaners to know precisely what they wanted, but what all protesters agree on is that they have to let all opposition forces unite on the Maidan. Fights between opposition groups would only play into the hands of the regime. Now that the new power order is about to be established, however, Right Sector has decided to register as a party and run for all elections announced, apart from the Kyiv city Mayor. Dmytro Yarosh, its leader, is running for president. In the last opinion poll, he had 2.3 percent support, which obviously doesn't get him very far. But that any wider support for the Right Sector exists at all may be connected with the triumph of the revolution as well as the external threat from Russia.

THE RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA machine has been successful in getting its message out, especially among its own citizens. Large swaths of the Russian population support Putin's invasion in Crimea. A Ukrainian friend of mine came back from a short trip to Moscow surprised by his Moscow friends' "totally empty grasp of the situation in Ukraine". In Crimea, Ukrainian TV channels were taken off the air on March 9. Ukraine responded by issuing a law taking all major Russian channels off the air. This has, however, had no effect, since the biggest provider has not complied. Many Crimeans really believe their economy would be better off under a Russian flag; further, absent closer union with Russia, they fear they soon will be forbidden from expressing themselves in Russian, their mother tongue – some even believe that simply "thinking in Russian" will be prohibited. The belief that the Russian language is banned as a second official language is widespread especially in the Russian mass media. The Ukrainian parliament did indeed pass a language bill hastily, but it was not actually signed into law by acting president Turchynov. This was intended to revoke a law passed during the Yanukovych presidency, which gave regional and local authorities the right to assign a second official language, wherever a national minority exceeded 10 percent of the total population.

The pro-Putin protest marches in the eastern cities and Odessa are more dependent on paid attendance, since these areas are reachable by Ukrainian TV, and are less easy for Putin to grab. Paid Russian "visitors" tour the cities. One woman crying about the loss of the Russian language was caught on camera in three separate cities: Odesa, Kharkiv, and Donetsk. Pictures of small Russian flags in street bins after protests are shared on social media. Media disinformation and wage slaves are two strategies for conquering a country.

MONEY WAS ALSO offered during the anti-Maidan counterdemonstrations in support of Yanukovych. This is shown in several video clips shared on social media. I was myself offered money to participate in an anti-Maidan meeting one evening, at the very beginning of the protests. An old lady

came up to my friends and me and showed us a paper slip of some sort in her glove, and I got the impression she was slightly ashamed. She smiled a bit insecurely when we rejected her recruitment offer of 20 US dollars for the anti-Maidan event. Those offers are said to be based on "network marketing" with chain responsibilities among the participants, who are paid at the end of the event. To reduce all who were not supporting Maidan to recipients of bribes or misinformed citizens is of course a bit too harsh. Obviously, during the Maidan protests, many, especially in the eastern and southern parts of the country, were expressing sincere support for Yanukovych and the Party of Regions, and were against the protests: Yanukovych was a good leader who provided stability and the Maidan people were "dangerous criminals". Many families have relatives in Russia and the fear of losing contact with them was a factor as well. According to a poll by the Razumkov Center published on March 13, 2014, 55.2 percent of Ukrainians were critical of the government in December. With the new government, the figure is 34.7 percent.

The new Ukrainian government tries to keep Ukraine united, and one strategy has been to appoint wealthy Russian-speaking oligarchs in some of the unstable cities in the East and South. The oligarchs are respected, especially in these areas, and their support for the regime shows an example for the people. That they are wealthy enough to contribute out of their own private funds to the defense of Ukraine is also a factor. All Ukrainian national TV channels (which are mainly oligarch controlled) have banners in the corner saying, "Ukraine united".

IT WAS THE STRATEGY of most of the oligarchs to keep good relations with whoever they thought might be in power after these demonstrations were over. "The Chocolate King" Petro Poroshenko, a shipping, confectionery, and agriculture magnate, was the only one who took a clear stand in favor of Maidan, participated in meetings at Maidan and showed his support for the protesters openly. His Channel 5 portrayed the Maidan protests in a balanced manner, as did Ihor Kolomoysky's TV channel 1+1, while Rinat Akhmetov's Channel Ukraina as well as Dmytro Firtash's channel Inter reported in a way that favored Yanukovych. Firtash's channel quickly switched sides when it was clear that Yanukovych was finished, sometime around February 18-20.

Even though most of the oligarchs kept in the shadow during the protests, they made some announcements occasionally. They expressed support of the "civic voices being heard", as well as made statements like "We do not want Ukraine to be split between east and west", and tacit agreement with the actions of the regime. The rhetoric used by the wealthiest oligarch, Rinat Akhmetov, as well as people who are officially friendly to the regime, that Ukraine has to stay undivided, does not run counter to the views of the Maidaners. It has never been in the interest of the people of Ukraine to split the country. According to a survey presented in the Ukrainian weekly magazine *Kommentary* by Ivan Malyshko on January 31, 2014, in the geographic extremities of the country, only a few percentages wish a separation. In the Donbass region eight percent expresses such a view, and in Western Galicia only one percent wishes to separate from Ukraine. According to the same survey, only seven percent support a federal solution to the crisis in Ukraine. The Maidaners and the supporters of anti-Maidan lived in parallel worlds, to a large degree because of the media. Now a united

PHOTO: VADIM KULIKOV

Euromaidan started with a gathering of some hundred persons, but changed the whole country and and its relations to the world.

Ukraine lives in parallel worlds with its long-enduring fraternal country, Russia.

WERE THE "EUROMAIDANERS" living in an illusion? This has yet to be determined. What the protesters have achieved so far is the first successful popular revolution and change of government in the post-Soviet space that wasn't immediately brought about by a falsified election. This happened in the face of a government that did not shy away from the use of lethal force, and is testament to the movement's remarkable level of organization and determination. The Maidan protests served as an eye-opener for young people, giving them a sense that change is possible. The idea of living in a just society has, at least temporarily, triumphed over corruption and short-term infusions of money.

However, the conflict has now moved to a new level because of the Russian intervention. Although there may have been little love lost between Putin and Yanukovych, the latter was supported by the Kremlin precisely because he and his corrupt cronies would never comply with the westward-looking protesters and their demands for transparency, and because he took a hard line on dissent. What will become of the democratic reform priorities of the new government when faced with a concrete external threat is yet to be seen.

Some measures against the culture of corruption have already been taken, for example, the parliament voted for lowering travel expenses and an end of the use of luxury cars by MPs. Lesia Orobets, a young politician who was very active during the protests, is running for mayor of Kyiv, and has declared that her electoral campaign will be based on transparent crowd sourcing. All the victims that these events have cost, and all the struggles through these months, have made reforms a very serious matter. The protesters will not make the same mistake they made after the Orange Revolution – just believe everything will be OK. Maidan activists are still there controlling the actions of the parliament, and they will remain until the presidential and parliamentary elections. This means that a kind of direct democracy is, in effect, what rules the new Ukraine at the moment.

Great expectations will be placed upon any leader, expectations that may be hard to live up to – what is desired is "a strong guy like Klychko with a brain like Yatsenyuk". "A president needs money and reputation," I hear repeatedly. We are thus still in a culture where money and political power are inseparable. According to World Values Survey 2011-2012, Ukrainians approve of a "strong leader" to a much higher degree (71 percent) than for example Poles (22 percent), and slightly lower than Russians (76 percent). The survey also shows that the differences between eastern and western Ukraine are negligible. Why is there still a demand for a strong and rich leader? The crisis situation probably evokes faith in those assumed to be experienced, competent, and resourceful. What is being fought appears again as a requirement in the very selection of a new leader. The oligarch Petro Poroshenko is often mentioned as someone who could "handle the transition", "understands both politics and economics", and "is diplomatic". At the same time, the fact that he has promised to rebuild the cobblestone street Hrushevskoho and the Dynamo Stadium, where the battles have taken place, underlines his patriarchal style. Who will become Ukraine's new president? According to the latest polls (released at the beginning of March), Poroshenko has the most support, at just above 30 percent.

The Russian invasion has brought together the Maidan movement with those who previously opposed changes. All Ukrainians must be involved in order not to surrender to Russia.

THE PARALLEL WORLDS that exist between the people, and power, to some extent meet in the fight against the external threat. The Party of Regions and the oligarchs would appear to agree in the need to fight against Russia. However, Akhmetov publicly promised to support the newly appointed governor in Donetsk, Serhiy Taruta, but obviously failed to prevent the clashes in Donbass. Many believe that those Russian "tourists" could not have come to Ukraine and local thugs would not have organized themselves without his (at least) tacit approval. Kolomoyskiy, on the other hand, who is now governor in Dnipropetrovsk, has not failed in maintaining stability in his region. Akhmetov controls everything in the Donbass region and perhaps a federalization of Ukraine is not far from his true interests. Other interpretations are possible. If Ukraine were to fall too heavily under the rule of the Kremlin, it could spell the end of the oligarch's business empires.

BECAUSE OF THE direct Russian intervention, the territorial integrity and independence of the Ukrainian state is at stake. But as long as business and politics are as intimately intertwined as they are today, any serious reform in Ukraine in line with the ideological foundation of the protest movement will be a an exceptionally challenging task.

hanna söderbaum

Note: The content in commentaries expresses the views of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of Baltic Worlds.

reference

1 Maidan Nezalezhnosti is also known, in English, as Independence Square (the direct translation of Maidan Nezalezhnosti).

HUNTINGTON'S CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS IN RUSSIAN DISCOURSE

PHOTO: PETER LAUTH/WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

In 1993, Harvard professor Samuel P. Huntington published his famous theory about a clash of civilizations, according to which the primary reason for conflict in the future would not be ideologies or economic interests but rather cultural and religious contradictions.

Huntington began his thinking by surveying the diverse theories on the nature of global politics in the post-Cold War period. Some theorists and writers argued that human rights, liberal democracy, and capitalist free market economy had become the only remaining ideological points of orientation for nations in the post-Cold War world. Other researchers argued that we had reached the "end of history" in a Hegelian sense. Huntington believed that while the age of ideology had ended, the world had merely reverted to a normal state of affairs characterized by cultural conflict.

In the 1993 *Foreign Affairs article*, Huntington writes:

> **It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation-states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.**[1]

At the end of the article, he writes: "This is not to advocate the desirability of conflicts between civilizations. It is to set forth descriptive hypotheses as to what the future may be like."

He argued further in *The Clash of Civilizations* that after the end of the Cold War, world politics had moved into a new phase in which non-Western civilizations were no more the objects in relation to Western civilization, but had become important actors, along with the West, in shaping world history.

Huntington's theory is more relevant now than ever in Russian discourse. The background for this is the growing religious awareness among Muslims both in the wider Middle East, from Pakistan to Morocco, which has resulted in terrorism and Western interventions, and in Russian Northern Caucasus, especially Chechnya and Dagestan. Other reasons are the growth of Russian nationalism, which fills the void left after the collapse of communism; the strengthening of the Orthodox Church; and President Putin's recent anti-West campaign. Russian nationalism and xenophobia have resulted in veritable pogroms against migrant workers, mainly those from the poor, new Central Asian states, but also those from the unruly North Caucasus in Russia proper. In October 2013, a nasty pogrom occurred in southern Moscow, after which 1,200 migrants were deported, and a so-called Russian March took place in over a hundred cities with slogans like "Russia for the Russians" and demands for the introduction of migrant visas.

All this set the tone for the international conference on Huntington's theory, in Yekaterinburg, October 28–30, 2013. Most participants came from various Russian regions; many of them had a non-Russian background and academic training. There were also some experts from the Middle East and Western Europe. Russian nationalists were hardly noticed. An important role was played by Armenians from different countries, especially Ashot Ayrapetyan, head of the Center for Interethnic Cooperation and chairman of the conference.

The conference was opened by Vladimir Dubichev, deputy head of the Sverdlov oblast administration, who lauded the choice of Yekaterinburg as the venue, since it showed that Russia honors international conventions about the eradication of all forms of racism. The region has over 160 ethnic groups, all of whom allegedly live in peace and harmony. This differs from many other regions in Russia and reflects a special Ural mentality, he opined.

Most experts at the conference seemed to agree that Huntington's theory on the clash of civilizations was fruitful and had raised essential issues, but the critical questions are whether it is applicable to today's world and how it is used by different political groups. The philosopher Viktor Martyanov reminded us that the theory was advanced in reaction to Francis Fukuyama's theory

about the "end of history" and the victory, with the collapse of the Soviet empire, of the liberal-democratic West, which resulted in the bipolar world being split up further. Enver Kisriev, a researcher on African civilizations, explained that the theory had become attractive because globalization had broken up traditional ties and weakened many states, so that many people instead sought support in an ethnic and religious identity. As noted by Huntington himself, Russia can be viewed as an example of this. Nowadays, many Russians, including President Putin, maintain that Russia is a civilization of its own, separate from Europe. Some participants claimed that Huntington's theory could be used as legitimation for Western interventions in Muslim countries.

Complex civilizations

However, almost all speakers offered criticisms or modifications of Huntington's theory. They said that even if there are differences between civilizations, the boundaries are vague: conflicts can be avoided, and there are differences and conflicts within civilizations as well as between them. While Huntington refers to the United States as part of a Western civilization, Valery Garbuzovof the US-Canada Institute in Moscow pointed out that, throughout its history, the US has developed its own identity and become a melting pot. In it, several races and nationalities coexist peacefully, which has laid a solid foundation for economic and military successes.

Kisriev emphasized that the modernization of states cannot be based on religion, but presupposes secularization. Other conference speakers voiced support for individual human rights over collective ones based on ethnic or religious affiliation. Anara Maldasheva, at the Britain-sponsored Center for Training and Research in Kyrgyzstan, underlined the importance of civil society and NGOs in dampening ethnic conflicts. In her opinion, the citizens are more peaceful in their approach towards other states than their leaders are.

Conflicts can also be caused by clashes among growing populations over limited natural resources - not only energy, but also water and agricultural land, stressed Alexander Akimov, at the Institute of Economic Oriental Studies in Moscow. He nonetheless discerned possibilities of cooperation and convergence among civilizations.

Gevorg Ter-Gabrielyan, head of "Eurasia-Armenia" a British-sponsored fund in Armenia, noted that "civilization" once referred to the whole human race, whereas now there are many definitions. In his view, conflicts should be solved by education that promotes critical thinking. Deputy Director of the Iranian Institute for Political and International Studies Ahmad Sadeghi underlined the need for economic and cultural exchange and for non-violent conflict resolution. He criticized Huntington's theory for neglecting the common roots of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. He recalled former President Khatami's proposal on a Dialog among Civilizations, which became the basis of a UN resolution in 2001 and was followed up by a Spanish-Turkish initiative on an Alliance of Civilizations in 2005.

The view of the Middle East as a divided civilization with conflicts among various Muslim groups was presented by the economist Ibrahim Hegazy at the American University in Cairo. In Egypt, he noted the existence of a fundamental battle between the Muslim Brotherhood and secular forces.

The Armenian-Syrian political scientist Hrach Kalsahakian reminded us that the borders in the Middle East were drawn arbitrarily by the former colonial powers. The states are weak, and clan membership is often more important than citizenship. As everybody knows, the Kurds are split among Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, and are fighting for unification.

Yury Anchabadze of the Moscow Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology advanced the view that almost every nation nowadays claims to be a civilization of its own, for example in the Caucasus, and he posed the question whether the conflict between Armenians and Azeris should be labeled as civilizational. The same is true of the widening rift between Shia and Sunni in the Middle East.

The migrant question

The issue of clashing civilizations has been exacerbated in recent years as a result of growing labor migration and refugee flows from the south both to Russia, and to Western Europe. Curiously, this problem was not touched upon by Huntington, but admittedly, it was less urgent at the time he developed was developing his ideas. Several speakers elaborated on the tough conditions today for migrants in Russia. On top of the harsh conditions, the migrants are often targeted for attacks by Russian nationalists. In Soviet times, state structures existed to receive and employ migrants. Today, however, there are few - if any - services available to migrants; they receive no free healthcare and have to pay for their Russian language courses. Yet the migrants are needed in Russia, for instance in the growing construction and service sectors. The migrants, in turn, often have no other alternative than to strive to find work abroad, in order to be able to support their families back home. Khursheda Khamrakulova, a member of the Council of Nationalities of the city of Moscow, argued that state power should be strengthened to handle this problem.

The economist Akimov made a proposal on how to organize the recruitment of foreign migrant workers: use private employment agencies. This may cause legal problem, others argued.

Many other solutions, or rather perspectives, were also forwarded. Uwe Erbel, who represented a German NGO in the field, mentioned respect and integration as key factors.

As early as the 1970s, the West German government was inviting foreign workers from southern Europe, but did not expect them to stay. The migrants met resistance in the beginning, but now it is obvious that they are needed, for instance in the healthcare sector.

Erbel thus argued for measures to improve the conditions for migrants: they should be allowed to organize, be taught the local language, get citizenship, and enjoy equal rights. If they are integrated, they will also become an asset.

Hegazy, the Egyptian, commented in this context that if the EU states want to reduce migration from Arab states, they should promote trade rather than give aid. The Syrian Kalsahakian, who has lived in Dubai for many years, discussed the rapid economic development of Dubai, where about 90 percent of the population

are immigrants, but lack all rights.

Professor Andrei Golovnev, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Yekaterinburg, rounded off this discussion by proposing the proclamation of an official Migrant's Day. The model for this was Empress Catherine the Great, who invited foreign workers to settle in Russia and arranged a good reception for them at the border.

Are foreign interventions justified?

A special session of the conference was devoted to the contentious question of whether foreign interventions into domestic conflicts, which can be seen as a response to civilizational contradictions, are justified. Chairman Ayrapetyan started off with an interesting historical exposé. Without lingering on the Turkish genocide of the Armenians in 1915, he recalled how Soviet Russia supported Kemal Atatürk's revolutionary regime against the Western powers after the First World War. Russia provided economic and military assistance, which was used against Greeks, Armenians, and Georgians in the period 1920–1921. Nevertheless, in the 1930s, Turkey reoriented itself towards the West and became a threat to the Soviet Union. By way of conclusion, he posed the question of whether the Western powers are not concerned that their support for armed groups in various countries in order to promote liberty and democracy might backfire. He was obviously referring to the current civil war in Syria.

Several other speakers also voiced doubts about the merits of military action and support. Kisriev mentioned Afghanistan as an unsolved problem, despite many years of occupation.

"The strong Western powers act as they please in world politics and even supported the Taliban," claimed Dr. Khamrakulova, arousing protests. She suggested further that the president of Russia should be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize because he had foiled an American intervention in Syria by inducing its government to turn over its chemical weapons.

However, Mr. Kalsahakian pointed out that the Western intervention in Libya was insufficient and that the more important issue is what steps are to be taken after the intervention. He noted that in Syria, it is not only states that are interfering, but also various radical groups and alliances. The UN only intervenes when the concern is chemical weapons, not other lethal weapons. He saw a need for intervention, but the question is of course what kind of intervention.

I myself contributed to this debate by noting that instead of talking about "humanitarian interventions" and the like, the UN nowadays uses the concept of responsibility to protect (R2P). In 2005, the Security Council adopted a resolution obliging the member states to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. The international community has a responsibility to assist the states in this, and if the states fail to protect their populations, the international community has a responsibility to intervene with coercive measures. Military intervention nonetheless still requires sanction by the Security Council.

Proceeding then to review some foreign interventions in recent years, including their motives and results, I pointed out that no Western or other states intervened to prevent the genocides in Rwanda in 1994 and in Darfur in 2003–2010, each of which claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. The UN-sanctioned NATO intervention against the Taliban regime in 2001 and the subsequent military presence in Afghanistan now, after over twelve years, has not led to the desired outcome of peace and development. Similarly, the US-led intervention in and occupation of Iraq from 2003 to 2011 must also be seen as a significant failure, given that terror attacks continue, and the country seems to be disintegrating along confessional lines.

The NATO interventions in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999 may be regarded as somewhat more successful, since the internecine war was stopped and independent states were established. However, the ethnic cleansing is a done deed, and the viability of the states remains uncertain. The air support provided by NATO for the opposition in Libya in 2011, which was sanctioned by the UN Security Council, contributed to the demise of the long-lived Gaddafi dictatorship. But this was followed by economic crisis, and low-level insurgency among regionally based clans, so after about three years, the outcome remains a disappointment.

More successful was the French intervention in Mali in 2013, which helped the government to stop and reverse the onslaught of Al Qaeda-connected rebels in the north. After this, the French troops soon handed over peacekeeping to UN troops and left for the Central African Republic and another civil war. Thus, even if the reasons for the interventions in most cases are compelling, the results are rather mixed, especially in the long run. But a failure to intervene can also be disastrous.

In conclusion, the discussion at this conference on Huntington's controversial theory on the clash of civilizations did not, perhaps surprisingly, give rise to sharp exchanges between Christians and Muslims or Russians and Western Europeans. Instead, the spirit was characterized by a striving to solve problems by dialog and cooperation. Very few nationalist statements were heard. The general discussion about civilizations was linked both to topical analyses of the acute migration problems in Russia and other countries, as well as to a more political debate on the use of violence in and among states. Even though more questions than definite answers remained on the table, many different interests were thus met, and everybody appeared satisfied with Ural hospitality.

ingmar oldberg

Note: The conference was organized by the Center for Interethnic Cooperation in Moscow and financed by the Foreign Ministry's Gorchakov Fund, with support from local authorities in Yekaterinburg.

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POST-SOVIET DILEMMA:

INCREASED NUMBER OF STRAY DOGS

Many postcommunist countries – Russia, Bulgaria, and Romania – have large numbers of stray dogs. Various estimates have been made on the exact figures: the number of stray dogs in Bucharest, for example, is said to be 65,000. Stray dogs reproduce rapidly and pose a significant threat to human health through their role as vectors of diseases such as rabies. Each year, the anti-rabies center of the Bucharest Institute for Infectious Diseases vaccinates about 15,000 people against rabies as a result of their having been bitten by dogs. The stray dogs may cause other problems, too: they may be responsible for damage of property and livestock, for deposition of excreta near or in areas inhabited by people, and so on.

In September, 2013, a 4-year-old Romanian boy died after being attacked by a dog. After the incident, Romania adopted a new law that allows dogs in custody to be killed after 14 days if an owner has not come forward. Previously, it was only sick dogs that were put to sleep. The new law was met with resistance and indignation, in particular among dog rights activists in northern and western Europe.

There are other, more effective methods for reducing the number of stray dogs, the activists claimed. Holland is often mentioned in this context as an example of where it was possible to reduce the number of stray dogs with gentler, long-term methods. Sterilization is an important measure, relocation another. Education of owners and measures to manage the dog population as a whole is also of importance. Sterilization programs for reducing the number of stray dogs have now been adopted in several Romanian cities.

IN PREPARATION FOR the 2012 UEFA European Championship, there were plans in Ukraine to mass slaughter strays. Instead, after protests from activists, especially those from outside the country, stricter animal husbandry laws were adopted, and in a few cities – Kyiv, Odessa, and Lviv – sterilization programs were introduced with support from NGOs in Western Europe.

In Russia, the methods for keeping the number of stray dogs down is determined at the local level. In several localities, poisoned meat has been put out as a cheap and quick way to reduce the number of stray dogs and cats. This is not, as mentioned above, the internationally recommended method. It causes suffering, risks harming pets – as well as people – and for that matter is not considered particularly effective in the long run.

"IN PREPARATION FOR THE WINTER OLYMPICS IN SOCHI, THERE WAS A DESIRE TO RID THE CITY OF STRAY DOGS."

In preparation for the Winter Olympics in Sochi, there was a desire to rid the city of stray dogs. Mass culling was announced, and during the fall, approximately 300 dogs per month appear to have been slaughtered. Sharp protests were nonetheless heard. A Russian businessman stepped in and became the savior of the remaining strays. His deed is described as follows in *The New York Times*:

> **A dog shelter backed by a Russian billionaire is engaged in a frantic last-ditch effort to save hundreds of strays facing a death sentence before the Winter Olympics begin here. [...]**
> **A "dog rescue" golf cart is now scouring the Olympic campus, picking up the animals and delivering them to the shelter, which is really an outdoor shantytown of doghouses on a hill on the outskirts of the city. It is being called PovoDog, a play on the Russian word povodok, which means leash.**

Stray dogs in Bucharest.

American hockey players got involved by finding new homes for the dogs. The *Daily Mail* reports:

> **David Backes went to Sochi hoping to bring home a gold medal with the US hockey team. Instead, the St. Louis Blues' captain brought back a couple of stray puppies. [...]**
> **Backes said he and his wife did not originally intend to bring any animals back. They were hoping to create awareness about shelters that have been set up in Sochi to help hundreds of stray dogs that received international media attention.**

Backes has now created a foundation, Athletes for Animals, that will help find new homes for the strays in Sochi.

But the problem of stray dogs is not just one faced by organizers of major events. In central Moscow, there are reportedly some 35,000 stray dogs. They are said to have adapted to the urban en-

Sterilization programs have now been adopted in several Romanian cities. PHOTO: COLUMBO222/WIKIPEDIA

vironment in a startling way. Andrey Poyarkov, a biologist who has studied Moscow's strays for 30 years tells ABC News:

> **The street is tough and it is survival of the fittest. These clever dogs know people much better than people know them. Taking the subway is just one of many tactics the strays have come up with for surviving in the manmade wilderness around them.**

Moscow's strays have also been observed obeying traffic lights, says Poyarkov's graduate student, Alexei Vereshchagin. He and Poyarkov report that the strays have developed a variety of techniques for hunting food in the wild metropolis. Sometimes a pack will send out a smaller, cuter member apparently realizing it will be more successful at begging than its bigger, less attractive counterparts.

THE SURVIVAL INSTINCT is strong, and the dogs are adaptable. Therefore, they survive and rapidly increase in number.

So why has the number of stray dogs increased so sharply in Russia and Eastern Europe since the transition to a market economy? Often mentioned explanation is that mass pet abandonment was triggered by economic hardship in the post-Soviet Russia. A theory proposed by Viktoriya Guseva at the University of Colorado is that it is about a lack of protection of private property. She argues that:

> **"Abandonment was made possible by the lack of pet ownership regulations. Therefore, the lack of pet ownership laws and regulations were the cause of the stray dog population increase."**[1]

Guseva argues further that protection of private property guarantees ownership exclusivity, even when it comes to dogs. Regulations as dog registration and licensing, humane dog control practices and animal shelters thus play a key role in the stray dog population management and reduction of its size. Stray dogs as a group consist of owned dogs that are lost or abandoned, but also of dogs born roaming. According to WHO 75% of all dogs in the world are strays.

ninna mörner

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RECONCILIATION RATHER THAN REVOLT

How monitoring complicates perspectives on democratization

by **Anders Nordström**

"Cosmopolitan Europe is not a new mechanism for producing unlimited happiness but rather a set of instructions for dealing with ambivalences – ambivalences that are irreducible because they are characteristic of the second modernity."

Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande, Cosmopolitan Europe, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2008), 27.

Since 1989, the international community has been increasingly engaged in monitoring, measuring, ranking, and rating democracies in order to secure the core values of human rights and democracy. Historically, this kind of activity would be seen as outside interference in the very mechanisms of popular sovereignty, but today it is more or less standard practice and often welcomed. In the name of universal norms, agents representing the international community advice, guide, and ask states to make changes to legislation and practices in line with regional or world standards. The general problem this article will address centers on how to understand long-term interference of the international community in the affairs of states that strive to be recognized as democratic. Is it to be viewed as democratization from the outside? Or are new democracies much more integrated in an international community of values, and interference should be seen as part of institutionalized cosmopolitanism?

The focus of the study is the Council of Europe (CoE) and the member states Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The CoE claims to be the guardian of European values and acts as an antechamber to the EU. Before any EU candidacy can be discussed, prospective candidates need to be accepted as willing and able members of the CoE and finish a period of monitoring. The three states above have been under scrutiny since the turn of the century, with no end to the monitoring in sight.

The CoE is a traditional IGO and accession by new states is decided by the existing member states, but the monitoring of membership commitments has been delegated to the parliamentary assembly of the CoE (PACE), which is advisory, but independent. The peculiarity of PACE monitoring is that it is in the hands of a transnational body with members representing the parliaments of Europe, and not experts or diplomats appointed by the states. It opens up countries for scrutiny and interaction based on the promise of a short period of monitoring, but includes the possibility of continuous monitoring if progress is not satisfactory or, in the worst case, a recommendation of rejection is made.

The aim of this study is to explore the continued critical dialogue between a parliamentary assembly with rather unclear authority and its new members. If it is assumed that states in general treasure their sovereignty, and members of a community of democracies ought to respect each other's constitutional integrity, the long-term monitoring of new members becomes puzzling. This article will investigate the occurrence of interference, the authority employed to ensure interference, and the continuation of a process of interference over an extended period. The study is guided by three research questions: 1) What events led to interference and what were the responses? 2) How did interference affect the authority of the monitoring? 3) Why did the process of interference continue?

Two perspectives on interference

In the literature dealing with the spread of human rights and democratic standards, two broad theoretical perspectives on the role of outside interference can be found. The first and dominant perspective is that interference is best understood as democratization from the outside.[1] This assumes a dualism between democratic and authoritarian states and a steady push from activists in transnational civil society to abolish authoritarian rule and liberate societies.[2] The logic of interference in the democratization from the outside perspective is that that outside pressure can be employed in the distinct phases of democratization. States are thought to develop from authoritarian to democratic through a brief transition followed by consolidation of the new rules of the game. Outside intervention is considered to have an effect during transition and consolidation to support the forces of democratic change and delegitimize the forces of authoritarian rule.[3] This implies that the forces of democratic change and authoritarianism are recognizable and that outside forces are skillful in their use of measures of intervention.

In such a scenario, the role of an IGO such as the CoE is to provide pressure and amplify the demands of democratic states and transnational activist networks. It is considered a leverage point which can add normative power.[4] In the literature on the impact of the CoE, the lobbying activities in Strasbourg by human rights organizations is explained by the normative power of the CoE in the field of human rights.[5] However, the scholars who have studied the impact of the CoE on the new members are generally disappointed. The organization has been reluctant to use its powers to condemn regimes with poor records of democracy and human rights and is feared to have lost credibility as a human rights champion.[6] The interference logic of democratization from the outside thus assumes a revolutionary outsider role of IGOs and a high degree of consistency with clearly defined ideals of human rights and democracy.

A less revolutionary understanding of interference is that it is an aspect of institutionalized cosmopolitanism. Institutionalized cosmopolitanism can be defined as the intentional organizational measures the international community uses in its attempts to deal with risks and uncertainty created by the processes of globalization.[7] The cosmopolitan perspective essentially denies the dualism of democratization and assumes a unified whole of self-proclaimed, but flawed, democratic states engaged in a dialogue on the specifics of a proclaimed unity of values enshrined in various human rights treaties. This dialogue is carried out through iteration of universal values and intended to save rather than undermine the foundation of the states' authority.[8] The main difference is thus that, in the cosmopolitan perspective, the conflict regarding interpretation of human rights lies within one legal-political system, not between two opposing systems.

THE ROLE OF IGOS IS TO INVENT new means for addressing postponed or unresolved issues that neither states nor IGOs can address on their own. Often these means are seen as ad hoc temporary measures, but they tend to bring the international and the national systems closer together.[9] What institutionalized cosmopolitanism does is open spaces for interaction between competing actors based on the claim of common values. In these spaces of interaction, a dialogue on the new boundaries takes place. Cosmopolitanism as a way of re-organizing the world thus gains authority and re-authorizes democratic states by publicly mediating the universal and the particular. The interference logic of institutionalized cosmopolitanism thus assumes a reconciliatory insider role where the IGO resolves acute problems, and relies more on responsiveness to the concerns of local actors.

> "THE EASTWARD EXPANSION ALSO MEANT A REDEFINITION OF EUROPE SUCH THAT IT WAS FIRST AND FOREMOST A COMMUNITY OF VALUES."

Method of analysis

The method of analysis has been to trace the monitoring process through the official documents it creates. The material is reports, resolutions, and transcripts of the debates available on the CoE website. The process has been divided into phases of destabilization and stabilization of the monitoring agreement between PACE and the member state. The monitoring contract represents a common enterprise by the CoE and the member state and remains stable as long as progress is recorded. Destabilization occurs when the rapporteurs express concern over an event which is so significant that they publicly ask for action by the member state in order to show it is still committed to the common cause. Destabilization is most visible in the extraordinary debates concerning specific issues, declaration of "test cases", and in instances of the application of threats to officially challenge the CoE credentials of the country in question. Stabilization occurs when PACE resolves that the issue is closed. By identifying the actors, issues, and positions on the issues visible in the public documentation, a story about each process has been created. The stories have then been

compared in order to make some generalizations about the logic of interference. Only issues concerning domestic politics have been analyzed. In the South Caucasus, PACE also had the goal of regulating the consequences of war and the creation of peace, but although a lot of energy was put into this effort, it will not be dealt with here.

The story of the accession process of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan

After the end of the Cold War, the CoE became the first of the European organizations to invite members of the former East.[11] In rapid succession, the former Warsaw Pact states and the European republics of the former Soviet Union were invited in, and at the same time, the pan-European legal system was strengthened. The rapid expansion caused concerns about the level of commitment to the values of the IGO, and, as an ad-hoc solution, monitoring was put into place. PACE was invigorated by taking on the task of monitoring the new members' obligations and commitments to the community, and ultimately the power to recommend that CoE exclude them from membership if they failed to keep their promises.[12] PACE monitoring of new members is performed by the monitoring committee, but a growing host of specialized and independent CoE bodies also monitor individual conventions or have specialized monitoring roles.[13] The Venice Commission, which is the CoE's expert body on constitutional law,[14] and the CoE Commissioner for Human Rights, who systematically address human rights issues all over Europe, deserve special mention in this context. The importance of the work of the PACE monitoring committee is that it collects and places all monitoring activities of the CoE in one context.

THE EASTWARD EXPANSION also meant a redefinition of Europe such that it was first and foremost a community of values. The invitation and acceptance of the three South Caucasus states of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan as members meant that the border of the pan-European legal sphere was extended to cover these three newly independent states with poor records of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and with less than full control over their own territories. Inclusion of the three states did not come without resistance. The Political Affairs Committee first argued that the South Caucasus traditionally was a part of Asia and that the CoE thus should not extend that far.[15] This, however, led to resistance within PACE. After a crucial debate in 1994,[16] it was stated that as long as states neighboring Europe declared a willingness to belong to the community of values they would be welcome.[17] Membership thus came on the condition of acceptance of the developing European acquis[18] on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, and of being subjected to monitoring by PACE. The CoE acquis was a new concept that was being developed, and referred to a host of conventions that were to be obligatory for all member states and would form the basis for European consensus in the field of democracy and human rights.

The terms for membership were set in the entry negotiations. During the accession period from 1996–1999, CoE experts assessed the situation, established contacts with the societies, and together with the authorities created a list of commitments and obligations to be enacted after membership. The goal was to make the new states' legislation and administrative structures harmonize with the ideals and standards embedded in the CoE acquis. What was negotiated was how to make the existing legal system compatible with the European standard and where and to what extent it was necessary to make changes. All three countries were described as having the same general problems. The deeper long-run problem was the mentality of authoritarianism, which created a political culture of unwillingness on the part of the authorities to accept the need for critical debate and a failure from the opposition to provide constructive criticism. There had been serious allegations of election fraud and use of undemocratic measures and certain parts of the opposition in all three countries had refused to acknowledge the results and take part in regulated political life, instead engaging in boycotts and street demonstrations. This had been met with repression from the state, including violent clashes with police and persecution of political opponents. There were also lingering problems of refugees and displaced peoples from the wars, problems of corruption, and the lack of an independent judiciary.

In the accession process, the authorities and the CoE bodies negotiated what needed to be done and what the most pressing concerns were. The assessment was not whether the countries had fulfilled all standards, but whether they were perceived as progressing and willing to cooperate with the CoE and other organizations in the field. The end result was a formal opinion by PACE that set the agenda for the years to come. This was the contractual agreement that governed the relation between PACE and the new member during the continued monitoring process. The spirit was one of inclusion. An often-used phrase was that the countries had reached the "minimum standard". For the CoE, the inclusion of the South Caucasus meant that the countries had an opportunity to start their journey towards the goal of becoming fully included in the pan-European legal sphere.

The post-accession phase

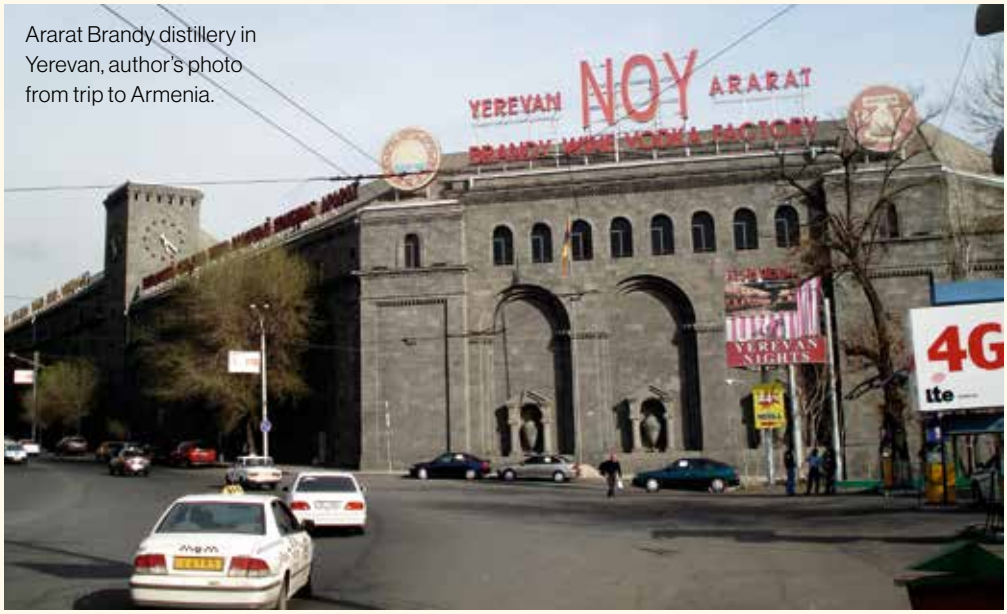
The minimum standard of human rights practices was tested in the post-accession phase as the more controversial aspects of the membership contract were challenged by the new members. The challenge evolved into a long-term contestation between human rights activists and advocates of the state's right to self-determination. Each of the three countries challenged the minimum standard of human rights, but on different issues. In Armenia the parliament stalled the abolition of the death penalty, in Georgia the parliament stalled the signing and ratification of the minority rights conventions, and in Azerbaijan the government challenged the allegations that there were political prisoners in the country. These three issues came to define the key problems PACE identified with each of the countries regarding human rights. This does not mean that

Belonging to Europe is not a question of geography. Rather of meeting minimum standards set by the CoE.

The Old Town in Baku, author's photo from trip to Azerbaijan.

Wild mountains and wine in the town of Sighnaghi, author's photo from trip to Georgia.

Ararat Brandy distillery in Yerevan, author's photo from trip to Armenia.



each of the problems was not present in all three countries, but once focus was set on one set of issues for a particular country, it came to define the continued dialogue.

Armenian reluctance to abolish the death penalty

The death penalty had been abolished in Azerbaijan and Georgia before accession and Armenia was planning to abolish it.[20] But in 1999, the year before accession, there was an armed attack inside the parliament on the newly elected government which resulted in the deaths of several ministers. This event stirred up emotions regarding the death penalty and it became difficult to continue with the abolition effort.[21] For PACE and the international human rights movement, the abolition of the death penalty and the creation of a death penalty free zone in Europe was perhaps the most important achievement of the enlargement of the CoE,[22] and there was little room for compromise. When PACE debated the first regular report on the progress of Armenia in 2002, the country was given a deadline of June 2003 and threatened with sanctions if it did not comply.[23] Armenia eventually abolished the death penalty in October 2003,[24] but the delay raised concerns that Armenia was not fully committed to change and complied only under pressure.

Georgian reluctance to extend minority rights

Minority rights were high on the agenda and PACE viewed the minority rights conventions as a means to prevent future ethnic conflicts.[25] Armenia and Azerbaijan willingly signed the CoE minority rights conventions, but Georgia failed to do so and argued that minority rights were not necessary and perhaps dangerous to the stability of the country.[26] The rapporteurs of the monitoring committee did not put pressure on Georgia in the first evaluations, referring to lack of interest from the minority groups themselves.[27] The issue was mainly pushed by the Committee of Legal Affairs and Human Rights,[28] and pressure to sign the conventions was re-applied to Georgia in connection with the Rose Revolution.[29] In 2005, Georgia entered the Framework Convention on National Minorities, but continued to fail to sign the European Convention on Regional and Minority Languages. A minority rights issue which became important was the fate of the stateless minority Meshketian Turks.[30] During the accession phase, Georgia made commitments to grant the Meshketian Turks citizenship and reintegrate them into Georgian society.[31] The process went very slow, and as it dragged on, the group was eventually granted asylum in the United States, a development that revealed the flaws in the European minority rights regime. In 2005, a PACE resolution again raised the issue,[32] and the Georgian government made additional promises and started the process of repatriation. For PACE it was a symbolic test case where Georgia could show its willingness to make progress.

Azerbaijani reluctance to accept allegations about political prisoners

The issue of political prisoners turned out to be the most problematic and divisive challenge for PACE.[33] Prisoners who could be described as political were present to some extent in all three countries. During the accession phase, alleged political prisoners in Georgia,[34] Armenia,[35] and Azerbaijan[36] were interviewed by the CoE rapporteurs, and the situation assessed. The situation in Azerbaijan, however, called for further action by PACE. A large number of prisoners had been jailed on uncertain grounds during the years of political instability, and, in the accession negotiation, Azerbaijan committed to releasing or granting a new trial for those prisoners who were regarded by local human rights organizations as imprisoned on political grounds. The organizations created a list of cases that formed the basis for dialogue among Azerbaijan, the CoE, and the NGOs. When Azerbaijan became a member, however, the attitude by the Azerbaijani authorities manifested an unwillingness to accept the views of the NGOs and their role as advocates for alleged political prisoners. To save the situation, the CoE founded a special group to cooperate with Azerbaijani authorities and monitor the implementation of the commitments.[37]

WHAT FOLLOWED WAS a kind of game between the Azerbaijani government, the human rights activists, and the CoE bodies involved. The government released some prisoners, but kept others in prison, and challenged the opinion of the NGOs and the CoE experts, both on the cases and on the definition of political prisoners in general. The human rights organizations, in turn, reported new cases and questioned the retrials. In the middle was the CoE, which was eager to make visible progress, and whose ambition was to make the government and the NGOs cooperate. A number of debates were held and resolutions and recommendations made in PACE on the topic between 2002 and 2013, but the issues were not resolved.[38] Instead, the questions remained open and polarized, and the polarization spilled back over into the CoE and PACE. The problem boiled down to the question of which authority PACE should rely on regarding political prisoners: the admittedly flawed, but possibly progressing legal system of Azerbaijan, or the human rights activists in Azerbaijan and their transnational partners. The division led to a failure to pass a resolution on the issue in 2013.[39]

> "HOWEVER, THE SCHOLARS WHO HAVE STUDIED THE IMPACT OF THE CoE ON THE NEW MEMBERS ARE GENERALLY DISAPPOINTED."

The phase of politicization

After the post-accession phase, the monitoring became more and more entangled with political processes in the three countries. In 2003, all three South Caucasus states had their first cycle of presi-

dential elections as members of the CoE. Armenia had its elections in February, Azerbaijan in October, and Georgia in November. They all followed the same pattern: allegations of fraud and use of government resources to control the public sphere before and during the election, and attempts to quell street protests with police action and detentions after the elections. In Armenia and Azerbaijan, the government suppressed the protests and stayed in power, but in Georgia, the regime collapsed and gave way to the so-called Rose Revolution. The events in Georgia encouraged the protest movements in the neighboring countries and seriously called into question the stability of the democratic institutions that had been endorsed by the CoE.

The response from the monitoring committee was to attempt to engage both the forces of stability and the forces of change in order to save the agreement of reform in line with European standards. In the first PACE session in January 2004, all three South Caucasus countries were the focus of debate, and resolutions were made on how to proceed.[40] The different internal dynamics of the three countries, however, resulted in the process developing in different directions.

Armenian compliance under the threat of exclusion from the Council

In Armenia, the emphasis of PACE was to ensure that the confrontation between government and opposition did not stop the legal reform process. After contested presidential and parliamentary elections in Armenia in 2003, there had been mounting pressure on the government to step down. The opposition called for a referendum of no confidence in the president and organized street protests. However, the elections had been accepted by the International Community, and PACE viewed the events as a result of a lack of procedures for dealing with contested elections.[41] Instead, the PACE action in the Armenian case became tied to the reform of the constitution.

A reform of the constitution designed to strengthen parliament and human rights protection had been put before the voters in Armenia in a referendum at the same time as the parliamentary election. After the constitutional reform, a number of legal reforms that were part of Armenia's commitments would follow. The draft, however, failed to gain enough votes to pass. The whole situation had created a degree of legislative inertia that threatened everything that Armenia had promised PACE. The rapporteurs feared that both government and opposition preferred the status quo, since it preserved an uncertain situation from which both sides felt they could gain.[42] In order to secure the continuation of the harmonization process with the CoE acquis, PACE needed to get all the political forces to agree to cooperate.

IN APRIL 2004, the escalating confrontation between government and opposition risked getting out of hand and PACE reacted by holding a debate[43] and threatening Armenia with sanctions unless the two sides reconciled and reached a compromise before the PACE session in October 2004.[44] The government responded by cooperating with the CoE and inviting the opposition, while the opposition refused to cooperate with the government.[45] PACE saw this as sufficient progress, and at the follow-up debate in September 2004, a deadline for a new constitutional referendum was set for June 2005.[46] The problem was that consensus in society and real political will still were lacking in Armenia. As a sign of will, the referendum was carried out in December 2005, although the opposition saw it as imposed by the West and protested and boycotted it.[47] After that came a reform package that harmonized the political legal system with European standards.[48] But in the process, the oligarchic system, in which wealthy businessmen had great influence over politics, had become even more entrenched, and polarization between government and opposition continued. The opposition continued to use popular mobilization to challenge the government.

> "THE PROBLEM WAS THAT CONSENSUS IN SOCIETY AND REAL POLITICAL WILL STILL WERE LACKING IN ARMENIA."

After the presidential election in 2008, won by the former prime minister, the opposition again took to the street. The situation quickly escalated and the Armenian government declared a state of emergency and violently beat down the protests. The result was ten dead, both police and protesters, hundreds of detained, and a hardening polarization of government and opposition.[50] The events in Yerevan led to a quick response from PACE and a series of debates concerning the functioning of democracy in Armenia.[51] Armenia was once again threatened with exclusion from the CoE. Armenia was give until June 2008 to make an inquiry into the events, amend laws on freedom of assembly, release non-violent protesters, and start a dialogue between government and opposition.[52] The problem was how to create an inquiry that all sides accepted, and to get the opposition to agree to talk to the government after being shot at.[53] Armenia made most of the legal amendments that the CoE asked, and the CoE Commissioner on Human Rights assisted with creating a fact-finding group, but there was little willingness on either side for reconciliation.[54]

IN DECEMBER 2008, the PACE rapporteurs recommended that Armenia's voting rights be suspended,[55] but the threat was withdrawn after a last-minute visit and new promises from the speaker of the Armenian parliament,

and the time limit was extended.[56] The chapter on the 2008 events was officially closed from the PACE point of view in 2011.[57] By then, most protesters had been released, the opposition had agreed to engage in dialogue with the government, and an investigation into the events had been made.[58] The following parliamentary and presidential elections in Armenia in 2012 and 2013 were considered an improvement and did not result in any urgent debates in PACE. The opposition continued to question the election results, but participated in the elections and parliamentary work, continued to hold a dialogue with the government, and did not seek open confrontation on the streets.[59] The protest movement after the presidential election was instead transformed into a platform for the local elections in Yerevan.

Georgian anticipation and preemption of PACE concerns

In the case of Georgia, the emphasis of PACE was on curbing the enthusiasm and haste of the new government in its pursuit of reforms, making it commit to the agreement made with the previous government. The new Georgian regime was eager to get the blessings of the CoE on the extraordinary transfer of power and planned reforms. The new Georgian leader, Mikheil Saakashvili, addressed PACE in January 2004[60] and declared his commitment to European values. He had been a member of the Georgian PACE delegation since the time of the country's guest membership, and had had his training in human rights in Strasbourg. The main concern of the PACE rapporteurs was that reforms in Tbilisi were proceeding too quickly, and without heeding the advice from Strasbourg and Venice.[61] After the first debate in January 2004, a mandate was given to renegotiate the timetable for fulfillment of the commitments.[62] A year later, in January 2005, a reviewed set of commitments and a new deadline to show progress was set for September 2005.[63] In January 2006, PACE was evaluating the fulfillment of the new agreement.[64] By that time, the relationship between PACE and Georgia had stabilized, and Georgia had asked for guidance from the Venice Commission both when it came to constitutional changes and issues of regional autonomy. PACE rapporteurs still believed the anti-corruption reforms risked centralizing too much power in the executive, but were content with the cooperation with CoE experts, and pleased that euphoria had given way to pragmatism.[65]

At home, however, the new government's rapid changes were challenged. In 2007 Arkadi Patarkatsishvili, owner of several media outlets and described as Georgia's richest man, allied himself with the opposition to organize protests and to campaign against Saakashvili in order to bring about early parliamentary elections and constitutional change. The response from the government was first to restore order by declaring a state of emergency, beating down the protests with force, and closing oppositional media, and then to take the initiative by calling snap presidential elections and taking the issue of early parliamentary elections to a plebiscite. Saakashvili won the early presidential election and also initiated a dialogue with the opposition regarding constitutional change and media and electoral laws. The dialogue resulted in electoral law and constitutional reform, and in May, early parliamentary elections were held. PACE reacted to the events by monitoring the elections[66] and debating the honoring of obligations by Georgia in January 2008.[67] At this session, Saakashvili also was invited, and addressed PACE to explain his actions and take questions.[68] The general verdict of PACE was that the actions of the Georgian government to try to restore the dialogue was a step in the right direction, and assistance was offered in the form of legal advice. PACE's concern with Georgia then shifted rapidly when the war between Georgia and Russia broke out in August.

In 2011, before the upcoming elections in 2012–2013, PACE evaluated the progress in the fulfillment of commitments and obligations.[69] Georgia still had not fulfilled its obligations regarding minority rights, but had cooperated with the Venice Commission on constitutional changes to strengthen the role of parliament, and on a new electoral code. The authorities received praise for cooperating with parts of the opposition, but the political climate was still described as charged, and concerns remained regarding the independence of the judiciary. The report nonetheless described the progress made as considerable, and declared the upcoming elections as the litmus test for the consolidation of democracy in Georgia.[70]

> "THE ISSUE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS TURNED OUT TO BE THE MOST PROBLEMATIC AND DIVISIVE CHALLENGE FOR PACE."

THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION in 2012 also became a litmus test in the sense that it was to show whether the Saakashvili regime was willing to hand over power to an opponent that had won an election. As in 2007, Saakashvili was challenged by a man described as the richest man in Georgia. Billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili created an election platform a short time before elections, and became the main contender. Unlike in 2007–2008, both the challenge and the response from the government were made within the framework of the laws. In the end, the contender won the election, Saakashvili admitted his party was defeated, and Ivanishvili became prime minister. The cohabitation of the new prime minister and the president was not without friction and the matter was also taken to Europe. Both Saakashvili[71] and Ivanishvili[72] went to Strasbourg and addressed PACE and answered questions in 2013 and presented different stories about the state of human rights and the rule of law in Georgia. Like well-integrated members of the CoE, both, however, invited more scrutiny and asked for more cooperation with the organization. Saakashvili furthermore stepped down from office when his term as president was over.

Azerbaijani success in dividing PACE

In Azerbaijan, the emphasis was on getting the increasingly powerful government simply to harmonize with the CoE at all. By 2002,

Azerbaijan had carried out most of its formal commitments, but still had a very unbalanced political system with a strong presidency and a parliament without real power to control the executive, and the country did not seek advice from the CoE. A constitutional referendum was held in August 2002 without previous consultation with the CoE, observation from the international community, or proper public debate in the country.[73] After the election of Ilham Aliev in 2003, protests led to several deaths and hundreds detained, and it became clear to PACE that the country was far from living up to its promises concerning human rights and democracy, and PACE called upon the authorities to inquire into the events, release detained protesters, and make legal changes.[74]

The issue was closely tied to the contested issue of political prisoners. The unwillingness to recognize this problem resulted in an examination of the wider situation of human rights in Azerbaijan. The question for PACE was: With whom should they cooperate? The parliament was not seen as a proper parliament[75] and the opposition was marginalized.[76] The remaining partners were the NGOs or the government, both of whom distrusted each other. The NGOs were the ones that the rapporteurs perceived as reliable,[77] but hope was put in the new government which was said to represent a new breed of technocrats.[78] Aliev had led the Azerbaijani PACE delegation and was well aware of the commitments and obligations. The tone in the reports was also understanding, and the threat of sanctions was lifted in the fall of 2004. Azerbaijan had a special situation and could not be expected to cooperate more until the role of the parliament was strengthened.[79]

As parliamentary elections neared, the media climate was worsening: a prominent journalist was murdered, and parallels were made to the situation in Ukraine before the Orange Revolution.[80] PACE therefore declared that parliamentary elections of 2005 were to serve as a "decisive test case" to determine whether Azerbaijan had made enough progress.[81] Before the parliamentary election, the authorities acted in line with CoE advice and lifted bans on rallies and allowed air time for the opposition, but it was clear that there still was an unequal playing field and instances of election fraud. The results were contested, but with less violence compared to the protests in 2003. Efforts by the opposition to organize large-scale protests were hindered, and the Azerbaijani authorities responded by organizing a rerun of elections in ten constituencies. Most of the opposition boycotted the re-run and, for the rapporteurs of the monitoring committee, the re-run was not a sign of progress. Azerbaijan had failed to produce fair elections and had to be sanctioned.[82] The Azerbaijani delegation, however, contested this assessment, claiming that the election represented progress when compared to previous elections, and noted the significance of cultural differences from the West, and the responsibility of the opposition to accept the rules.[83]

THE WHOLE ISSUE of whether or not to sanction Azerbaijan led to what has been described as a "showdown between activists and apologists" in PACE in January 2006.[84] The main question was whether it was enough progress to organize the rerun in the ten constituencies. The case against sanctions was that President Aliev had done what was asked and that, compared to how things were before the cooperation between the government and the CoE experts, the situation was improving. The case for sanctions was that the general picture was a deteriorating situation concerning human rights in the country, and that the CoE's credibility was at stake.[85] Both the Monitoring Committee and PACE voted against sanctioning. This meant that the committee continued to follow up on the issue, but that the momentum was lost for putting pressure on the government.

The Azerbaijani government was willing to cooperate with the Venice Commission and the CoE experts on its own terms. The progress report of 2007 recorded progress in combating corruption, engaging in prison reform, training judges, reforming local self-government, and freedom of assembly.[86] But these measures were also often described as one step forward and one step back. The overarching goal of mending relations between the authorities and the opposition and NGOs remained. After the parliamentary election in 2005, the opposition was even more marginalized and the general human rights situation continued to deteriorate. The main problem for the relations between the CoE and Azerbaijan still concerned political prisoners, and the Committee for Legal Affairs and Human Rights wanted a new rapporteur on the issue, which the Azerbaijani government was openly against.[87] The Monitoring Committee instead held a new debate in June 2008 on the broader topic of the functioning of democracy.

The upcoming presidential election was declared a new test case for democracy, and Azerbaijan was asked to revise the electoral code and laws on freedom of assembly according to Venice Commission advice, and to guarantee the right of the opposition to rally and campaign. The opposition was asked to engage in dialogue with the authorities and take part in the electoral process.[88] The government made most of the suggested legislative improvements, but the opposition did not participate in the elections. Ilham Aliev was reelected with 88.7% of the vote and a 75% turnout.[89]

PACE returned to the issue of the functioning of democracy in 2010, as the next parliamentary election was coming up. The opposition was weaker and less active than ever, and the conditions for political activity were becoming even more constrained. The government also continued making controversial legal and constitutional reforms without asking for consultation. A constitutional reform was made in 2009 through referendum, which among other things would abolish the two-term limit of the president, without asking the Venice Commission in advance and without inviting international observers. The Monitoring Committee instead asked the Venice Commission for an opinion, PACE sent a small delegation to be present at the referendum, and the laws were submitted before implementation.[91] Azerbaijan's democratic credibility was still tied to the question of resuming the dialogue between government and

opposition.[92] But the development in the country went in the opposite direction. In its evaluation of the election, PACE could not record any meaningful progress in the democratic development of Azerbaijan. The opposition failed to gain any seats in parliament and instead attempted to organize outside the parliament.[93]

IN 2012, AZERBAIJAN'S overall progress on honoring obligations and commitments was assessed for the first time since 2007. By now, the conflict between the majority in the Monitoring Committee and the Committee of Legal Affairs and Human Rights was more visible than ever, and pressure was brought upon the PACE committees both from coalitions of international and Azerbaijani human rights NGOs and from the Azerbaijani government and parliamentarians. The committees presented contradicting reports regarding the credibility of Azerbaijan as a willing partner in the realization of European values,[94] and, for the first time, the Monitoring Committee asked PACE not to vote for the resolution from the Committee of Legal Affairs and Human Rights.[95] The report was not accepted, and the more mildly worded resolution of the Monitoring Committee was approved instead. This meant that the majority in PACE continued to support the position that recognized Azerbaijan as a willing participant in the attempt to adhere to European values.

What events led to interference and what were the responses?

The two major types of questions considered in this study were PACE concerns over the progress of human rights and concerns over the functioning of democracy. The issues were intertwined, yet also involved distinct sets of actors, and elicited responses with different logics. Human rights issues led to more outside pressure, whereas issues concerning democracy tended more to involve local actors.

The actors initiating interference on human rights grounds were primarily coalitions of PACE delegates in the specialized committees and the transnational human rights movement. The monitoring process served as an arena for the global struggle to push for stronger protection of human and minority rights, and the accession phase was a moment were the activists could and did bring forward specific cases and enshrine them in quasi-legal documentation. The success of the coalitions lay in their ability to lobby and gain concessions from the governments in concrete cases. The death penalty was abolished, weak minority groups like the Meshketian Turks were protected, and political prisoners recognized and released. Where they failed, it was because of a lack of resonance in the organs of representative democracy in the monitored countries. When the issues became polarized between transnational human rights activists and national delegations, it became difficult to form majorities among parliamentarians in PACE against their fellow parliamentarians in the monitored countries.

The actors initiating interference on the functioning of democracy were the political opposition with their protests and the governments seeking to avoid blame. Elections provided regularly occurring tests of the functioning of democracy that required political peace in order to be passed. For a country to be viewed as a mature democracy, it was crucial that the opposition accept the rules of the game and be willing to be a part of the election process. The issues of concern to PACE focused on the handling of protests, but also involved much larger issues of freedom of expression and of assembly, and the creation of a balanced field of political competition and credibility of the political institutions. The PACE responses to crisis succeeded in gradually finding and amending flaws in election laws and campaign frameworks, but failed to create acceptance for the general rules of the game.

The minimum required response from governments to both human rights and functioning of democracy issues in the monitoring process was to invite CoE experts and ask for advice. This was often enough for other governments and parliamentarians. Bringing new issues to the agenda was also difficult. The human rights issues that were raised to the level of open debate were all matters that were raised in the negotiation procedure. Once inside, the governments had better chances of protecting themselves against new allegations of human rights abuse. Functioning of democracy issues, on the other hand, had a regularly occurring pattern due to the election cycles. Every election thus provided an opportunity to test and evaluate the government's and the opposition's willingness to show progress.

IF CLOSING ISSUES CAN BE interpreted as success and keeping issues unresolved means failure, the success of the monitoring process was the ability to interact, react fast, and tie moments of crisis to PACE concerns and assure cooperation by threatening the countries with CoE exclusion. The risk of losing PACE credentials made

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the governments more eager to cooperate with CoE experts and sometimes comply with CoE advice. The failure of the process resulted from the dependence on an opposition and a government in the monitored countries that were willing and able to engage in meaningful dialogue. The more unbalanced the relation inside the country was, the less interest both government and opposition had in cooperating and closing the process. The consequence of the failure to close the process was that different points of reference evolved in the different countries when PACE made judgments on progress. The countries thus came to be measured against specifically tailored yardsticks.

Armenia developed a tradition of waiting for advice and implementing advice only under pressure. The country was cornered into a situation where implementing the advice of the CoE became the only way out. PACE's point of reference became Armenia's polarized political environment, which included the resulting legislative inertia. Armenia became more responsive to CoE evaluations than the other countries and received more threats of exclusion from the Council. PACE's stake in the Armenian reforms were thus comparatively higher than in the other countries, and PACE sometimes was associated with the government.

GEORGIA DEVELOPED A TENDENCY to anticipate European reactions and make reforms that were good enough to pass. Georgia went ahead with reforms and asked for their approval based on the same or even higher standards than the CoE required. PACE's point of reference became Georgia's own high ambitions. In this way, Georgia could to a large extent set its own agenda, but the discourse of European values became more internalized in Georgia. PACE could function as an arena for internal positioning between the uneasily co-habiting prime minister and president.

Azerbaijan developed a tradition of ignoring advice and turning the problem back to PACE. Azerbaijan avoided and resisted interference to the extent that the point of reference for PACE became Azerbaijan's strong insistence on self-determination and the risk of contradictions with the CoE acquis. Progress in Azerbaijan was what the government agreed to, and whether or not Azerbaijan was progressing became mainly a point of contest between groups in PACE that were separate from the forces dominating domestic politics in Azerbaijan. The majority in PACE and the Monitoring Committee did not want to take on the role of a human rights champion in open conflict with a member state.

How did interference affect the authority of the monitoring?

As a system of values, PACE monitoring was characterized by a lack of certainty and by built-in inconsistencies. All CoE members were bound by the CoE acquis, but PACE did not have the legal authority to interpret the acquis; that was the role of the European Court of Human Rights. Neither did PACE have political authority to interpret the acquis – that belonged to the decision-making body of the CoE, the Committee of Ministers. The authority of the PACE monitoring process was founded on a temporary contractual agreement, and, like any contract, it is made by parties in a certain historical situation which has to be reenacted and recalled. In a sense, monitoring created double standards. Monitoring essentially meant that the monitored states were obliged to ask for and listen to advice when they made certain legal reforms, and not to stray too far from the CoE acquis. In cases where PACE met resistance, it could only remind the new members of their previously stated willingness to be part of the process and the contractual fact that the new members had agreed to accept this situation. Monitoring did not mean that PACE had extraordinary authority to interfere in issues outside the contract.

PACE, HOWEVER, HAD taken it upon itself to develop the acquis, and the monitoring processes became a battleground over the acquis. The communication on whether the new member fulfilled its commitments was part political and part legal, and depended as much on formations of transnational coalitions for lobbying as on legal

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The time before and after elections in the three countries regularly included a violent struggle for control of the public sphere. This created conditions incompatible with the ideals of a free and fair debate.

reasoning. This meant a constant testing of the limits of the human rights acquis, which brought forth the irresolvable political and ideological conflict between human rights activists and advocates of national self-determination. Monitored self-regulation provided an uneasy compromise between human rights universalism and the particularism of national self-determination. As the processes dragged on, the contest created uncertainty over how long the period of monitored self-regulation would last, and what it actually means, but the process was not derailed.

The uncertain authority of PACE monitoring led to a process that was rather selective in its responses to events. The selection of issues to act upon became based on the historical legacy of the monitoring procedures. The selectivity of the system was, however, the key to the success of gaining entry to and integrating with the new member states' political legal systems. Failure was avoided by the postponement of all conflicts that could endanger the contract, and in the meantime relied on slowly building webs of influence where possible.

Why did the process of interference continue?

The experience of the monitoring of the South Caucasus countries showed that the CoE always extended its democratic credit to the monitored countries. Once the CoE had defined itself as a community that wanted to spread its values, it was better to avoid losing a potential member forever than temporarily losing a struggle over an issue. As PACE monitoring evolved, the communication involved more independently acting bodies both inside and between the monitored country and the CoE. The more evidence that accumulated the harder it became to close the process either by declaring success or failure. So it continued by responding to events and forming complex webs of interaction between CoE experts and various bodies in the monitored countries. The PACE majority was willing to forgive the unforgivable as long as members showed some kind of promise of future cooperation. PACE monitoring thus continued to grow and evolve because states agreed to be scrutinized in difficult times and in response were provided with much needed democratic credibility. The process bound lender and debtor together. Following CoE advice lent authority to the state institutions under pressure, and the CoE got a stake in their continued existence.

THE PROCESS OFTEN FAILED to create a consistent voice for human rights and continued to extend democratic credit to members that progressed very little. But re-authorizing flawed democratic states enhanced both the authority of the CoE and the authority of the monitored states. PACE lent credibility and in the process built a stock of democratic credibility debt among the new members, to which remaining a part of the CoE clearly meant something. The logic of the extension of credit and the continued monitoring was an acceptance of a continued CoE gaze and the slow weaving together of the CoE's and the members' legal-political systems.

Democratization from the outside and institutionalized cosmopolitanism

The experience of the monitoring processes shows that PACE interference first led to legal harmonization of human rights and democracy standards, but as the process continued, it also led to politicization and disunity regarding what the values actually meant, as well as diverging trajectories among the new members.

When monitoring began, PACE interference looked like democratization from the outside. The profile of the IGO was high, and the desire for inclusion pushed the new members to make changes and to commit to changes that they otherwise probably would not have made. Issues of minority rights, abolishment of the death penalty, and recognition of political prisoners were successfully pursued by transnational activist networks that used the authority of the CoE as leverage. The logic of interference was that of an outsider attempting to make revolutionary changes. However, as the states gained membership, this logic changed.

When mass protests against electoral fraud and corruption destabilized the three countries, the IGO became involved in the messy politics of the new member states. PACE interfered to save the agreement on commitments and ended up attempting to reconcile governments that distorted the functioning of democracy and opposition movements that saw the rules of the game as deeply unfair and did not want to participate. The logic of interference was that of an insider attempting to save the institutions of interaction. In line with institutionalized cosmopolitanism, PACE intervened to avoid the risk of losing a member, and created new means of interaction by initiating dialogues on concrete legal issues. Questions of concern that could result in declarations of the states as either democratic or authoritarian were transformed into processes of reforming flawed democracies that were both democratic and authoritarian at the same time, processes in which the states could make progress at their own pace.

The cosmopolitan perspective on IGO monitoring thus transforms the view on the democratic state from one of being understood as an independent entity to one of being understood as a constituent part of the European matrix of institutionalized cosmopolitanism. This closes the expectations of interference to impose radical change but opens a prospect for interference to maintain a continuing critical dialogue on the legal and political consequences of belonging to a community of universal values. The crisis of the democratic state is likely to continue, and all forms of helping to heal societies and restore credibility are therefore likely to be in demand. It is not likely to stir up mass excitement, but it becomes helpful once the dust has settled and when people come out to pick up what remains in order to go on with their lives, despite the failed promises. In a world of failing democratic promises, governments thus may, after trying all other alternatives, embrace cosmopolitanism and accept an institutionalized external bad consciousness.

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EVERYDAY LIFE BEHIND THE IRON CUR

I WAS BORN the same year that Joseph Stalin died. During my childhood, few, if any, thought the Iron Curtain would fall only a few decades later. The world was seen as split into a red half and a blue half. As a Swede, it was hard to understand what life was like just a few hundred kilometers east of the island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea. The official image of the societies of the East was also distorted, both as the self-image of the ruling powers, and as that seen through the Western looking glass.

But I was curious about the dream of a different kind of society that had been born in the East. What did it look like? How did people there think? Did anything remain of the dreams? During the years 1971-1984, I undertook several trips to various parts of the COMECON area. I always had my camera with me. I want my pictures to convey the everyday life that can be found now and then, in the West, as in the East.

In the summer of 2013, a series of photos were exhibited on Gotland and the entire exhibition was put online. People made contact with me, and one person said that he recognized himself in one of the pictures. Another sent a photograph taken at the same location, but today. The photographs became an occasion for meeting, again – albeit on the Internet.

sten-åke stenberg

Professor of social work, and an amateur photographer. His pictures are displayed at www.flickr.com/photos/stenaake/sets/72157635363609897

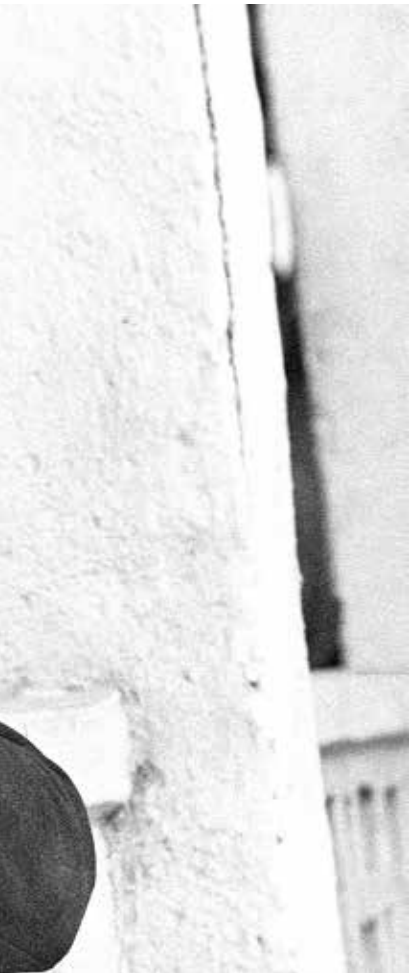
A man in Tajikistan in 1984, photographed during our Silk Road trip.

During a field trip in 1976 with the Swedish School of Social Work, we encountered this man in his custom-built wheelchair.

We experienced the stillness of Dubrovnik in Yugoslavia in 1974 when we traveled by train through – as we learned at the time – the only country that practiced a planned market economy.

Click pause. This was the world in the gray-scaled past.

TAIN: WESTERN VISIT TO THE EAST



In October and November in 1984, we traveled on the Silk Road. It is there where we met these girls with handbags and headwear in Samarkand.

The first voyage was a school trip by plane to Leningrad and Moscow in June 1971. This older lady was sweeping the Red Square.

In the summer of 1974, I took the train through the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary to Yugoslavia. In Prague, I met three generations of this family.

In the fall of 1976, the School of Social Work in Stockholm organized a trip to the Soviet Union to study social policy. Intourist thought that Tbilisi in Georgia was an appropriate destination. Here, work with the grape harvest.

What do images tell us about the observed reality? Maybe they say more about the observer?

SWEDISH MEDIA ON LITHUANIA: THE NA

Thanks to news reporting, we can imagine places we have never visited. The media provides us with narratives that help us make sense of events by linking them together and evaluating them. It can be argued that news stories not only inform readers, but also function as resources to maintain and confirm collective identities, such as nationality.[1] Identities are thus constructed against the contrast with an "other"[2]. A fundamental function of stereotypes found in media narratives can also be found in the sense that one's own identity is highlighted by the portrayal of the difference from others. Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, professor of Slavic studies, University of Lund, suggests that if you wish to understand your own nation's self-image, it is more fruitful to study stereotypes of others produced within your own culture, rather than examining stereotypes portraying your own nation.[3]

In this article, I identify main narratives related to Lithuania in the reporting of five major Swedish newspapers between 2010 and 2012.[4] Several news articles present similar stories that can be merged into a coherent narrative. By identifying these main narratives, it is possible to address perspectives and stereotypes that are repeatedly, in different articles, connected to Lithuania in the Swedish media.

The Swedish media clippings above represent two of the main narratives: homophobia and social deprivation.

IN MANY NARRATIVES, Lithuania is presented in a favorable light. It is depicted as the home of brave freedom fighters, extraordinary basketball heroes, and responsible, self-disciplined, hard-working people. Several narratives include elements of "surprise" over Lithuania being a "modern" or "favorable" country. In order to describe what is perceived as positive changes, negative stereotypes are exposed. One example is the narrative on Lithuania as a new, exciting tourist destination. The perceived anonymity of the country is romanticized and, in one article, "Europe's most secret capital" is described with the following slogan: "Vilnius – gray, poor and criminal? No, nothing could be more wrong!"[5]

In some narratives, Lithuania becomes the embodiment of ideas that have traditionally been associated with the West, such as development.[6] One narrative that was identified depicts Lithuania as the European, democratic, and progressive neighbor of the totalitarian, backwards Belarus. Belarus is, in this context, the "other", what Eastern Europe used to be, and Lithuania is a praised fellow EU member, part of "us".

LITHUANIA'S MANAGEMENT OF the financial crisis and the fight for Baltic independence are two popular themes related to Lithuania in the Swedish media. The narratives manifest a close relationship, both political and economic, between the two countries. Lithuania is, like its Baltic neighbors, portrayed as a political and economic success. It has gone from being a poor, oppressed Soviet republic to an exemplary democratic European market economy with rapid economic growth and a responsible model for other debt crisis countries in Europe. Sweden is eager to show its admiration and close support and at the same time strengthen its self-image as a nation that supports democracy. Political lessons from the struggle for Baltic independence are also used in domestic political debates.

In the compass of the crisis, the decisive dividing line is not between Eastern and Western Europe, but rather Southern and Northern, where Southern Europe is the "other" of the North. Lithuania is presented in the Swedish media as a part of the North, just like Sweden.

The narrative about the financial crisis is often constructed with a terminology found in the discourse on natural disasters or medicine. The natural disaster analogies add up to the perception of there not being anyone responsible for the crisis (even if Swedish banks are described as having been the targets for disapproving assessments) and the medicine analogy supports the austerity rhetoric – a cure, unappetizing or not, is necessary. In this narrative, Lithuania is presented as swallowing its medicine, while Greece refuses.

The Swedish media often lets Lithuania stand for the entire Baltic region, and Lithuania is also occasionally confused with Latvia. The media thus strengthen the perceived unity of the Baltic countries.

Within the aforementioned narratives, Lithuania is thought to have distanced itself from Europe's dark past of oppression and depression, a past that for the postwar West was long incarnated by Eastern Europe.[7] Lithuania's Soviet past functions to highlight the horrors from which Lithuania has been liberated and underlines the advantages of the current European political

RRATIVES REVEAL THE SELF-IMAGE

and economic order. The experience of the Soviet occupation (the memory of a "real crisis") is also used to explain Lithuanian people's "acceptance" of austerity measures.

LITHUANIA IS GENERALLY depicted as a part of the same community as Sweden, and described as European or as a neighboring country just across the sea. However, Lithuania occasionally occupies the ambiguous space between inclusion and exclusion that has been typical in depictions of Eastern European countries[8], even if the exclusion is never complete.

Lithuania is in some cases associated with negative traits such as backwardness or general inferiority. This is manifest in narratives linked to homophobia, anti-Semitism, poverty, and criminality. In these narratives, Lithuania can be depicted as different from Sweden, but there rarely exists a complete distancing towards Lithuania. Narratives on social deprivation, such as children's vulnerability or inhumane conditions for Lithuanian guest workers, include solidarity and empathy.

One of the main narratives is related to homophobia. The plans to ban Baltic Pride in 2010 and the Lithuanian parliaments' approval of a bill in 2009 that restricts the dissemination of information about homosexuality evoked strong reactions in Sweden. Attacks on Gay Pride events or discrimination of LGBT people are seen as threats to the entirety of democratic society. Within the narrative on criminality, Lithuanians are associated with human trafficking, burglaries, and drug traffic. However, Lithuanians are not presented only as criminals or victims. Successful cooperation between Swedish and Lithuanian police authorities constitutes an important feature of the narrative related to criminality. Lithuania is thus also perceived as a praiseworthy partner.

Lithuania's way of dealing with Europe's past becomes a crucial dividing point for how Lithuania is depicted and positioned on the mental map of Europe. Within the narratives related to poverty and intolerance, Lithuania's Soviet past is a present ghost. Lithuania is also sharply criticized for not coming to terms with its past of anti-Semitism and not taking enough responsibility for its participation in the Holocaust. The two narratives about intolerance (homophobia and anti-Semitism) show how Lithuania is perceived as failing to deal with and distance itself sufficiently from Europe's temporal "other", its own past of discrimination and genocide, a past the West has itself defined, culturally and morally, by remembering.[9]

THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY of journalists is to publish news that is of interest to their readers. The narratives on Lithuania in the Swedish media are thus to a great degree picked and shaped according to what Swedish readers might find viable, not necessarily according to what issues might best represent Lithuania's self-image or internal political, cultural, or economic climate. The narratives on Lithuania are partly selected and shaped in order to confirm values and norms, such as democracy, progressiveness, and human rights, which are connected to the Swedish national self-image. This can be seen as one reason why the narrative on LGBT rights is one of the most dominant narratives linked to Lithuania. It strengthens the Swedes' self-image as a democratic and tolerant people. However, the narratives that were identified not only confirm Sweden's self-image in one sense, but also question it and address Sweden's own past and guilt. By analyzing narratives linked to Lithuania, we see how Lithuania is presented in order for Swedish readers to make sense of the world, not only Lithuania's place in it, but also their own.

anna lovinda olsson

Note: The content in commentaries expresses the views of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of Baltic Worlds.

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Post-military Islands in transformation.
Leaving the past aside

Beate Feldmann Eellend: Visionära planer och vardagliga praktiker: Postmilitära landskap i Östersjö-området

(Visionary plans and everyday practices: post-military landscapes in the Baltic Sea region). Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Stockholm Studies in Ethnology 7, 2013. 157 pages, ill.

After the end of the Cold War, a large-scale disarmament commenced in the Baltic Sea area, one of the most militarized regions of Europe. Simultaneously, a reconstruction of the Baltic Sea as a Sea of Peace was started. Beate Feldmann Eellend's thought-provoking PhD dissertation covers three post-military landscapes in this area: Deyevo on Saaremaa (Estonia), Dranske on Rügen (Germany, former GDR), and Fårösund on Gotland (Sweden). The goal is to visualize how the military landscape of the Cold War is being transformed to conform to modern Europe. More precisely, Feldmann Eellend investigates what "the planning visions mean in the everyday life of human beings" (p.15). The specific research aim is to elucidate the challenges posed to planning in the transformation process. The study is structured around three issues: how the coastal landscape of the Baltic is disarmed and transformed into a civilian landscape of consumption; how plans and everyday practices are formed in a field of tension between experiences from the past and expectations for the future; and how parts of the past are enhanced or forced aside in the transformation.

In a theoretical sense, the author is ambitiously working with two main threads, on the one hand, theories emphasizing that space is formed by relation and process, and, on the other, theories of "memory politics". Henri Lefebvre's spatial triad (consisting of perceived spaces, planned spaces, and lived spaces) occupies a prominent position in the thesis. To this basis of spatial theory are added concepts taken from Rheinhard Koselleck: time interface, spaces of experience, and horizon of expectation. Time, like space, is seen as relationally created, meaning that history and future are time dimensions encompassing different possibilities for interpretation, memory, and conflict. Contemporary questions always influence the memory of the past and "in this process those conflicts of memory politics appear that emerge in the construction of collective memories" (p. 19). Another concept, collective memory, thus takes a central position in the thesis. While the theoretical approach is ambitious, there is a certain unclearness concerning the use of concepts. Among other things, the reader has to relate to practices of memory, everyday practices, and spatial practices. A more distinct discussion of the different forms of practices would have enhanced the thesis.

The thesis relates to three different field of inquiry: The first is ethnological and anthropological research concerning Europeanization and regionalization. There is, according Feldmann Eellend, a need for ethnological research visualizing "the political and cultural connections between processes of Europeanization and regionalization at local, national, and macro-regional level" (p. 23). Secondly, the thesis is related to (mainly) ethnological research on cultural heritage and planning. It seems as if the relation of the thesis to planning research is particularly important. Planners are considered to have a great need for knowledge about values, experiences, and relations typical of everyday life. Without this knowledge, human needs cannot be dealt with, which is seen as a problem of democracy.

Aerial photo of Dranske

The thesis is also related to the field of cultural military history. Feldmann Eellend asserts that few ethnologists have shown an interest in the military. Her scrutiny of the previous research that does exist seems well argued for, but it is not clear in what way earlier research has been of value to the thesis. To be sure, the author says she enjoyed examining the ethnological research on regionalization processes and "sees connections to" parts of anthropological research on cultural processes at the juncture of local, national, and macro-regional levels (p. 23). But what is meant by getting enjoyment from previous research? In this connection, the research process should have been discussed in more detail.

THE AUTHOR INTERVIEWED around 20 people (ordinary inhabitants as well as local politicians) but she also worked with photo documentation. In addition, she collected archival material, newspaper articles, and planning documents, and she also studied local chronicles, brochures, and magazines of local associations. It is thus obviously a rich and multi-faceted material that forms the foundation of the thesis. The method she uses is the so-called mobile searchlight, characterized by an interplay between different categories of material in order to visualize a field. For this reason, a more detailed discussion of how this rich material was combined and activated in relation to the theoretical premises of the thesis would have been advisable. It is also difficult, at least to some degree, to understand how fieldwork was carried out in the different localities. In addition to these problems, there is a certain lack of clarity concerning the process of selection and why these three places were chosen as study objects.

In chapter 2, "EUropeisk rumslig planering" [EUropean spatial planning], the focus is on the macro-regional level. The EU is defined as a power striving for a "united and competitive" Baltic Sea region. This endeavor characterizes the visions and strategies that mark the planned space. Feldmann Eellend analyzes the European Spatial Development Perspective, as well as the conversion networks Convernet and ReMiDo, quite well. According to these networks, the post-military landscapes ought to be transformed

PHOTO: KLUGSCHNACKER/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

on the island of Rügen off the coast of Germany.

into attractive places for tourism and recreation. In this connection, the cultural heritage would be important, but "only in terms of fortifications and fortresses mainly from the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries" (p.56). A conclusion therefore is that the transformation, as it is expressed in the planned space, adds to the formation of a homogenous EU space that hides parts of the history of the 20th century.

In chapter 3, "Garnisonens kollektiva minne" [Collective memory of the garrison], the space of planning is abandoned and the focus is rather on perceived space. The chapter addresses mainly "the practices of memory that were formed in the transformation processes by the people remaining in the post-military landscapes" (p. 57). The collective memory appears rather bright. Although the supply of housing, goods, and other services was socially layered, "collective memories were formed by experience of an everyday life with good social and economic resources" (p.82). Feldmann Eellend asserts that "these memory practices [...] permit the visualization of the political role of collective memories in the transformation of the military landscapes" (p.83). The discussion of collective memories in this chapter is important for the thesis in general, and is particularly interesting. A more developed source-critical discussion in relation to the analysis of the material would nonetheless have made the analysis in the chapter more powerful.

THE FOLLOWING CHAPTER, "Vision om rekreation" [Visions of recreation], focuses on what happens when the perceived space meets the planned space. The thesis shows that locally formed visions have as their goal the transformation of the military landscapes into competitive places in the Baltic Sea region. The local visions are thereby "in interplay with the macro-regional visions" (p. 117). The author asserts that there is a lack of "critical reflection concerning the parts of the past that are selected or obfuscated" (p.92). A consequence of this is that the population expresses feelings of exclusion, but they also develop skepticism towards the transformation. The study thus makes visible a gap between, on the one hand, "the expectation in the future visions of attractive recreation" and, on the other, an "affective memory with experience of an urban military workday" (p. 118). This is perhaps one of the more important conclusions of the thesis, since one of the lessons one hoped would crystallize from the work involved the challenges to planning in the transformation processes.

IN CHAPTER 5, "Postmilitära statusförskjutningar" [Post-military status displacements] the analysis is deepened with a particular focus on social and cultural status displacements. Deyevo and Dranske were subject to a material dismantling. Military equipment disappeared with the troops, and the buildings were subject to vandalism, increasing decay, and in some cases demolition. They represented the wrong historical period and were seen as unattractive. Viewed in the light of this status displacement and material dismantling, the memories of the inhabitants gain a particular meaning: Collective memories of a relatively satisfactory everyday life can be understood as a type of "reinstatement memories". Cultural memories, that is, the history mediated via nonprofit museums and booklets on homestead history, function in a similar capacity.

Chapter 6, "Motsträviga rum" [Reluctant spaces] contains a discussion that sums up the dissertation. It commences with two important questions: What creates the gap between visionary plans and everyday practices? And what consequences might this gap have for people in lived space? The dissertation refers to critical research showing that Europe is on the way to becoming a Monotopia, since it is only certain parts of the past that are being defined as cultural heritage, that is, the aspects that have economic value as an attraction. Given that there is a risk that collective memories are at risk of exclusion, it is doubtful that a strong macro-regional identity is being created. Instead, there is a risk of "a type of cultural amnesia" (p. 155) and a widening gap between the planned and the perceived space. In order to create a socially sustainable society, planning must consider both "structural market forces and human values" (p.162). For the EU, this is an important task. Without consideration of peoples' experiences and collective memories, no legitimacy is created: "Not until the targets and norms of the EU gain meaning and acceptance by people at a local, everyday level can they be implemented" (p. 167). The author thus turns a much needed, critical eye towards those political processes that risk leading to exclusion and cultural amnesia.

fredrik nilsson

MEETINGS WITH JÜRI ARRAK & THE ARTISTIC SPIRIT OF ESTONIA

by **Maxim D. Shrayer**

At the end of August 1975, the art historian Boris Bernstein took my parents and me to the annual autumn vernissage of Estonian artists in Tallinn. Here non-representational and abstract paintings were freely exhibited alongside commonplaces of socialist realism that one could see all across the Soviet Union (an Estonian fisherman in a valorous pose would replace a Kazakh rancher or a Ukrainian farmer). Bernstein brought us over to a painting titled *Corona*. "It's by Jüri Arrak, who is, perhaps, the best living Estonian artist," Bernstein explained.

Corona is an Estonian folk version of billiards. A square table is made of smooth pinewood. There is a hole in each corner. Instead of the regular balls, one uses wooden pucks with holes in the middle, and the nine-ball is a larger-size puck. Arrak's painting employed bright, unmixed colors and depicted four humanoids playing corona. These orange, blue, and aquamarine humanoids were simultaneously primordial, medieval, and alien, but their gaping mouths and frozen eyes had contemporary, Soviet expressions.

That evening, on the train taking us back to Moscow, I drew a copy of Arrak's *Corona* from memory. My father, the writer David Shrayer-Petrov, got the artist's address from Boris Bernstein and mailed him my drawing and a personal letter of introduction. Jüri Arrak sent my father photos of some of his paintings, and my father mailed him poems and translations. (He had translated several Estonian poets into Russian, including Ellen Niit, Mats Traat, and Jaan Kross.) Later my father composed and dedicated a poem to Jüri about Soviet escapists playing corona. In the course of their early correspondence, they discovered many affinities, which paved the way for a lifelong friendship. Both Jüri and my father were born in 1936, the Year of the Rat, according to the Chinese calendar, and they felt that their affinities were not coincidental. To this day, Jüri and my father fondly refer to each other in Russian as staraia krysa ("old rat"). Born in very different places and in different countries (Estonia was still independent in 1936), both hated change and adored routine, were superstitious, and given to hypochondria. Both Jüri and my father allowed for a dose of the mystical in their daily lives, and, of course, both were–are–creative artists.

The following summer Jüri Arrak fetched us in Pärnu, the coastal resort where we vacationed. In his rattling Zaporozhets mini car we drove north and west along the coast to his summer-house and studio, the homestead Panga-Rehe in the Töstemaa region. Panga-Rehe is about one-third of a mile inland from the Baltic coast. Farmers and fishermen had lived on this homestead, growing barley, oats, and potatoes in the field, apples and gooseberries in the garden, smoking perch, pickling herring, sun-drying flounder. When Jüri bought the place in the early 1970s, he repaired the straw-covered roof of the house and made some electrical and structural improvements, but kept the interiors unchanged. Most of the old, rough-hewn furniture, including the hard beds with straw mattresses, had come with the house. There was no running water, and several times a day we walked to the well, where a slippery green echo made its home.

One half of the house was taken up by main living area, combining kitchen, parlor and dining room, with a hearth and a wood-burning stove, a long oak table, its surface blackened and smoothed out by a century of daily repasts; long benches on both sides; narrow beds around the walls. Old peasant tools and utensils were everywhere on the walls. Bunches of drying herbs and flowers hung from the massive central rafter over the dining room table. On some of the doors Jüri had painted his creatures, illustrating stories from the Estonian national epic, *Kalevipoeg*. At the time he was very interested in mythology, not just Finno-Ugric and Greco-Roman, but also Indian and Far Eastern, and I remember him working on a large painting to be titled *Gigantomachia*, the battle of giants. Jüri's summer studio and the master bedroom

Corona (oil on canvas, 97x120 cm.). 1975. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

formed the other wing of the house. The recessed windows were small, and it was always shimmering-dark and cool inside the house.

An old black mutt by the name of Rex used to greet the arrivals with cascading, cheery barks. Rex was succeeded by a cocker spaniel named Lonni, a busybody who dashed about the outlying fields and from afar looked like a partridge. Jüri and his first wife Urve Roodes Arrak, an artist working with leather media, had two boys. The younger, Jaan, was my age; Arno was two years our senior. Both had long pale yellow hair and looked like young Vikings. The summer we first came to visit Panga-Rehe, Jüri had built and decorated a house on stilts in the middle of the apple orchard, and the boys slept there at night. Although the Arrak parents both spoke Russian fluently and were more cosmopolitan than many of their fellow Estonians, the boys weren't encouraged to learn Russian despite the official requirement at school. Not pushing children to master Russian was simultaneously a form of the occupied Estonians' civil disobedience and a means of cultural and linguistic self-preservation. The Arrak boys and I had to resort to English, which they knew much better than Russian and which I had been learning at home and at school. Both brothers, especially the younger, more gregarious Jaan, struck me as free, relaxed, and comfortable in their skin. Thinking of our impending return to Moscow and of being a Jewish black sheep among my Russian peers, I envied the Estonian boys.

In the morning Jüri would paint, Urve and my mother would do some cooking, while my father sat outside taking notes or composing poetry. The young Arraks and I would bicycle to the coast and dive into the cold open sea from a huge boulder the size of a fat bull. The seaside landscape was rough and angular, all pale green and gray, with juniper trees and lichen-coated rocks.

If it rained the night before, we would walk to a nearby "mushroom" forest, lugging back baskets of red- and brown-capped aromatic boletuses for soup and orange chanterelles for pan-frying with butter and dill. Sometimes Jüri would bring out a wooden table, chairs, paper, and paints and give his sons and me a lesson

in the middle of the courtyard, under the tall August sky. Both Jaan and Arno inherited artistic genes, and Arno Arrak later became a professional artist. While Jüri didn't purposely invite his guests to see unfinished paintings, he also didn't close the door to his studio. During our second or third summer visit to Panga-Rehe I observed stages of Jüri's work on a canvas he called *Conversation of Self-Portraits*. Four of Arrak's bearded selves, two of them still outlines, two already given some flesh and blood, were sitting around the room, engrossed in a four-way discussion.

One summer Jüri and my father spent several days behind closed doors in Jüri's studio, working on a book of stories for children. They were variations of old Estonian folktales about a prankster swamp-goblin who assists poor waifs and punishes greedy farmers' wives. Jüri called him "Majv" and attributed metaphysical prowess to this creature. After they had hammered together a rough draft of the stories, my father was going to write it all up in Russian, and Jüri illustrate it – for a book they hoped to publish in Moscow. Nothing came of the project, probably because we soon became refuseniks and Soviet publishing houses closed their doors to my father.

Because of the level of trust between the Arraks and my parents, the Arraks were from the very beginning privy to our plans to emigrate. Like many Estonians who remained in their country after World War II and throughout the Soviet occupation, the Arraks had close family abroad. At night, when the kids were already in bed after a supper of fresh peasant bread, cheese, milk from under the cow, honey, fried mushrooms, vegetables and tea brewed from fresh herbs and berries, the Arraks and my parents would stay up and talk. I slept in the guest bedroom, udders of creamy fog hanging outside on branches and wood shutters. It was so quiet all around, no other homestead within half a mile, that I could hear every word. The subjects of emigration, artistic freedom, and the status of minorities dominated their nighttime conversations. Sometimes the Arraks and my parents listened to evening programs on the Voice of America, Kol Israel, Radio France, and other short-wave broadcasts. The forbidden programs reached those sparsely populated parts without being scrambled.

Throughout our years as refuseniks, the Arraks remained our close friends and openly supported our family. Unlike many of my parents' old friends, Jüri and Urve weren't afraid of associating with refuseniks and dissidents, even though it may have caused repercussions for their own artistic careers. They got along seamlessly, my parents and the Arraks. Only once did I overhear a dissonant late-night exchange between my father and Jüri. They were talking about World War II, the evacuation from the siege-encircled Leningrad to the Urals, about my father's wartime childhood amid Russian peasant children who hadn't seen a Jew prior to his arrival, and also about the meaning of privation.

"Where were you during the war?" my father asked Jüri.

"I was in Tallinn, with my mother," Jüri replied, unperturbed.

"It was hard, wasn't it?" my father said automatically, probably thinking of a boy exactly his age living through the war in a Nazi-occupied Russian city.

"Well, actually, we had a normal life," Jüri answered, growing a bit tense.

A burdensome silence of disharmony set in the old farmhouse, and sensing my father's bewilderment and Jüri's discomfort, Urve offered to boil up some water for a fresh pot of tea. I didn't make much of the exchange, chalking up the tension to the amount of liquor the two men had consumed. At the time, I hadn't yet learned that Estonia was the first to become *Judenrein*, during the time that Jüri called "normal life". I also didn't know about the 20th "Estonian" Division of the Waffen-SS or the Klooga camp. Should I embitter the perfect memories by staining them with the blood ink of my afterknowledge?

Trips to Panga-Rehe crowned our Estonian vacations. Because we visited every year between 1976 and 1986, we witnessed changes in the Arraks' interests and tastes. From a cultivated appreciation of Estonian folk customs and traditional daily living, the Arraks turned to Buddhism and, Urve especially, to astrology. One summer in the mid-1980s, we drove into Panga-Rehe to discover a tall limestone stupa with a bright-colored downsloping eye painted on its front. Jüri had built it with the help of his new

Left to right: Maxim D. Shrayer, Emilia Shrayer, Jüri Arrak, Urve Roodes Arrak, Vüike Lubi. Photograph by David Shrayer-Petrov.

Right: A drawing of Arrak's *Corona* by the 8-year-old Shrayer (August 1975) and Arrak's inscription, on the back of the drawing (in July 2013).

colleague Vello, also an Estonian painter. On strolls to the secluded coast, Vello talked to my parents about the dissident movement in Estonia and about attempting to cross the Finnish border illegally someplace in Northern Karelia. From there he planned to reach Helsinki, take a ferry to Stockholm, and ask for political asylum in Sweden. Vello's own canvasses, painted in turbid colors, had subversively dreamy titles such as "Memories of a Zoo Superintendent". He quoted *Animal Farm* from memory and nicknamed his hippyish girlfriend "Mollie", after the horse in Orwell's novel. That summer, for the first time, a sense of foreboding had invaded the Arraks' family and homestead.

In August 1983, my parents and I drove up from Pärnu to visit the Arraks in Panga-Rehe. The first thing Jüri said after we got out of the car and hugged and kissed was:

"Tomorrow we'll go visit Väike Lubi."

"Uncle Jüri, so who is this Väike Lubi?" I asked.

"She builds towers," Jüri answered. "A local wonder. You will see."

We drove inland for about half an hour on dirt roads. We first came to a large clearing, its boundaries marked on two sides by tall pine trees, on the third by a rivulet studded with yellow water lilies, and on the fourth side by the road by which we arrived. In the far end of the clearing, we saw a vegetable garden and four or five beehives constructed of odd boards and parti-colored planks. One beehive was built from carved pieces of an old armchair. In the center of the clearing stood Väike Lubi's towers.

Visualize a structure that is about three stories high, built of thin vertical logs and various horizontal boards and cuts of plywood. The horizontal sections were somehow woven into the vertical ones, forming a grid, each wall like a piece of roughly knit cloth with large loops and holes. The roofs were covered with sundry materials, including shingles of different shapes and colors, corrugated metal, plywood, straw, and tarpaulin. There were no hung doors or framed windows. Wooden ladders built from young mast pine trees were attached to the towers at different heights, in places where gaping openings in the walls offered access to the structure's interior. All the outlandishness of the construction aside, each of the towers was intended as living spaces and bore a semblance of an architectural style. One looked like a contemporary barn; the other, a functionalist summerhouse; the third, a chalet.

Jüri ran to the vegetable garden and came back in the company of a woman who looked to be between forty and forty-five. This was Väike Lubi, builder of the three towers and mistress of the forest clearing. "Väike" means "little" in Estonian, so literally the nickname means "Little Lubi." She was under five feet, with muscular arms and hips, and tufts of gray in her sandy hair. She was dressed in black rubber boots and a worn-out button-front gown made of green fabric with a printed pattern of yellow daisies. A smile never left her typically Finno-Ugric face with its pointed nose and triangular cheekbones. She surprised us by speaking very fluent Russian. After learning that my mother was a specialist in the English language, she addressed her in an accurate English.

"I studied architecture in Canada," Väike Lubi said. "For five years."

In the car while driving back to Panga-Rehe, Jüri told us that one day Väike Lubi had mysteriously showed up at this clearing, which belonged to a nearby collective farm, and started building. The locals initially helped her with food and building materials. She grew into a folk deity and object of adoration. She healed with herbs and incantations. Infertile couples used to come to her for counsel and cure. Väike Lubi's clearing became a regular stop for wedding parties in the area, and she blessed bride and groom and gave them wreaths of flowers to wear during the ceremony. Estonia was Christianized only in the late twelfth century by foreign invaders, and to this day native folk traditions nourish Estonian culture. Should it be surprising that in the 1980s, after forty years of Soviet occupation, the adherence of the Estonians to their ancient pagan rites would find expression in the creation of a wondrous figure like Väike Lubi?

I personally witnessed Väike Lubi's healing powers. Jüri had complained to my father of a bump on his neck. The bulging, fatty growth was about the size of a large cherry, and my father suggested that Jüri have it checked and surgically removed. Väike Lubi examined Jüri and tugged him by the sleeve to the bank of the rivulet. Sheep ran after their mistress, bleating triumphantly. The rest of our party followed Väike Lubi, Jüri, and the sheep. Väike Lubi stepped into the water, and I saw hundreds of minnows dash to her feet. She didn't feed them but said something to them in Estonian. She pulled a penknife out of her gown's side pocket, cut a bunch of plants with dark green leaves growing near the bank of the rivulet, and chopped them up on her callused thumb. She

Jüri Arrak. White Fish (pastel on paper, 39x59 cm.). 1997. Collection of Maxim D. Shrayer and Karen E. Lasser. Courtesy of Maxim D. Shrayer.

Left to right back row: Jüri Arrak, Ivi Arrak, Karen E. Lasser, Maxim Mussel, Olga Kononova; Front row: Tatiana Rebecca Shrayer, Mira Isabella Shrayer. July 2013, sea coast near Panga-Rehe.

Jüri Arrak's studio, Panga-Rehe, July 2013. All photos taken by Maxim D. Shrayer.

then rubbed the chopped plant against the growth on Jüri's neck, and it started to disappear right before our eyes. It was astonishing. Väike Lubi shook our hands, hugged Jüri and Urve and gave them cuttings of the healing plant to take home. Then she turned around and minced up the path toward the center of her clearing, where another group of pilgrims was waiting. . . .

During our honeymoon in August 2000, I visited Panga-Rehe with Karen, my American-born wife. Since our first visit together, we have been back to Estonia three times, during nostalgic summer vacations in Pärnu. It's a different Panga-Rehe today, a different family routine, and also a different Jüri. His younger son, Jaan, died in a tragic accident in 2006. Arno Arrak, Jüri's elder son, paints landscapes with more than a dash of his father's manner in their colors and lines. Urve Arrak spent almost two decades in the United States. But she couldn't live without Estonia. Urve eventually returned home to Tallinn, where she died in 2012. Jüri's second wife, Ivi, a lovely person and an artist in her own right, now makes herbal tea in the old Panga-Rehe kitchen, under the smoked beams, amid rusty peasant scythes, husky cowbells, and copper pots displayed on the blackened walls.

The walls haven't been whitewashed for many, many years, and the memories of the Panga-Rehe I once knew still hover over the heavy dining room table. Jüri has grown older and more sentimental, just like my own father and other artists and writers born in 1936, the Year of the Rat. Jüri still paints mesmerizing canvasses that transport me to another world.

During the most recent visit to Panga-Rehe, I asked Arrak what happened to Väike Lubi.

"She's gone," Jüri said. "Disappeared about 1990, right before independence."

"And the towers?"

"The towers, too, are gone. Where is Väike Lubi? Who knows?" Jüri's voice dropped and he turned to Ivi, drawing her to his side.

Born in Moscow in 1967 to a writer's family, Maxim D. Shrayer is a professor at Boston College and a bilingual writer and translator. Shrayer has authored over ten books, among them the memoirs *Leaving Russia* and *Waiting for America*, the collection of stories *Yom Kippur in Amsterdam*, and the Holocaust study *I SAW IT*. For more information, visit www.shrayer.com.

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on the web

Baltic Worlds is open access on the web. The journal's website has had, since 2010, a special Election Coverage section. This spring we will have a special focus on the EU election and its consequences for our broad coverage area: the Baltic Sea region, Eastern Europe, Russia, and the post-Soviet countries.

BALTIC WORLDS

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GHOST NETS IN THE BALTIC SEA

"Beneath the waters of the Baltic Sea, deadly traps that are never emptied lie in wait. Old, forgotten fishing equipment, especially old fishing nets, continues to catch fish that die needlessly. Abandoned fishing gear devours sea-life with insatiable hunger. To a number of conservationists, these derelict nets are darkly referred to as "ghost gear". In more technical terms, they are often referred to as Abandoned, Lost, or Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG).[1]

PHOTO: GHOSTFISHING.ORG

With the advent of synthetic materials, nets now can continue to trap marine life in the water for hundreds of years.

The problems with the so-called ghost nets have grown ever larger since the late fifties. Fifty or sixty years ago, nets were commonly made from biodegradable hemp or cotton. With the advent of synthetic, degrade-resistant materials such as nylon, nets now can remain active in the water for hundreds of years. Some plastics can remain in the marine environment for up to 600 years. When gear does finally break apart, further damage is done when marine animals eat plastic particles, and polyurethane chemicals leach into the water.[2]

The problems are significant for the countries around the Baltic Sea, above all Poland and Lithuania, where fishing with nets went well over quotas around the turn of the millennium. In 2011, WWF Poland, together with fishermen, scientists, and various others, conducted a pilot project financed by Baltic Sea 2020, with a view to working out the methodology for net removal and carrying out activities to clean the Polish territorial waters of ghost nets. As a result, 6 tons of ghost nets were retrieved from the Baltic during 24 days of actions at sea – on the ocean floor, and at two shipwrecks.[3]

IN 2012, THE PROJECT CONTINUED, with Polish and Lithuanian fishermen pulling up nearly 22,000 kilograms of lost fishing nets. The total length of the nets was some 135 kilometers. The project also developed a database where fishermen had the possibility of reporting lost fishing gear, as well as places where their nets and trawls got stuck. The database has helped to create an interactive map that shows where fishing gear has been lost or is entangled. (sieciwidma.wwf.pl.)[4]

Many countries have no official rules or laws for reporting or taking care of lost fishing gear – picking up after oneself is a matter of one's own conscience. In Norway, it is required that fishermen report to the Directorate of Fisheries, which is also actively working to raise awareness about ghost nets and their pernicious effects. In Canada and the United States, fishermen are required to put small transmitters in their fishing nets in order to fish.[5]

LOST NETS' FISHING capacity decreases with time from 20% of the usual net capacity after three months, to 6% after 27 months. Together with total allowable catch quota set at maximum sustainable yield, this additional 6% (that is not included when the quotas are set) constitutes a significant potential threat to the stability of the fish stocks in the Baltic Sea.[6]

Modifications in trawl construction and operations have resulted in increased net damage and loss. Evidence from a number of locations around the world indicates that recent demersal gillnetting practices are leaving more gear per fishing unit in the oceans; in some cases, this lost gear is heavily concentrated on productive fishing grounds. These changes in traditional gear types and fishing methods are increasing the potential for loss of commercial and noncommercial species because of ghost fishing.[7]

ninna mörner

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