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Modes of Appropriation and Social Resistance

*Special Issue Occasioned by the 11th Annual Conference
of the Romanian Society for Social and Cultural Anthropology,
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OPENING ADDRESS OF THE 11TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ROMANIAN SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY "MODES OF APPROPRIATION AND SOCIAL RESISTANCE"

Foreword to the special issue

GABRIEL TROC[*]

It may not be too obvious, but - beside what we explicitly formulated in the conference's call for proposals - we thought that the theme *Modes of Appropriation and Social Resistance*, and the related subjects, would at the same time address, on a slant, the particular state of affair of anthropology in Romania.

I would spare a lot of our time if, instead of trying to sketch the history of what happened with anthropology in Romania after 1990, I would try to find a shortcut, which may be in this case a question. Therefore, I would rhetorically ask how many of us wrote at least one piece of text that contains - maybe even in the title - the word "post-socialism" or the term "transition"? Or possibly both. I guess many of us.

Why is this so? There is no simple answer. But it is a fact that an impressive body of works was produced by us, as indigenous, Eastern European anthropologists, under the premises that we investigated, described and explained a society which was singled out - in respect with its cultural difference and social organisation - by its socialist past.

It was also quite clear, for a while, that our interrogations would follow in the footsteps of some Western sociologists, or anthropologists who used to work in this part of the world, and who built, in different ways, the peculiarity of the area, a sort of "specific" to be sold to a Western academic public. They described our societies with a number of concepts which became cornerstones for further research, such as: "shortage economy", "parent-state", "fuzzy property", "capitalism without capitalists" and others of this sort.

Shortly put, I would say that till recently, and with certain variations, the dominant paradigm of anthropological research in this part of the world was that of the anthropologist who researches his/her own society with the

[*] *Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, e-mail: gabrieltroc@socasis.ubbcluj.ro*

finality of producing that effect of a social or cultural *difference* which was already predetermined by the large scheme of the concepts involved in the former discipline of sovietology or in the communist and post-communist studies.

For sure, working in this episteme was not something that only anthropologists fell into; we know very well that local philosophers, historians or political scientists have done the same, up until the present.

Still, within anthropology, precisely because we work with tangible people and situations, a recent change of direction is discernible. It became clear by now for many - some of them being here today with their very recent researches - that phenomena that were considered to be somehow specific for the "post-socialist" times - like land redistribution, rapid capital accumulation, or urban services privatizations - were not specific at all, but were also part and parcel of a global dynamic of social stratification and wealth appropriation.

The turmoil that followed the 2008 economic crisis made it even clearer that facts considered by many of us post-socialist local phenomena had been actually connected to larger global processes all the way: financial and market deregulations, exploitation of cheap labour force, or for-work migration, to name just a few.

It is quite obvious, thus, that investigating the "local" - whatever peculiarity we would assign to it - be that Central or Eastern European, Balkan, post-socialist or others - would hardly be relevant without the connection to larger global forces which transcend our lives, but have huge implications for it. At this conference, we aim at opening-up the discussions in this direction, advocating the need to come back to an epistemology and a theory that is centred on the world system and its connections. We may, and I think we should, reconsider the line of thinking produced, of course, by Marx, and developed later by Wallerstein - and which got an anthropological emphasis in the works of Maurice Gaudelier, or Eric Wolf, and more recently of David Harvey and David Graber.

Still, a change in the anthropological approach should come not only from a logical change in the epistemological orientation, but also from the discernible transformation on how our society itself reflects the recent social and cultural dynamics. I would just like to remind here that before 2008 there were very few in the public sphere - including the academia - who spoke about "capitalism". There were talks about "the market", "market society" and other euphemisms, but not plainly about capitalism. This fact has dramatically changed after 2008; and I guess, soon, people might talk casually about "neoliberalism".

This is in fact a reflection of a reality that is deeply lived by people, who understand from their day-to-day life how their well being is influenced by economic and political forces located in very different places, and which they could rarely and barely control.

Therefore we face new forms of enclosures, control, appropriations, but also new forms of resistance and public protest. We can simply observe at this point that in the recent past the anthropological inquiry from Romania has barely studied these issues.

I would close this opening address with enumerating a number of topical questions that we hope to touch upon during our discussions, and which may open a research agenda for the future:

- How do people perceive the limits of the representative democracy and what alternatives are imagined or hoped for?

- What sorts of resistances are imagined against a market system which sometimes develops totalitarian features?

- How can we resist the reinvention of militaristic ideologies, and what can be done against the tendency of today's capitalism to reignite wars at the peripheries of the global system?

- What is the solution for solving conflicts that are deeply political? Is it peaceful resistance, or open fight? What can we learn from the most recent forms of protests with respect to the fight against the contemporary hegemonic domination?

- How can we deal with the situation of Eastern Europe where anti-communism still remains the dominant discourse, having the ability to suppress any new thinking of alternative change, and also serving for the proliferation of conservative, nationalist, pro-austerity measures and the like?

It might sound a little grim, but also, I hope, very challenging.

THE BLACK SWANS OF GREECE'S GLOBAL COUNTRYSIDES

JAMES P. VERINIS[*]

ABSTRACT. A vast array of processes we might identify with the terms re- and de-peasantization are occurring in Greece, in conjunction with the emerging post-productivist moralities and aesthetics of European countrysides and along with the absolute lack of consensus as to what neo-rural means or how it should be managed by local, national, and EU institutions, especially in the European periphery. Rural sociologists, social geographers, anthropologists and other scholars concerned with rural Greece have long confirmed the 'backwardness' that has supposedly plagued it since the state's inception. More recent work has focused on how new global migrants suffer from xenophobia and exploitation in rural Greek areas. Yet my fieldwork has gradually revealed significant Greek/ non-Greek co-ethnic endeavours in 'traditional' small-scale agriculture that have the potential to contribute different information to a post-colonial rural Greek history. Small-scale olive farmers in semi-mountainous areas who have found themselves economically uncompetitive for example, especially in light of the current European financial crisis, have developed a variety of unprecedented relationships with many immigrants they now work with, from Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine most notably. In reclaiming abandoned fields and centuries-old farm enterprises as well as collecting traditional foodstuffs that few 'modern' Greeks collected until recently, immigrant farmers link rural Greeks back to their agrarian lives and traditional Greek agricultural practices to new international value-added food markets for boutique or heritage products. These developments, outside the historical confines of the binary relationship between Greece and northern Europe or the United States, as alternative readings of global Greek countrysides, embody significant solutions to the most prescient problems in contemporary rural Greek communities.

Keywords: neoliberalism, non-Greek farmers, repeasantization

Introduction

Agricultural practices, as well as other horticultural, hunting, and gathering activities, are always born of a first engagement between migrants travelling from another place and the natural resources they find in this new

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[*] *Salve Regina University, Newport, Rhode Island, e-mail: jverinis@gmail.com.*

land. This first contact is a significant one, informing the conception people create of the new world in which they have come to live. Narragansett Indians in southern Rhode Island where I currently live conceived of the world they came to inhabit vis-à-vis corn, or maize for example. All Narragansetts were allotted the same amount of this staple, sent by the spirit Kautantouwit to these and other Algonquin-speaking people of the North-Eastern United States in the ear of a crow. Harvest activities organized everyday gender structures and informed religious life. The Green Corn ceremony, which initiates a period of fasting, is celebrated when corn first begins to ripen (typically in August).

While we similarly have to go back some time in order to contemplate how early settlers of what is now the Greek nation-state first envisioned their world there, their visions were informed by the activities and processes entailed in food production and consumption. Perhaps most notable was the olive tree, which has helped to organize life in this and other Mediterranean places ever since. Palestinians plant olive trees in contested territories to protest the Israeli 'occupation', for example. Perhaps not coincidentally, olive trees in this region also first developed as a result of the acts of birds, long before these trees were ever domesticated by humans, as they consume wild olives and thus prepare the pits for germination with the acids of their digestive systems. Of course all contemporary marketed olive cultivars are grafted onto wild stock by humans. Yet most olive trees far outlive their farmers, as well as the birds who contributed to their genetic survival, by many hundreds of years in some cases. Considering the roles of birds and trees does beg the question, as Michael Pollan has suggested in *The Botany of Desire* (2001), as to where agency lies in this particular ecological history. We would do well to consider these and other actors, such as new generations of ruralite food producers, urbanite consumers, counter-urban farmers, as well as immigrants also now drawn to cultivate such things as olive trees. Their new rural visions on old Greek farms are consequential.

I recall, for example, a Cambodian couple foraging for snails one afternoon on the shores of the island of Conanicut in Rhode Island. I was picking mussels and we exchanged information on what we intended to do with our catches. They drew a picture of the state in terms of cuisine, migration, and coastal resources that I had never seen before, making connections between geographic spaces, subsistence practices, and food markets that I could never have made on my own. Very few Rhode Islanders know what Cambodians are doing with snails. It is as if neither they nor the snails were even there. And then suddenly both are, changing everything you think you knew about the social ecology in question.

Indeed, the most significant socio-ecological visions I recognized when in the field in Laconia prefecture in the rural Peloponnese between 2008 and 2010 were those of South-Eastern or Balkan European immigrants- Bulgarians,

Romanians, Moldovans, and Albanians, amongst others- who have lived in Greece for more than twenty years. Along with the xenophobia and rural stagnation so noteworthy in scholarly literature on Greece, the unprecedented accomplishments of these non-Greeks have also come into view in the investigation of Greek countryside. As they reclaim, re-purpose, and re-territorialize Greek agricultural land, presumptions about the end of Greek agriculture take on new meaning. Until recently jokes often made by local Greek residents in Laconia- that we will all be eating Albanian olive oil in the future or that Laconia might become a 'little Albania'- were simply that. "Learn Albanian now", Greeks have often said, now only half in jest, "so that you'll know how to pronounce your boss' name".

As with many ethnographers of rurality in Greece, I have witnessed the neoliberal milieu of the European Union or globalized agriculture in which Greeks and non-Greeks compete with each other for limited social, cultural, as well as financial capital. Orange production regimes (Lawrence, 2007) are particularly susceptible to volatile developments. In the agro-town of Skala, a dozen or so kilometres from Goritsa, the village in which I spent approximately eighteen months, I very often saw the exploitation of cheap migrant labour that post-colonial theorist Aamir Mufti referred to after visiting there in 2014. Yet, as Mufti himself pointed out in order to draw attention to the achievements Greeks and Pakistani have made in the way of ethnic pluralism elsewhere, this is but one of many pictures people construct of neoliberal place-making.

Take this picture for example, described in the following terms by the *Greek Reporter*, an online news organization:

Figure 1.
"A large number of Albanian immigrants in Greece are returning to their country because of the financial crisis, unemployment and reduced wages" (Kalmouki, 2014)

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Despite the fact that many Albanians have indeed left Greece as a result of exploitation or xenophobia and since the onset of the economic crisis late in 2008, particularly those from the construction sector (with IKA health insurance by which much data about immigrants is typically gleaned as opposed to OGA insurance which covers agricultural workers), most have remained. What is more, the men in the photograph are not Albanians. There are no pictures of Albanians leaving Greece en masse. This is perhaps due to a lack of Albanian national solidarity. They are also relatively invisible because traditional Greek agriculture in which many Albanians work is irregular, informal, and dismissed as 'backwards'. These agriculturalists are, along with the farms they work on and now increasingly own themselves, black swans.

The trope of the 'black swan', one which I originally borrowed from Dutch rural sociologist Jan van der Ploeg and which he used in order to illustrate the resiliency of small farms in the famously 'progressive' world of Dutch agriculture, is more complicated than I believed at first. Understanding the nature of black swans- what makes them so complicated- is key to understanding what it is that is so mysterious and significant about immigrants in Greek agriculture.

Before black swans were 'discovered' in Australia in 1697 by the Dutch explorer Willem de Vlamingh, all swans were presumed white. Thus referring to something as a black swan is to equate it with mythological creatures such as the unicorn, just before a unicorn walks into the room. Not only are black swans rare, and so perhaps unpredictable, the significance of black swans lies in the fact that they exist without us actually knowing it. Hardly just an oddity, people fail to comprehend their uncanny existence- the mythical figure cannot be reconciled with the creature itself.

The application of this trope at this moment in Greek history, with specific regard to Greek agriculture and immigration, has become central to my understanding of the contemporary Greek countryside. It has added enormous complexity to the important Marxist presumption of the exploitation of immigrant agricultural labour. It has helped me to contextualize the accusations of stagnancy there (along with the immense stigma embodied in almost everything animate and inanimate in rural Greece) and consider the fantastic potential to be found in the unpredictable. The black swan has, at various points in my ethnographic descriptions (Verinis, 2010, 2012, and forthcoming) been a young Afghan man discretely holding hands with an older rural Greek man in public, a small Greek olive farm that a Romanian couple wants to buy, 'Greek' olive trees transferred to an Albanian farm, a nearly extinct Greek food variety, a young urban Greek entrepreneur returning to his grandmother's farm, as well as a stalwart old Greek man who continues to farm in the manner he deems proper despite the fact that he earns less money than he expends year after year.

The work of South-Eastern European/Balkan immigrant farmers make up the bulk of my ethnographic accounts of black swan behaviour because, as with the misrepresentation in the photograph above, I was told time and time again that they were not there and that, even if they were, their presence and impact was short-lived at best despite the fact that they remain and are helping to define the ways that Greeks conceptualize the world as did their ancient forebears in the Mediterranean region thousands of years ago. These black swans are largely invisible due to the fact that their presence draws inconvenient ties between periods (such as the Ottoman and that of new Europe) as well as people (Albanians and Greeks for example). By labelling all Balkan immigrants 'Albanians' as they typically have for some time now, Greeks also [dis]place themselves as ambiguous Balkanites vis-à-vis a semantic overlap, highlighting the lasting significance of a Balkan syncretism (Bakalaki, 2003: 219). They are inconvenient in ideological terms as well. Semi-intensive farming initiatives like the *Neas Agrotis* or Young Farmer program in Europe (in conjunction with Malthusian ideologies) are being undermined by the exchange of peasant values between the East/South and the West/North. Peasant traditions are being re-embodied to the chagrin of those scientists and capitalists who believe only in the future of large scale and capital intensive agriculture and they are being re-embodied in non-Greeks, to the chagrin of neo-fascists such as members of the political party *Chryssi Avgi* or Golden Dawn. These swans are invisible to rural sociology, which is mostly concerned with broad based statistical outcomes, as well as to the anthropology of migration which rightly focuses on the 'dirty work' that immigrants are often forced to do and the concomitant forms of exploitation they endure.

Etienne Balibar (2004), Robert Kaplan (2010), Andreas Kalyvas (2009), and Vangelis Calotychos, author of *The Balkan Prospect* (2013)- journalists, political scientists, and literary critics- continually propose that Greece represents Europe's innate possibilities in social, cultural, as well as political terms.[1] Sarah Green makes the point that the Balkans are characterized by so much fragmentation precisely because of the many connections between certain ethnic groups there (2005: 129). Under such [historical] circumstances, maintaining

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[1] Balibar characterized Greece's position in Europe in 2004: "If Europe is for us first of all the name of an unresolved political problem, Greece is one of its centers, not because of the mythical origins of our civilization, symbolized by the Acropolis of Athens, but because of the current problems concentrated here" (2). Balibar's characterization of Greece has gained lasting credibility since the onset of the European financial crisis. As the journalist Robert Kaplan speculated in 2010; "the state of the politics in Athens will say much about the success or failure of the European project".

a clear separation between the Greek and the Albanian sides could only be done through a continual refusal to clarify the ambiguities, through ignoring the leftovers of previous attempts to establish separations that could not be resolved because the locations of the separations (as it were) remained contested (157). Almost anything is possible in such a context.

The Greek countryside is still made up of diverse varieties of people, places, and ideologies that make it the quintessential representation of all that is invisible and unpredictable, inconvenient and disregarded, uncanny, impossible, as well as possible. Greece means as many different things as anyplace in the world might. I found black swans here particularly telling for this reason.

In order to diversify their incomes, black swans such as my Bulgarian friend Stefanos in the Laconian town of Skoura, often run coffeeshops as well as their own farms. An Athenian Greek had been running the *kafeneoin* that Stefanos now rents and this fellow, as Stefanos explained, lacked the sensibilities required to cater to local villagers. Instead of providing them with food and service they were accustomed to, he had attempted to sell them 'trendy' urban cuisine. Stefanos had learned to appreciate what rural Greeks prefer, sharing these tastes himself and after having lived in rural Greece for more than two decades. While chatting with an old Greek man in this kafeneion one afternoon, I referred to Stefanos as an olive farmer. The old Greek seemed to be in shock despite the fact that he was very well aware that Stefanos was indeed a farmer. "*Alla einai Bulgaros*", "but he's Bulgarian" the man protested. To hear such a thing said out loud in public conversation brought the incongruity of a Bulgarian farmer in Greece to the fore for this man. "I've worked with all of these people. There's no difference between me and them now", Stefanos once told me. Yet he then also pointed out that "to learn the truth about Greece you have to talk to foreigners". In order to discover what Greece could possibly be, you must visit with the invisible, unpredictable, inconvenient, disregarded, uncanny, and impossible.

Post-Peasant politics: extinction, resistance, and mimicry in rural Greek border countrysides

At the Goritsa *kafeneion* one day, some men were talking about how the Spanish as well as other Europeans were beginning to harvest olives mechanically, in rows with large harvesters, supposedly collecting up to eighty tons a day.

Figure 2. A G10 olive harvester by the French company Gregoire
http://industrial.gregoire.fr/portail/news/52-new-gregoire-g10-the-future-of-the-olive-harvesting.html (20.11.2014).

Due to the semi-mountainous topography of the fields they own, as with all of Laconia for the most part, they do not have the option to harvest mechanically even if they have contiguous fields and were willing and able to uproot old trees in order to plant new ones in formulaic rows. They laughed, referring to themselves as the shepherds of the olive industry, milking their trees by hand, and gestured as if they were masturbating.

This sense of marginal positioning is omnipresent in rural Greece. While rural Europe has always been somewhat connected, southern European rural areas have long faired worse in the bargain. Shared agricultural practices have indeed played a key role in the development of Europe as a whole. Louis XVI planted potatoes on the royal grounds, posted an elite guard, but relieved him at midnight to inspire curiosity and encourage potato theft. The invented cultural capital surrounding the potato led to its spread in northern Europe and ended much hunger there.[2] While Europe's centres of political power had long been anchored in the south where wheat grew reliably, the potato arguably shifted the balance of power to the north where it has since remained (Pollan, 2001: 201).

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[2] Of course overreliance on this crop also later contributed to the Irish famine.

Half of the agriculturally oriented households and two-thirds of EU farmholdings are in southern Europe (Kasimis, 2005). Yet much of southern European life remains in a precarious state. According to the World Wildlife Federation (WWF), Mediterranean forests, woodlands and scrub host more than 25,000 plant species, most of which are indigenous to the region. 600-800,000 hectares of these forests, woodlands, and scrub are damaged each year due to human negligence and arson (Heatherington, 2010). What is more, ancient terraced olive production regimes of Greece in are in limbo, floating amidst traditional "artisanal technes of aesthetic distinction" and the "industrial technoscience" developing elsewhere (Meneley, 2007: 685). The majority of Greek olive farmers operate on an extremely small scale (85% of them according to George Vlahos at the Agricultural University of Athens). Farmers in the Peloponnese expend an average of seven times the personal human energy as farmers working on an industrial scale. As they increasingly become abandoned and thus subsumed by shrubland, Greek olive farms become at risk of utter extinction. Echoing the sentiments expressed by many 'experts' and farmers I spoke with over the course of my fieldwork, Goritsa municipal agronomist Stavros Nikoletos told me that Greece should not even try to compete with these countries in the same global markets.

Unsurprisingly, feelings of joy and play seem to be missing from the experiences of youth in Greek villages (Caftanzoglou and Kovani, 1997: 241-245).[3] As Kostis Hadjimichalis (2003: 109) points out, most of Greece, along with major portions of other Mediterranean countries like Spain, Italy and Portugal, is subject to becoming merely a countryside to northern Europe's urban population- a refashioning of the rural/urban dualism. In this scenario, Greeks become "modern Euro-peasants", merely the "gardeners of the European landscape" for the urban middle class to which Jacques Delors, amongst other politicians, has referred (Hadjimichalis, 2003: 110). Nonetheless, globalization and liberalization, once the progenitors of agricultural modernization campaigns, seem to now be eliminating the conditions which had encouraged conventional entrepreneurial modes of production. High costs of energy inputs, unstable processes, as well as other aspects of conventional farm intensification make the massive modernization project from the 1950's and 1960's one that now "bites its own tail" (van der Ploeg, 2008: 143). Italians use the expression 'agricoltura de salto', or 'hit and run agriculture' to describe EU policies or market conditions which premise nothing more than immediate profit. In fact, the largest farms in the most 'advanced'

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[3] Caftanzoglou and Kovani point to Aristophanes' *Archarnians*, the comedy in which simple peasants praise the wealth and polysemy of agriculture as a testimony to the potential value of rural life (250), as the antithesis to the dominant conceptions of "peasant" life today.

parts of Europe (such as the Netherlands) represent to van der Ploeg the weakest links. Pluriactivity, once only useful in peripheries such as Greece, is now seen by many as a new global model.

Along with farm diversification, such a new model entails, for example, the reproduction of craftsmanship and new forms of cooperation between new rural residents. Contemporary endogenous development rhetoric in EU policies as well as in the writings of European rural sociologists such as Christopher Ray (2001), John Gray (2010), and van der Ploeg highlight somewhat anarchic conditions as opposed to the combination of state apparatuses, regulatory schemes, and agribusinesses which have typically been thought beneficial to modern rural European life.

Ann Kingsolver (2011: 15) describes the act of 'placing' an absolute stranger as someone local in order to establish shared experience with them as a counter to many of the other less favourable potential placements or shared experiences rural people now face. Referring to Mary Douglas' 'matter out of place', Kingsolver (115) describes a case in which a Filipino family felt almost immediately at home in Nicholas County Kentucky whereas many who were born in this rural American county experienced nothing of the sort upon re-settling. Rural relationships, as she says, are particularly "thick relationships", which exclude and include people differently than other types of relationships. "Subsistence talk", that which is so common in rural areas, can be compared to what Kingsolver refers to as "tolerance talk" in urban ones, in which people are led to [de]construct boundaries between each other. As she writes, "the work that people do together in small towns, across whatever differences they may have in order to sustain community services under challenging conditions could be instructive for those facing similar challenges at different scales" (140).

These "neo-peasants", as objects, are as inconvenient to theory and scholarship as they are invisible to development models. Anthropologists such as Michael Kearney (1996), William Roseberry (1978), and Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992) consider ideas about "peasants" both misleading and powerful- "robust anachronisms" demanding a legitimate "post-peasant" perspective. Hybrid figures as peasant-migrant workers and land-owning proletarians have added complexity and theoretical gravity, if also ambiguity to the idea of peasantness in recent decades.[4]

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[4] The notion of a "worker-peasantry", for example, is inherently ambiguous according to Holmes (1983). The term has been bandied about, arguably extended too far beyond the case of the East-Central European agriculturalists- the excesses of agricultural populations- who became the first worker-peasants known to scholarship.

Greek rural sociologist Stathis Damianakos (1997: 192) links Greek peasantization to their overall lack of integration into contemporary mass culture, concluding that; "the modernization of agriculture has not managed to change the Greek peasant into a businessman" (Damianikos, 1997: 206). Yet while the Greek peasant has not necessarily turned into a businessman, he has become other things, such as other ethnicities, in the meantime.

Greece, as such a Southern European border country, has been strained by certain new European immigration patterns. In recent decades, many immigrants have preferred to enter the EU overland across Greece's northern border with Turkey or by boat to islands in the Aegean due to the relative ease in doing so. What is more, the Dublin Regulation and a subsequent Dublin agreement send asylum seekers to the country where they first entered the EU when no other placement for refugees can be found. As a result, rural Greece is thus now home to a huge pool of cheap informal labour. In the fields, immigrants have filled in gaps where human hands as opposed to mechanization are needed-harvesting fruits, vegetables, and flowers amongst other crops as opposed to the cereals and potatoes more mechanically harvested in the north.

This particular pluriactive strategy amongst Greeks and non-Greeks, long preferable in the Greek countryside, gives this post peasant a transnational character; "whereas the peasant was essentialized as having a primordial connection to the land, a condition that made the agrarian issue the fundamental peasant concern, post-peasant rural politics is increasingly elaborated in terms of human rights, eco-politics and ethnicity" (Kearney, 1996: 8).

Stefanos and his family, along with many Greek and non-Greek families who have begun to engage in or have been drawn back to rural and plural activities in Greece, are in a state of what van der Ploeg calls "repeasantization". As neo-peasants, to a certain extent they choose to suffer certain financial consequences or losses in terms of respect in the context of global capitalism so as to maintain some control over their livelihoods as well as community ties, agricultural heritage, or agrarian values that others might not share as much of an interest in. This too is key to understanding the post-modern black swan.

In conjunction with the renewed interest in rural pluricactivity and the new elaborations of post-peasant rural politics, it is largely the Albanians in Greece, particularly those who can demonstrate ties to what Greeks refer to as 'North Epirus' (in southern Albania), who are now seen as reservoirs of various kinds of Greek and Balkan 'traditions'. "If Hoxja kept those people "backward", this is turning out to be a most useful resource for Epirus's postmodern future", Sarah Green has written with regard to the four-decade long fascist regime in Albania and artisanship's place in new hierarchies of value (1998: 277).

Arvanites, a Greek minority with historical ties to Albania located primarily in Attica, by way of this argumentation for example, have the ability to reverse the accusation of moral and cultural inadequacy and accuse Athenians and other urbanites or *skliathes* (bourgoisie) of modern and moral degeneracy (Gefou-Madianou, 1999: 424). While manual labour may continue to be derided as backwards behavior, and as immigrants may seem particularly susceptible to stigmatization as they increasingly enact this backwardness, they are also somewhat immune to Greek stigma. Perhaps they are not playing the same modernization game, that which small-scale Greek farmers have historically lost with the rest of Europe. Perhaps Albanians and other South-Eastern or Balkan immigrants have not learned how to desire to emulate the West in the manner that Greeks and some other Europeans have over the years of affiliation with EU or some other Western ideological apparatus (Carole Barkas, personal interview, April 15, 2011).[5]

Natalia Ribas-Mateos notes that "the arrival of the Albanians led to the rapid revitalization of traditional farming methods" (2005: 119). New relationships between Greeks and immigrants enable the farm-owners to resist selling the farm. Terraces worked with hand labour in this highly mountainous country remained relatively unaffected by the introduction of the tractor and certain other agricultural innovations. Especially in Less Favoured Areas (LFAs), migrants have reinvigorated traditional terrace farming activity, drawing attention away from the pursuit of more conventional European standards as well as to the ways these activities conserve water and deter soil erosion in a region increasingly affected by drought (Holst Warhaft and Steenhuis, 2010).

Immigrant labour availability now influences crop selection, investment decisions, and the overall direction that many local agricultural paths take. Growers in the Spanish regions of Catalonia and Andalusia have shifted from cereals to more labour-intensive fruit trees and greenhouse cultivations for example now that there is a surplus of foreign labour (Cole and Booth, 2007: 69). Italian farmers leveled coastal plain farms, uprooting carob, olive and almond trees in order to expand greenhouse production in the 'transformed strip' (*la fascia transformata*), eighty some odd kilometers between Scoglitti and Pachino

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[5] One day two Albanian neighbors of mine in Goritsa, Polychronis and Minas, showed me a video Minas had made on his phone of them doing extraneous farm chores for an elderly Greek woman with her donkey. We all found the video extremely humorous, but it was not exactly clear why. It could have been the ridiculously small scale of work they were doing with this single and now socially derided beast of burden. To consider two such disparate means to an end- traditional and modern farming techniques in Europe- as equally legitimate is certainly laughable. Yet what is specifically funny about this picture is open to question.

in Siraca. This stretch of land is symbolic of the powerful forces at work here, on the part of government as well as peasant and migrant entrepreneurs (Cole and Booth 2007:72). Immigrants now often revitalize socially dead places (Psimmenos, 1995), vis-à-vis the phenomenon of *convivencia* in Spain, for example. On the local level, *convivencia* takes such forms as shared perspectives on cleanliness or the nuclear family as opposed to differences between ethnicities, nationalities, religions, or races (Suarez-Navaz, 2005: 141). To understand *convivencia* one must consider people's multiple positions, as family members, group members, consumers, producers, citizens, foreigners, etc. (Suarez-Navaz, 2005: 193, Rosaldo, 1994: 11-12). *Compartecipazione*, an Italian notion of shared entrepreneurship in which the Italian farmer provides the site and materials while the immigrant entrepreneurs provide the labour supply, is another novel arrangement between citizens and immigrants.

Migrants in Greece revive traditional stone building methods, "contributing to the conservation of the rural landscape" (Kasimis, 2009: 55). They care for the aged, as metonymic 'replacement migrants' for absent children in rural areas (van der Geest, et. al., 2004). As Gray has written (2000: 48); "rural relatives are not positions in a diagram, a genealogy, but relations you have to cultivate, to 'keep up'". They are a practical relations (Bourdieu, 1990: 96). "Migrants even bury us", rural Greeks tell Charalambros Kasimis (2009: 56). In general they can be seen to enable the maintenance of traditional ways of life in the face of fast capitalism, contributing to the continuation of rural Greek social structure. Petronoti (2000) and others suggest that resistance to calls to conform to or mimic conventional northern European agricultural schemes in southern European countryside occurs on multiple levels: "Those variously described as villagers, peasants, or rural people perceive, interpret, and contest hegemonic ideologies and values in multiple ways" (Petronoti, 2000: 72).

Consideration of neo-rural trends along these lines might lead us to believe that southern Europe is in a potentially advantageous position, less fettered by a history of industrialized agriculture. Michael Herzfeld (2004) explores the identification of Greek artisans as such "exemplars of national virtue and tradition", a "repository of ancient skills and qualities" (Herzfeld, 2004: 4). Yet the "global hierarchy of values" inherent in the invention of tradition in this era of high modernism has been unkind and duplicitous to artisans, Herzfeld explains (2004: 16). The rhetoric of nostalgia is a privilege of power and we must question so-called 'traditional' elements. Daniel Miller (1987: 140) similarly refers to craft traditions as nostalgic products of disenchantment- that handmade products tend to reproduce hierarchies that separate 'elites' and 'peasants' in many ways. As Greek olive farmers hand-harvest products

for largely elite consumption for example, we must consider their agency (or lack thereof) in the socio-technical regimes of the table olive and olive oil industries. As non-Greek farmers become the chief producers of such traditional Greek foods and crafts, we must ascertain what post-peasant rural politics are achieving. In what ways and at which points are these Laconian farmers able to avoid rural stigma or reverse the accusation of moral and cultural inadequacy? Despite the fact that they are still seldom tastemakers defining at what point in the production and supply chain or in the branding and marketing of 'extra virgin' olive oil what certain individuals will benefit from the distinction afforded to such commodities, an increasing and diverse group of them are.

Greek dispositioning to nature, rural society, non-greeks and food after years of austerity: neo- rural peasant entrepreneurs in neo rural Greece

Much of this newfound agency can be found vis-à-vis neo-rural dispositions to nature and agrarian life. In many Greek cities new barter markets have begun to open in order to address the crisis in the 'social economy' that has emerged (Rakopoulos, 2014, Higgins, 2014). Referred to as 'the potato revolution' the 'anti-middleman movement', or 'solidarity economies' (*oikonomia allilengii*) TEM markets for example (a barter currency in which one TEM is somewhat equivalent to one Euro) breed solidarity akin to the solidarity experienced by older generations of Greeks, most of whom were relatively rural fifty or more years ago and who would commonly exchange such things as meat and flour for cheese and milk with one another. Indeed, these new cooperative movements typically originate around the exchange of food and resist the temptation to mimic capitalist networks. As Greeks have been seen to represent the neo-fascism and xenophobia now threatening all of Europe on the one hand (as a failure, disarticulation, or deformity), the involvement of Greeks and non-Greeks together in these endeavours signals other potential post-modern European sodalities that have their origins in rural peasant life despite the development of a strong urban/rural divide over the course of the past half century.[6]

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[6] Three septuagenarians I often spoke with explained to me over lunch one afternoon in April of 2010 how hard it had become to get traditional items until the arrival of new immigrants in the 1990's. The only people who sell manure for their gardens, for example, are the Albanians, they said. This reorients Greek attitudes towards non-Greeks vis-a-vis significant rural practices.

Figure 3. Petroula, an urban Greek TV weatherperson (complete with her urban animal) discusses the forecast against the backdrop of a typical rural Greek scene (Verinis, 2010).

In the world of cultivated nature, Greek ideas of "order" (*taksi*) and "care" (*fronditha*) for the environment, like the cooperative movements mentioned above, are also somewhat antithetical to more dominant rural or agricultural models in Europe. *Taksi* and *fronditha* to Greek farmers are akin to the ways one maintains a home. It is for this reason that Nadia Seremetakis (1991: 95) notes the relationship between the orderliness of households and the orderliness of fields. Toponyms are often simply family names, reflecting this relationship (Allen, in Kardulias and Schutes, 1997: 266).

Despite the prevalence of litter that has resulted in recent years with the rise of plastics, and while pesticides and other chemical inputs on the farm are not thought to be unclean by and large, properly pruned trees, well-plowed fields, and closely cut grasses are important indicators of order and cleanliness when considering farmer reputations. In sum, nature in the park-like western sense is often characterized by Greeks, as it is by the Anishinaabe in western Canada (Willow, 2011), as impersonal and is consequently uninteresting and misunderstood. The ambiguities surrounding the etymology and translation of words like "agricultural" and "rural" as well as "wild" in Greek are further representation of the difficulties encountered in attempting to multifunctionalize rural areas along EU lines. The words *agrotikos*/*agrotiki* (agrarian/ agricultural/

rural) and *agrotis* (farmer) share roots with *agrios* (wild and uncultivated). Greek farmers are linked with wilderness in ways that non-Greeks are not. The centripetal design of Greek villages, as opposed to the scattered separation of individual farms in the North American countryside do not lend themselves to agri-tourism either.[7] Greeks tend to live together in clusters rather than adjacent to their farms, which typically lie on the outskirts of town. These designs were to provide protection against wild animals and predatory armies and facilitate the cultivation of the fields of neighbours (Sanders, 1962: 44). There is the potential in this to imagine some kind of "European wilderness" in the large swaths of relatively uninhabited spaces between individual villages, accommodating a global eco-tourism (Heatherington, 2010: 68). For the time being however, linguistic, demographic and other kinds of hurdles have served to undermine the application of the conventional European agri-tourism models.

New "EU fruits", such as the kiwi, have often clashed with the sensory strata of Greek agricultural traditions. Heirloom seeds, like peach pits in Greece (Seremetakis, 1994: 3), represent the "memory" and "gene" banking of traditional agricultural knowledge held by individuals as part of farming families, embodying sensory strata shaped by collective bodily experiences and emitting a language through metaphorical usage. To refer to "new", "strange", or "weird" fruits has even been an historical, colloquial way to refer to strange people in Greece (Seremetakis, 1994: 7).

The sounds and smells of new mechanical devices often also materially change once more familiar agricultural spaces, from conversational to non-traditional commercial enterprises. Olive farms that use mechanical gas-powered harvesting tools, by virtue of the additional operational costs as well as the fact that they rule out any possibility for light chatter to help pass the time or create bonds amongst workers, are of an entirely different character than farms that rely exclusively on hand labour. Language barriers between Greeks and non-Greeks, for example, are well-maintained if and when there is no opportunity to cross them due to the excessive noise of machinery. Traditional or "peasant" agricultural practices by comparison have often gone a long way towards the management of significant changes to rural life in such a manner in the past, such as after the "Asia Minor Disaster" when more than one million Greek refugees from Turkey were "repatriated" in the world's first international population exchange in 1922 as a result of the Lausanne Treaty and instigated such key components of the peasant mode as terracing. A reversion to peasant

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[7] As a state representative at the Ministry of Rural Development and Food in Athens said to me, "we have a big problem with the meaning of the word agri-tourism here in Greece". "Agri-tourism... we simply don't think like that", Tassos Skouras, a regional representative at the development office in Tripolis, also told me.

agriculture or resistance to increasingly mechanized or intensive methods of farming less indigenous crops is again helping certain rural Greeks to manage globalized agriculture, facilitating the incorporation of non-Greeks as well as a repositioning of rural Greek socio-economic life in response to global hierarchies of value.

Talk of immigrants, how they smell or dress, similarly often bleeds into talk about animals in general. Ioannis Dimakos and Katerina Tasiopoulou (2003: 313) point out that Greek schoolchildren often associate immigrants with new health risks in the same ways that animals are typically blamed for the spread of disease. As 'others' of some kind (in terms of species or nationality), they should be put in their proper order. My wife and I were reviled by many Goritsotans once we took in a stray dog we named Popi for example.

Figure 4. Popi on a typical afternoon, advertising her liminality as a stray dog at home in the Goritsa town square (Verinis, 2010).

Virtually all dogs in Greek countrysides are of mere utilitarian value, as hunting companions. As a stray out of place in our home, people sometimes offered to find Popi a job protecting someone's property; "some Albanian keeps stealing his oranges" we were told one time about a friend of a friend who might be interested in taking Popi in as a watchdog. Popi and the alleged immigrant

perpetrator would both be put back in their places with such an arrangement. One young Greek boy cautioned us as we all played with Popi in the *plateia* or "town square" one day; "you have to be careful so that the Albanians don't grab her and eat her!". He had naturally conflated a general "Albanophobia" with the specifics of a particular myth- that Pakistanis, Indians and other Middle eastern or Asian immigrants, due to their supposed cultural predilection to do so, had been rounding up stray dogs and eating them in villages around Laconia such as Skala.[8] Greeks are certainly ethnocentric, as reflected in their relatively fantastic beliefs about human-animal relations or certain ethnicities. But this says little about the ways that their hard-lined stance may shift in a tumultuous context such as the current economic one, in order to repopulate rural areas, maintain traditional forms of agriculture, or otherwise create certain kinds of bonds with new people to facilitate such socio-economic remedies.

Ethnic and class alliances are now often described as culturally-based solidarities (Holmes, 2009). Herzfeld (1997) draws on the notion of 'cultural intimacy' to broach the contemporary state of organic solidarity in Europe. He considers the crypto-colonialism experienced by Greeks over the recent centuries as contributing to not only their ethnocentric views towards recent immigrant others, as a by product of parameters that "Great Powers" drew around them, but also the fact that difference remains undisclosed or incomplete (2010); "As a consequence of this process, difference remains a private matter, a component of cultural intimacy that officialdom seeks to conceal even as citizens matter-of-factly deal with its pervasive implications in their daily lives" (Herzfeld, 2010: 314). As daily life unfolds in a new transnational context, cultural intimacy is shared, denied, and forfeited vis-à-vis the negotiations of the meanings of rural, peasant, or *Ellinikotita* ('Greekness') more generally; "Because nationalities are grounded in images of intimacy, they can be subtly but radically restructured by the changes occurring in the intimate reaches of everyday life- by shifts in meaning that may not be registered at all in external cultural form" (330).

This reoriented focus on an agrarian life which includes certain non-Greeks has gone some way towards the promotion of many traditional rural Greek products, opening up a new space for peasant activities and identities in national and international food markets for example. The traditional early winter harvest of volvoi, or wild hyacinth bulbs- once avidly collected by Greeks- is now primarily undertaken by immigrants familiar with the wild crop and capable of the difficult labour.

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[8] Despite the more obvious reasons why stray dogs disappear in rural Greece- that they simply eat poison set out by locals to protect their crops from foxes and rabbits, crawl off, and die as our dog Popi eventually did- exotic images of hungry 'Pakistani' men filleting dog carcasses in dark village alleys are preferred explanations. The reported disappearance of a number of stray and pet dogs in Skala in 2009 was only the most renowned of tales such as this.

Figure 5. Avra Panousopoulou of Yiam, a new traditional Greek food company, capitalizes on the increasing international interest in traditional foods. yiam.gr/pickled-tassel-hyacinth-bulbs-volvi-toursi-kremidakia-bulbes-de-jacinthes-petrin-.html (06.04.2013).

In much the same way that biological processes in traditional saltpans provide food for birds, these new markets for *volvoi* have in turn reoriented attention to the olive groves in which they grow. The peasant environment- its biological processes as well as the peasants who participate in them- is increasingly linked to a global interest in sustainability measures such as organic agriculture and water conservation. Limited peasant water use not only protects a scarce resource and lowers costs, it adds taste or flavor and thus value to koroneiki olive oil, for example, in the contemporary global market. Ξερικες καλλιεργες or "dry climates", are not the failures they are most often seen as in Greece. They have their own set of benefits.
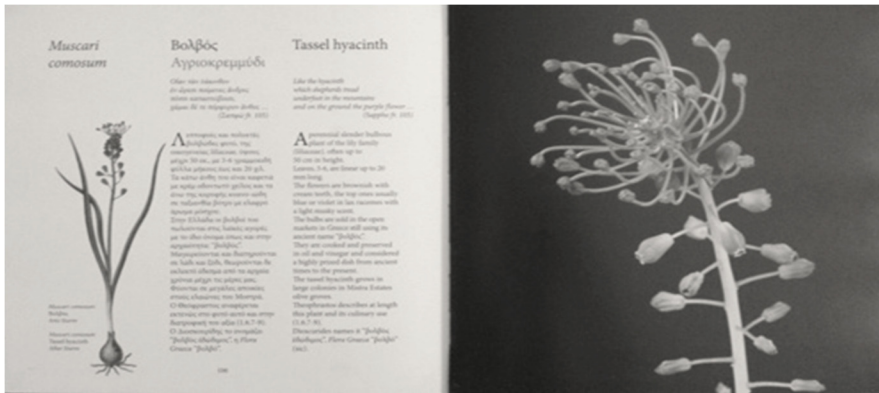
Figure 6. A page from olive farmer Eugene Ladopoulos' *Πρωτομαγια στον Μυστρα* or *The First of May in Mistra*, advertising *volvoi*, 'bulbs' or tassel hyacinth flowers, one of the many unofficial signs of Greek organic farming practices, biodiversity, agricultural heritage, and value-added foods. In this way Ladopoulos promotes his olive oil without the support of any EU structural investments.

Albanians Dora and her husband Lefteris also draw Greeks and non-Greeks together in peasant economies. They trade Panagiotis, a Greek shepherd who grazes his sheep in some of their fields, milk and cheese for oil in much the same way that such commodities have been used as currency in local relations throughout history (Chang, 1997: 136). What is more, the energy that Dora and Lefteris expend harvesting olives neither significantly depletes natural resources nor contributes to carbon footprints as opposed to the G10 harvester pictured above.

Figure 7. Dora (near left) talking with my wife Shayna during a work break. Note the hand-powered olive stripper in the foreground and sheep grazing in the background (Verinis, 2010).

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Nikos and Olga Bordigen, a Ukranian couple living in Sellasia helped me to understand other important connections between the Greek and non-Greek neo-peasantry and rural Greek futures. As with most of the olive groves in their adopted town of Sellasia, the trees that the Bordigens bought had been severely burned in the wildfires of 1988. They are now grafting new stock onto these fire-damaged trees, as well as portions of their house from the forest *maquis* that has taken over since then. Olga also pointed out in conversation one afternoon, for example, the benefits to having fragmented fields, one of the classic criticisms conventional modernization schemes make of the Greek peasant farmer. Fire danger, for the individual farmer, she said, is lessened when his fields are not altogether. Fields are separated by firebreaks in terms of this local logic.

Traditional rural peasant life, ethnic pluralism, new value-added food markets, and sustainable development strategies co-construct each other in these cases.

Figure 8. Nikos, Olga, and my wife Shayna with our daughter Anthe outside of their home in Sellasia (Verinis, 2012).

Conclusion

It is true that, as Adamantia Pollis has written (1996: 177), Greece's organic notion of society, in its rural as well as urban incarnations does not fit with the provisions of the European human rights convention established in 1950. Along with the ethnic identities of such historical minority groups as Arvanites and Vlachs, the rights of all citizens, let alone new non-Greek non-citizens, have been subsumed by the *ethnos*. In order to remedy this, as Pollis later wrote in 2001;

> Radical changes would be needed in the educational system, along with the separation of the church and the state and a reconfiguration of the symbols of Greekness. If this process of reconstruction is not thwarted, it will lead in time to a reconstitution of the Greek nation into a multiethnic multicultural society which incorporates both historical minorities and the new immigrants (Pollis, 2001: 292).

With regard to the Geek neo-peasantry, as Ann Kingsolver suggests:

> … rurality might be thought of more in relation to choices, resources, and skills than as a static background or worse a backwater to cosmopolitanism and global decision-making (Kingsolver, 2011: 16).

One of the olive farms I often worked on was owned by an Albanian named Mitsos. One field in particular was referred to as "Mitsos tou Poros". *Poros*, or "ford" was the name of the area and as mentioned above, it is traditional for fields to be named after their owners as if they were part of their houses. However it was the first time that I had ever heard someone speak of a place-name that referenced a new immigrant owner. At my urging, Mitsos hypothesized about the future of his and other such rural Greek places; "I'll tell you who's going to be here in the future- immigrants. The local people are unmarried. I'm telling you. They can't even find wives. It's sad. They rent to the immigrants and take money from the subsidies. But all of this is changing". Amidst the globalization of the Greek countryside, we come across such forms of relocalizing and repeasantizing strategies in which migrant farmers increasingly recreate the peasant mode prior to EU involvement.[9] More than objectified embodiments of a so-called 'peasant' life, immigrants like Mitsos are now largely responsible for the statuses and roles associated with such aspects of rural Greek culture as masculinity, agriculture, or heritage.

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[9] Mitsos, who owns his own tractor, storeroom, olive groves, and home has not even bothered applying for the limited subsidies that are still available for farmers in times of bad weather, preferring to spend his time maximizing his production levels. He has also begun selling table olives directly to the supermarket chain, Promitheftiki.

The question also remains as to what Laconia's specific rural "development repertoire" might be (Ray 1999:4). These are perhaps "contingent countrysides" (Sutton, 2000) or "contingent utopias" (Torres, 1997: 219). Like black swans, these sustainable, endogenous, and non-exclusionary rural development repertoires remain unacknowledged hidden novelties. As van der Ploeg points out:

> Considered in isolation, then, the many empirical changes associated with the current process of repeasantization must, indeed, appear miniscule and almost irrelevant. However, as soon as analysis moves beyond the level of single units of production, a widespread and radical re-patterning of both the social and the natural world is revealed… It also implies a redefinition of identities of farming men and women. (der Ploeg, 2003: 154).

It is true that the domination over nature by man has long been the basis for the rationalization of rural Greek society. This view favours productive relations over the development of social and ecological relations associated with contemporary ideas about sustainable development, especially those now emitting from EU rural development policy. Yet as many of the raw heritage materials, such as those mentioned above, are being resurrected, the social and ecological relations that are inherent to Greek peasant life become revived. Ancient olive oil harvest practices and oil mill technologies have remained somewhat constant since the neotechnic (Neolithic) period and exist simultaneously alongside new technologies (Louloudis, 1985). As Greeks and new immigrants participate in the transmission of such ancient Greek agricultural practices and technological know-how, a multi-ethnic rural Greek society that very few people know is even there forms around the sustainable functioning of traditional economies. As Raymond Williams (1973) has described, small-scale, "traditional", or "backward" rural practices seem to remain despite progression in agricultural modernization and rural development;

> The detailed histories indicate everywhere that many old forms, old practices and old ways of feeling survived into periods in which the general direction of a new development was clear and decisive. And then what seems an old order, a 'traditional' society, keeps appearing, reappearing, at bewildering various dates: in practice as an idea, to some extent based on experience, against which contemporary change can be measured. The structure of feeling within which the backward reference is to be understood is then not primarily a matter of historical explanation and analysis. What is really significant is this particular kind of reaction to the fact of change, and this has more real and more interesting social causes (Williams, 1973: 35).

Many of the real and interesting causes are to be found in the particular topographies, geo-political histories, as well as rural relationships now forming amongst a new group of black swans in Laconia and can often only be elaborated upon in talking and working with the non-Greek ones.

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NEW FORMS OF LAND ENCLOSURES: MULTINATIONALS AND STATE PRODUCTION OF TERRITORY IN CAMEROON

NGAMBOUK VITALIS PEMUNTA[*]

ABSTRACT. The 2008 financial crises led to a scramble for land and other natural resources reminiscent of colonialism by foreign governments and multinational corporations to feed their populations and pre-empt the eventuality of another food crises through large-scale agricultural investment. This paper discusses the creation of capitalist frontiers in the colonial agricultural enclaves of Cameroon's Littoral region where three multinational plantation companies hold sway. It demonstrates how the coming into the country of foreign investors has transformed the meaning of land and led to contesting legal orders between customary and statutory land tenure, the transformation of man-nature relationship and the dispossession of local communities due to the developmentalist state's production of territory. In the present neoliberal context, the state is increasingly controlling people and their relations to natural resources including land through the production of territory that is subsequently handed over to foreign investors. The paper adopts the view that the use of the expression 'new enclosures' is a misnomer because these developments are taking place at the very sites of the colonial frontier in Cameroon's Littoral region. It calls attention to the need for land governance reforms so as to restitute local land rights and for the need to respect internationally recognized environmental standards by multinational corporations.

Keywords: frontier, agricultural development, production of territory, communal land rights, land governance, developmentalism

Introduction

Despite the global outreach of the land grab phenomenon (South America, Central America, Southeast Asia and the former USSR), it is most accentuated in Africa and depicts 'a clear North-South dynamic [echoing] the land grabs that underwrote both colonialism and imperialism' (Borras et al. 2011: 209). Reminiscent of the colonial era, today's 'new enclosures' involves the taking

[*] *Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, Linnaeus University, Växjö, Sweden,*
e-mail: vitalispemunta@gmail.com

away of native land without consultation and for the production of crops for foreign markets-what Zoomers (2010) aptly describes as 'the foreignisation of land'. It is also accompanied by the reordering of nature and human-nature relationship and natural resource conflicts between multinationals and small-holder farmers. The 2008 global financial meltdown led to the quadruple convergence of finance, food, energy, and the environment. A spate of media reports intimate that powerful (trans) national investors and national governments as well as corporations and private equity funds have turned their attention to the Global South for the acquisition of millions of hectares of arable land for alternative sources of energy production principally biofuels, food crops, mineral deposits and reservoirs of environmental services as a preemptive security measure against future recessions. In Cameroon, the global spike in food prices alongside pent up political disenchantment with the sit-tight Yaounde regime as well planned constitutional change to eliminate presidential term limits led to food riots in February 2008.

This paper uses the protracted conflict over land between smallholder farmers and multinationals in Cameroon's Littoral region of Njombé-Penja due to the competing legal orders between customary and statutory land tenure as an ethnographic case study to argue that the use of the expression 'new enclosures' (Peluso and Lund, 2011; White et al., 2012) is a misnomer. In other words, while colonialism in its various guises has been an omnipresent reality, the land grab phenomenon in the country is actually happening in the very regions that served as colonial agricultural enclaves. This calls for the need to explore the past and historical memory so as to grasp the present, what might be aptly called a "critical junctures perspective" (Kalb and Tak, 2005). Reminiscent of the colonial period, this act of "possession through dispossession" (Harvey, 2005) is facilitated by the state's claim over all natural resources and state developmentalism that seeks to create governable spaces through the production of territory using the discursive repertoire of *terra nullius*. Through the production of territory development planning explicitly seeks to shape and order the future, even as, in practice, it often falls short of its stated objectives. Territories that are produced are handed over to foreign agro-industrial business consortiums while the locals remain as spectators. Their livelihoods are determined by the global capitalist economy that is mediated by control over land and supermarkets chains. Stated otherwise, futures are anticipated and evoked through the illusion of development planning (agricultural mechanization) when they have not yet materially manifested and may not manifest at all.

The paper draws on ethnographic interviews with stakeholders in the agricultural sector (labourers and smallholder farmers, civil society activists and the management of agro-industrial complexes) and participant observation to

examine the struggle over land and competing legal norms governing land tenure between smallholders and multinational corporations in the traditional colonial frontier of Cameroon's coastal region. The paper is organized into four parts. It begins with an examination of the heuristic concept of enclosure and presents a snapshot of the land grab phenomenon in Cameroon and the actors involved. This is followed by an examination of the territorialization practices that underpinned colonial and postcolonial developmentalist enclosures. Thirdly, we examine state territorialization practices which present local communities as primitive subjects who must be acted upon in the name of development since they are seen as standing on the way of progress. Fourthly, we examine the conflict engendered by the appropriation of native lands by three multinational corporations in the Njombé-Penja locality of Cameroon. This is followed by the conclusion.

The concept of enclosure goes beyond the mere fencing of land, pastures and woodlands and is intimately intertwined with other complex socio-economic processes mediated by the incorporation of "abstract space" into the market. It entails the incorporation of land as a common property resource into market relationships and the subsequent transformation of local farmers into wage labourers as multinationals takeover the land for export-oriented agriculture. Local farmers are simultaneously drawn into the circuit of global capitalism (see Marx, 1983; Makki and Geisler, 2011: 3; Harvey, 2005; Harvey, 2003) thereby tying their fates to the global supermarket chain. As Fouad Makki and Charles Geisler concede, it involves "the refashioning of land into a commodity through its disenchantment as a lineament of nature and moral economies"(Ibid). Through this process, land is taken away from labourers who as producers are then separated from the land, their relationships and user rights are extinguished. The process is further accompanied by displacement, forced migration using the police power of the state and broken livelihoods (see Cernea et al. 2000, Chatty and Colchester, 2002, Richards, 2013). Enclosure was actually a significant component of the development of historical capitalism: European overseas expansion was intertwined with the enclosure of the commons. The aim of these co-processes was to free up surplus land to be used for "higher profits". Accumulation by dispossession, Harvey (2003) maintains, is an omnipresent phenomenon that seeks to bring new spheres of social life under the ambit of the capitalistic neoliberal world market. Enclosure was copied from Europe and replicated in Africa by the colonial masters under the smokescreen of developmentalism and modernization that was materialized through the creation of plantations and other colonial infrastructures that were meant to serve as conduits for capitalist exploitation.

Cameroon and the global land scramble

The magnitude of the land grab phenomenon is dynamic, shrouded in secrecy, subjected to differences in definition and the timeframe covered. However, recent global estimates of the total area of large land deals range from 43 million ha (World Bank 2010) to 80 million ha (Anseeuw et al. 2012), and 227 million ha between 2000 and 2011(Oxfam 2011). These figures and other reports corroborate the fact that sub-Saharan Africa is the hub of at least 60 percent of total acquisitions (Borras et al. 2010:620). Among the 1, 272 land deals concluded globally, 62 percent covering 56.2 million hectares is in Africa (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2011). The controversial World Bank report released in September 2010 estimated that 45 million hectares of farmland were acquired around the world, two-thirds of it in Africa (World Bank 2010). Byerlee and Deininger (2011) estimate that 56 million hectares of land, 29 million of which are located on the African continent, south of the Sahara have been snatched up. In 2009 alone, 50 million hectares were reportedly ceded by farmers to corporations. While some of these lands have been out rightly purchased, some have been leased from between 25 and 99 years renewable (Oxfam, 2011).This is the fate of 63% of arable land in Cambodia, 30% of Liberia and 20% of Sierra Leone. The main driver of this phenomenon is a moratorium on new palm oil plantations in Indonesia and limited land availability in Malaysia – the two countries produce 80% of the world's palm oil exports (Nguiffo and Schwartz, 2012).

Cameroon has become the second most exploited land in Africa after Egypt as the hub of large-scale land acquisitions by a mix of states and private agro-industrial complexes mainly French, Chinese, Singaporean, Malaysian, Indian and American. These foreign investors have been attracted into the country partly through generous tax holiday for agro-business ventures and the complete absence of any fees for the use of water resources for irrigation purposes. However, their aim is that of producing and exporting more than half of their final produce. With a total surface area of 475 000km^2, Cameroon boast of 7.16million hectares of arable land which is increasingly up for grabs at the detriment of local communities and minority groups. About 276 000 hectares of land have been occupied by investors who exploit the land and its produce (Sama, 2013).These shady land deals have been facilitated in Cameroon like elsewhere in most of Africa by the institutional context-particularly the state's claim of monopoly over all parcels of land as well as its lack of teeth in negotiating investment ventures with multinationals because of corruption. Emboldened by its monopolistic claim over land and other natural resources, within the context of neoliberalism the developmentalist state of Cameroon is increasingly carving out territories for agricultural investment allegedly as a mechanism of food self-sufficiency through agricultural mechanization which also entails increasing the surface area for production (DSCE, 2009).

Chinese agribusiness companies have been negotiating for parcels of agricultural land of 10 000 to 100 000 ha, for food and palm oil production projects. In 2006, IKO- a subsidiary of Shaanxi Land Reclamation General Corporation (also known as Shaanxi State Farm), signed a US$120-million investment agreement with the government of Cameroon (GoC), giving it the Nanga-Eboko rice station and a 99-year lease for another 10,000 ha of land -- 2,000 ha in Nanga-Eboko (close to the rice farm), 4,000 ha in nearby Ndjoré District, and 4,000 ha in the west of the country in Santchou. The company has begun trials of rice and maize, and also plans to grow cassava (Carrere, 2010). Part of this land is an abandoned 120 ha rice farm in Cameroon's central district of Nanga-Eboko in the Upper Sanaga region. Originally established through Taiwanese cooperation in the 1960s, it was deserted when Cameroon switched allegiance to the People's Republic of China a decade or so after[1]. Also queueing up for parcels of Cameroon's arable land are Sime Darby-a Malaysian-based multinational and the global leader in palm oil production, which hopes to secure 600,000 hectares (circa 1.5 million acres) to develop oil palms across the South, Centre, Littoral and Southwest regions. Siva Group/Biopalm Energy, an Indian-owned consortium alongside Cameroon's National Investment Corporation is also about to acquire 200,000 hectares (about 500,000acres) of land for palm plantations in the South region where three other companies are also seeking land for the same reason. Furthermore, Malaysia's Sime Darby is said to be weighing up a further $2.5 billion plantation expansion deal[2]. It is estimated that this greenfield land for palm oil production will increase Cameroon's yearly palm oil production by 80,000 tonnes within the first five years of production, and would add about 30 billion CFA francs to this crude-producing nation's yearly revenue. Furthermore, a consortium of Indian and Cameroonian businessmen alongside FEICOM and the National Employment Fund have been ceded 155 000 hectares of land for the construction of a sugar mill- Justin Sugar SA in Batouri, east Cameroon. In addition to the highly publicized controversial Herakles Farms palm oil project, Cameroon recently ceded a large amount of land near Kribi for a $200 million - including a 50-hectare (124- acre) plantation, to Goodhope Asia Holdings Ltd- a Singapore based palm-oil processing for a palm oil plantation capable of producing 20,000-30,000 MT per year (Tumanjong, 2011)[3]. Due to secrecy, the line between acquisitions, leases rather than sales remains blurred. Further challenging this reconstitution of global property relations and countering to the north-south dichotomy and discourses of re-colonization

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[1] http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/16485#sthash.71dlV1wG.dpuf.

[2] http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/19155.

[3] http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-08-09/goodhope-asia-to-start-plantation-for-palm-oil-in-cameroon.html

(Borras et al. 2011) is that these deals sometimes involve "partnerships" between local institutions and their foreign counterparts. Whatever the institutional actors, the natural resources targeted through these acquisitions go beyond land, water, sub-surface minerals, carbon spaces, wildlife habitats, genetic substances and labour (Makki and Geisler, 2011:2).

Developmentalist Enclosure and Colonial Capitalism

Cameroon's land tenure system is based on, and is a replication of the colonial land tenure regime which reckons development in terms of "effective occupation" through the mechanization of large swathes of land that allies with international agribusiness interests. The colonial masters (Germans and later on the French and British) enclosed large expanse of arable land for plantation agriculture and forcefully turned indigenous farmers into wage labourers. The products were subsequently exported for the production of manufactured goods that were then sold in the colonies. They simultaneously herded the local population into unproductive reserves to acquire fertile land for the establishment of these plantations. They further laid claim on all unoccupied parcels of land which were unilaterally declared as *terra nullius* (as belonging to no one and therefore in need of reclamation).This narrative was aimed at transforming places identified as empty, underutilized or unproductive into developmentalizable entities. In Cameroon, enclosures and the colonial state's project of developmentalism underpinned the German colonial state's use of cosmographies of power[4] through the mechanism of spatial governmentality that was meant to free land for the production of tea, rubber, sugar cane, cocoa and palm oil for export. Under German colonial rule in Cameroon (1884-1916), all unoccupied parcels of land were in line with the Crown Lands Act, 1896 placed in the *Grunduch-* (the German land register). After World War I, the British and French inherited the German plantations which were forms of socio-spatial enclosures in the name of "enemy property". In British and French controlled areas of Cameroon, legislation in 1927 and 1938 handed over local land to the colonial masters. The French Decree of 1932 however permitted individuals to assert their claim over land usage (Belaude et al. 2010:18) meaning that certain parcels of land were excluded from the unilateral category of '*vacantes et sans maître*'.

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[4] They are master representations embedded in conceptual or physical maps that delineate and categorize places (Raffles, 2002). This is achieved through naming, signifying and locating as value-creating acts that increase the power of those wielding them (Makki and Geisler, 2011:5).

Through the process of land registration the colonial masters came to inject the notion of private property into the traditional tenure arrangement thereby transforming the collective ownership of land by a family or lineage group into individual ownership. This marked the beginning of the dispossession of natives of their land since they "were beyond the space of capital and could therefore not enhance it through labour-induced exchange value". In line with the presumed superiority of this principle of development (the Western capitalist development model),"non-capitalist social spaces were...considered static voids in need of development and progress, dormant traditional places waiting to be brought to modern life". Notions such as *terra nullius* have been figuratively used by postcolonial states in Africa "to figuratively nullify space, enclose it", and then hand it over to foreign entrepreneurs for 'development'. This gives capitalist development a redemptive character: "the antidote to a condition of emptiness" (Makki and Geisler, 2011:7). In the same light, and as shall become evident below, export-oriented agricultural developments are framed as the transfer of technology, the provisioning of employment opportunities and the fight against poverty, foreign direct investment and "partnership". The postcolonial Cameroon state is appropriating the discourse of *terra nullius* through its creation of agricultural frontiers as governable spaces. Cameroon's 1974 land governance law which is clearly not in tune with present day realities was modelled after the colonial arrangement whose basis is private property. Within the ambit of the 1974 Land Tenure Act, forest is conceptualized as the "private property" of the state. While Ordinance 74-1 is related to Private and Public Property and National Lands, Ordinance 74-2 deals with the public domain in Cameroon (Government of Cameroon, 1974a, 1974b). They are usually read in conjunction to explain the land tenure system which is based on land registration (i.e. all privately-owned land must be registered because all unregistered land is deemed to be either public land- held by the state on behalf of the public- or national land, i.e. unoccupied and under the jurisdiction of customary land law. In line with this legal configuration, while local communities are considered as squatters that can be evicted at any time, chiefs as auxiliaries of the administration are custodians of the land on behalf of the state. The main tenure effect of the state's appropriation of customary rights is the conversion of customary to state tenure because the latter (registration) is required for governments to make leasehold agreements with foreign investors (Richards, 2013:7). Like in most of Africa, the vesting of all parcels of land in the State and therefore its claim of monopoly over all parcels of land should be understood against the "backdrop of the conflicting landscape and power fields of traditional, colonial and modern authority systems: a hallmark of the land tenure system in which most local communities find themselves today and which has pitted

them against the state'' (Pemunta and Fonmboh, 2010:38, see also Pemunta, 2013, Pemunta, 2014, Pemunta and Mbu-Arrey, 2013). Despite legal dualism, the state prioritizes legal over customary land laws. This competing legal order permits the state to create territories (agric frontiers/greenfields) and hand them over to capitalist entrepreneurs against the wishes of local landowners. At the same, legal pluralism expose tension among different normative orders, as constructs appropriated by different actors to enforce and promote their rights (Belaude et al. 2010:5). The ceding of land to foreign investors and their local allies is clearly an assertion of emptiness as well as new modes of enclosures of social and physical spaces, and constitute forms of *terra nullius* that are replete in "statistical averages of low population densities, underutilized land and unproductive labour (Bellamy, 2009, Geisler, 2010, cf Makki and Geisler, 2011:7).

The World Bank has been instrumental and an accomplice in the creation and appropriation of the *terra nullius* narrative. Apart from imposing neoliberal market-oriented policies and privatization on the GoC which led to the withdrawal of subsidies to smallholder farmers, it simultaneously withdrew institutional support from these smallholder farmers in favour of industrial scale agriculture. As articulated in Cameroon's Strategy Document for Growth and Employment (DSCE) the heart of the government's agric strategy is the modernization of low productivity farms and the organization of scattered stakeholders (DSDR, 2005, 3.1, DSCE, 2009:6.1.2.378) so as to boast production. This implies that peasants are poor and unable to afford the technology (technology-deficiency) that could lead to greater productivity. The World Bank has subsequently characterized and classified most of Sub-Saharan Africa into the category of "high yield gap" despite the availability of suitable land. In its 2009 report entitled *Awakening Africa's Sleeping Giants*, for instance, the bank paints the picture of 'a vast underused land reserve' in much of West, Central, East and Southern Africa. The bank then proposes the capitalist exploitation of this supposed *terra nullius* through an intensive process of agricultural mechanization across the region (Hall, 2010:6). Commenting on the bank's 2010 and 2009 reports, Hall concedes that"…in this region, low population densities and low mobility prevail, which suggests that agricultural intensification will require larger farm sizes" (World Bank, 2010:64). This neoliberal rationalizing logic is ironically being concretized through massive land mortgages/leases in African countries with high scores on the global hunger index (Robertson and Pinstrup-Anderson, 2010:272). Land reforms in Cameroon meant to reflect the neoliberal ethos have fallen short of expectation. As Belaude and colleagues (2010:12) rightly note "efforts to change statutory law in order to better respond to the growth of trade and liberal structures from international agencies, such as the International Monetary Fund, have often continued to disregard the informal and alternative

legal and normative orders at play, including in particular those that govern land". This includes the introduction of certification which has been dogged by bureaucracy, and corruption as well as skewed towards the rich because of high costs. Although the 1974 Lands Ordinance stipulated that smallholder farmers who had peacefully occupied and productively appropriated a given parcel of land could register and avail themselves of legal titles to that land, it only provided rural farmers with concrete boundary markers, rather than formal titles. Ironically, these markers grant neither legal right, protection nor can they serve as collateral. A conjuncture between high cost and time (6.3 years on the average) for the titling procedure, bureaucracy and corruption has prevented poor farmers from availing themselves of the Ordinance and obtaining land titles. To worsen the situation, in the wake of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the GoC drastically slashed funding for the Lands department but simultaneously increased the titling fee. This increased official and unofficial financial expenditure at local, regional and state level for poor land title applicants in favour of state bureaucrats, elites and businessmen. The overall consequence is that: "Farmers initiate the title process and pay the fees necessary to have state agents place concrete boundary markers on their land. They then abandon their application and pay no additional fees" (Firmin-Sellers and Sellers, 1999:1120, see also Belaunde, 2010:20-25, Njoh, 2008:256). Customary contracts and therefore tenure insecurity therefore remain the norm: it can be taken under the pretense of eminent domain.

Cameroon ranked 36 with a score of 14.5 on the 2013 global hunger index (Global Hunger Index, 2013). Food insecurity and high food prices, alongside the planned constitutional change that cancelled presidential term limits led to strikes in February 2008. It is one of those African countries where the continuation of global agribusiness expansion is transforming the social and physical landscape of the country with unfettered socio-economic, political and cultural effects on smallholder farmers. This pattern of the enclosure of greenfields has reminiscences with colonial spatial governmentality that was operationalized through developmentalist enclosures that were the hallmark of colonial capitalism in Cameroon.

State territorialisation: Local communities as primitive subjects of development

In most of Africa, land access, ownership and rights have been influenced by a conjuncture between former colonial territorialisation policies and customary practices, as well as post-independence land reforms (IFAD, 2008:6, Njoh, 2008). These include a myriad of overlapping (at times contradictory) rules, laws,

customs/traditions, perceptions and regulations that govern how people's rights to use, control and transfer land. The chasm between customary and statutory land rights as well as the prioritization of the latter often culminates in the loss of land rights for the poorest and most vulnerable groups, mostly small-holder farmers, competing for land rights with urban elites and large-scale agricultural enterprises/plantations mostly in the coastal regions of Cameroon (e.g. the case of Njombé-Penja). The Cameroon state's vested interest in attracting foreign direct investment is concretized through the same territorialisation process of creating governable spaces that characterized colonial enclosures. The creation of governable spaces is also a way of aligning state developmentalist policies with the neoliberal policies of international organizations, the corporate interests of non-state actors such as multinational corporations and international institutions (World Bank and the European Union (EU)) so as to legitimize itself, but which instead leads to the erosion of the legitimacy of the state. It simultaneously transforms smallholder farmers into subjects of development who are at a pre-modern state and must therefore be modernized through the infusion of technology. The acquisition of land by multinational corporations without any clear benefits for the people may negatively affect the relationship between the state and its citizens, thereby eroding the perceived legitimacy of the former. Despite the co-existence of legal dualism in land tenure in Cameroon, it is statutory law that tends to prevail in any situation of conflict and that is appropriated by both the state and corporate actors. While legal pluralism is codified in Cameroon, its colonial legacy reinforces power inequalities (Pemunta, 2014). State monopoly over land and other natural resources implies that private individuals can only be granted access to land through negotiation on the terms of use that ensures "state priorities" ('interests of state actors in both their personal and professional capacity'(Belaunde et al, 2010:20). This is the case in Cameroon's coastal banana belt that is coincidentally the same frontier of colonial agricultural production.

External actors and the resource minorities of Njombé-Penja

The production and exportation of bananas in Cameroon's Littoral region is monopolized by three multinational plantation giants: the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC), in a partnership with Del Monte, the French and Cameroonian Company, Société des Plantations de Mbanga (SPM), and the Franco-American venture Companie Fruitiere, Plantations du Haut Penja. The region has rich agricultural lands and is strategically located on the Atlantic coast. Additionally, the area is bedecked by many chronic land related conflicts. Furthermore, the area has witnessed various forms of colonial regimes and hence has many tenure systems in its history making it suitable for land tenure and conflict

analysis between multinationals and small-holder farmers. The area witnessed an influx of immigrants due to its large industrial plantations as well as by the availability of fertile soils. The movement of people into the area dates back to the colonial period. While some voluntarily migrated into the area, others were coerced to work as labourers on German colonial plantations. However, many people also migrated to the area in order to seek refuge from the "maquisards" or "rebels" in the Western region during the pre-independence period (Gyau et al. 2014:30). Even more importantly, the port of Douala connects the region to the wider world. In colonial times, the strategic location of the region allowed the Duala serving as middlemen between European traders and other communities from the hinterland to hold monopoly over trade with Europe (Yenshu, 2003).

The German conquest of Cameroon that lasted from 1884-1916 led to the loss of the Duala's role as trade intermediaries. They became agricultural entrepreneurs, appropriated the labour of migrant slaves and labourers and managed the commercialization of agricultural products because of their perceived superiority (Austen, 1983). The economic depression of the 1930s led to price volatility in the international market and the Duala were unable to pay their labourers in cash. They rather began paying for labour by granting parcels of land. Former slaves and labourers, largely Bamilekes, but also Betis amassed land and became banana cultivators and agricultural entrepreneurs. Simultaneously, European companies with ties to the colonial administration held sway in the banana sector until after World War II when smallholders began to emerge as key stakeholders in the external banana trade.

The banana trade is today monopolized by three companies: the CDC, in a partnership with Del Monte, the French and Cameroonian Company, SPM, and the Franco-American venture Companie Fruitiere, Plantations du Haut Penja (PHP) in which American giant, Dole owns 40% of shares. These companies that export their products, predominantly bananas (*Musa spp*), pineapples (*Ananas comosus*), and ornamental flowers to the EU employ over 8,000 labourers (2,000 by SPM and 6,000 by PHP). Other multinational ventures in the region include les Brasseries du Cameroun et l'usine d'eau minérale Tangui. The three agro-industrial companies have eased out smallholder farmers from the production of banana for export since the latter lack the necessary technology and capital to produce high quality bananas for the international market. While these companies have obtained national concessions from the state, they have also been able to appropriate customary law by buying additional parcels of land from individuals or surrounding village communities. This is an arena in which the competing legal orders surrounding land tenure in Cameroon is at play and exposes the inherent tensions.

In Njombe, smallholders were expelled by PHP and undercompensated for their land. The state had granted a concession of 173ha to a cooperative called SOPRABO which in turn rented out a 63ha to farmers. This concession was unilaterally transferred to PHP through privatization when SOPRABO wind up. It was at this time that the three multinationals took over banana production from smallholders. In the wake of conflict with farmers, PHP re-granted to the forty-three farming families their 63ha while remaining owners of 110ha for the next 25 years. When SOPRABO failed to kick out the farmers, it shifted the responsibility back to PHP who decided to pursue an out-of-court settlement with the farmers on the mutual understanding that they would be adequately compensated for their crops and will have six months to harvest same from their fields. PHP later backtracked on the grace period and cleared the fields. The farmers maintain that they were not given a fair deal. Based on their own surveyor's valuation, they were owed 600,000 000FCFA whereas PHP gave them a meagre 65,000,000FCFA. This case underscores the blatant violation of citizen's rights by the state and multinationals. Additionally, it shows that those with resources and state connections prevail in obtaining a land title and consequently, have protection. The beneficiaries include multinationals, elites desiring land for commercial agriculture as a source of revenue when they eventually retire (Gyau et al. 2014), traditional authorities and local administrative authorities. On the other hand, it wrights tenure insecurity on farmers and perpetuates a system of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey, 2003). Cameroon's 1974 Land Ordinance privileged those with resources to acquire a land title thereby leading to the commodification of land.

While competing legal and customary orders were in play, apart from feelings that the amount of compensation was inadequate, the amount cultivated by each individual and each family differed, meaning that the amount due each farmer would have been disproportionate when compared to the other. Accepting the deal would have meant creating conflicts among themselves.

Furthermore, there are competing versions on the benefits accruing to local communities from the so-called multinationals whose activities are transforming people's relationships with their environment. First off, job quality and job security are key issues. Interviews with labourers revealed that they were paid less 3 USD for a minimum of 12 hours' work and that they are often threatened with dismissal for taking breaks in the tropical heat.

> Salaries are not good...It is abnormal that there should be famine here while we are working tirelessly round the clock so that the French can eat. Since the riots, salaries have increased a bit (minimum salaries have increased from 31,000 FCFA (46,50 euros) excluding bonuses which may bring it to the tune of 45,000FCFA (67,50 euros). But one could be at the door at any time since we have no permanent employment contracts and no insurance. They are really exploiting us like animals (Elysée Mbelle, July 10, 2011).

> Whereas, many people do not have access to portable water, partly because water sources are polluted, while the best of portable water in this region is processed, packaged and exported to the rich in the country and abroad by the Tangui company (Jean-Pierre, June, 2011).

The Institute of Pan-African Development (2010) found that many community members suffer from illnesses related to the use of pesticides that also causes environmental degradation and a dramatic shortfall in the supply of fish as well as the contamination of local water supply (cf Belaude et al. 2010, see also Cernea et al. 2000, Chatty and Colchester, 2002). PHP, although two of its plantations (the Mantem and PHP2 plantations) have Fair Trade certification is further alleged to be using pesticides that are banned in Europe and that have caused damage to both the health of its workers, the inhabitants and the land. Similarly, the Catholic Committee for the fight against Hunger and Development (CCHD) and Oxfam-Agirici have classified PHP as being among the most "unscrupulous" companies in Cameroon that the EU which subsidizes the banana sub sector in order to improve its competitiveness must deal with. The company is further accused of expropriating native land at the expense of local farmers "through dubious, if not illegal means, poor working conditions for its 6000 employees some of who work for as much as 15 hours a daily without compensation, lack of freedom to form unions and wrongful dismissals''. The report further points out that the inhabitants complain of pollution and high number of cancers caused by fungicides and pesticides used by the company, some of which-including chlordecone, a powerful insecticide- recently been banned by the EU because they pose a health hazard (Pigeaud, 2009). As indicated by the report and as corroborated by our observations, the inhabitants also complain of water pollution. An inhabitant in the Njombé locality stated that "Our river, our only source of water is polluted". Most of the pesticides are sprayed by airplanes which are easily inhaled by both the labourers and the inhabitants. The inhabitants also complained of high incidence of malaria, respiratory tract diseases and skin disorders. The upsurge in these diseases is attributed to plantation farming and to the use of chemical substances to spray the farms. The only available infrastructures- incentives to keep workers on site is a school to cater for the children of PHP employees as well as a hospital to cater for their health at cut-throat prices. The people lack portable water, electricity, good all round seasonal roads and are exposed to environmental hazards which negatively affect their health. A 2011 documentary film "The Big Banana[5]" produced by Franck Bieuleu, a Cameroonian filmmaker, and broadcast in France, attests to the widespread poverty in Njombé-Penja: 'very rich in terms of natural resources,

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[5] http://www.africanfilm.com/TheBigBanana.htm

but with an extremely poor population". The film chronicles the human and environmental impact of banana plantations in Cameroon. It further outlines the PHPs land grabbing tactics and the ensuing devastation for communities: poverty, pollution, and sickness from pesticides. In other words, the promise of providing social infrastructure as stated in its corporate social responsibility (CSR) statement has largely not been delivered. This shows the state's failure to monitor and enforce contracts with multinationals because of corruption and influence peddling. Locals as subjects of development have become victims of the development process. Land deals with multinationals are always shrouded in opaque practices that exclude indigenous community members from governance: the deal's duration, cost and its impact on the local community are known only by a close network of actors. When food riots spontaneously erupted because of a dramatic increase in the prices of basic necessities and coagulated with planned constitutional change to eliminate presidential term limits, the youths of the region vented their anger on PHP and SPM. Apart from heavy material damage estimated at 1,2 milliard CFA (1,8 million euros), hectares of bananas were chopped into pieces with machetes, farming tools carted away and buildings and vehicles belonging to these agro-industrial corporations were torched. Some labourrers even allegedly joined the rioters to inflict damage on their employers. According to Belaunde and colleagues (2010:41) the indigenous population were disenchanted because despite the huge amount of food produced and exported abroad, wages in the country remain dismally low while food prices continue to increase. Despite different perception as to why the three agro-industrial companies were targeted, Pierre Moulima, French-born director of human resources at SPM maintained that "We are constantly referred to as "French colonialists". We are being accused of taking the land and of turning the Cameroonian work force into slaves. People who think like that are not educated". On his part, his compatriot Christophe Bresse, director of plantations at SPM presented a benevolent image of these agro-industrial corporations by arguing that they are simply "doing good" by providing employment opportunities to the local population and that the rioters had simply "shut themselves in the leg[6]". The same ethos of capitalist benevolence is articulated in PHP's first ever CSR statement published in 2011 as a mechanism of greenwashing its image in which all incentives to capitalism are forwarded as ensuring worker's social welfare (Plantation du Haut Penja, 2011).

Additionally, PHP does not pay any royalties to the community because of corruption. The company is alleged to have high level political connections in the local, regional and national politico-administrative architecture of Cameroon (Pigeaud, 2009). The mayor of Njombé-Penja, Paul Eric Kingué who stood up

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[6] http://www.care2.com/news/member/597720583/802356

against the exploitation of the region and his people was awarded a life jail term. Apart from protesting the non-payment of taxes to his municipality by the multinational PHP, he also vigorously deplored the exploitation of plantation labourers who were being paid catechist salaries: 25,00CFA (37,50 Euros) per month. He was subsequently framed up, and arrested without a warrant, given a kangaroo trial and slammed an outlandish[7] life jail term by the Nkongsamba High Court allegedly on corruption-related charges and for his alleged participation in the hunger-related unrest in 2008. The above resonates with Gramsci's observation that 'the 'normal' exercise of hegemony is characterized by the combination of force and consent, in variable equilibrium, without force predominating too much over consent... [But] between force and consent stands corruption-fraud, that is the enervation and paralyzing of the antagonist or antagonists (Gramsci, 1975:1638). During the riots, five out of twenty PHP packaging plants and the office of one of the plant's managers were torched. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the United Nations (UN) has since asked the Cameroonian government to "put an end to the arbitrary detention of Paul Eric Kingué"[8].One Civil society activist stated that:

> The internal colonization of the Njombé-Penja region and the accompanying human rights violations by French multinational companies is facilitated by their links to powerful state actors in Cameroon. Courageous individuals like Lapiro de Mbanga and Paul Eric Kingué were unjustly imprisoned for allegedly taking part in the 2008 hunger riots that visited violence on these plantations. Their real crime was that they stood up for the rights of plantation labourers and their people (Interview of May 3, 2012).

Conflicts over land and other natural resources demonstrate the entanglement of the global and the local over the competing idea of modernization and food sovereignty-which are subject to the influence, support and legitimacy of outside forces. The ceding of land for mechanized agriculture which is vigorously favoured by the World Bank and foreign governments is accordingly framed as technology transfer. According to IKO's director in Cameroon, Mr. Zhao:

> It's time for the people of Cameroon to understand that the future is in agriculture... It must move towards the mechanization of its agriculture. It can no longer continue in these times cultivating with a hoe and a pickax. That will get you nowhere. Cameroon also needs considerable capital investments for the development of its agriculture[9].

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[7] Critics rightly maintain that others convicted of embezzling billions of francs have been handed far more lenient sentences.

[8] http://www.cameroon-concord.com/news/local/item/1247-un-tells-biya-to-end-all-judicial-harrassment-against-mayor-paul-eric-kingue#sthash.vhnApZAU.dpuf.

[9] http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/16485#sthash.71dlV1wG.dpuf

The excerpt quoted above underscores the fact that Cameroon's peasants have remained pre-modern. They have therefore remained primitive and need to be modernized through the infusion of technology. They are thus constructed as an object of benevolent intervention--- for purposes of humanitarian modernization, a site for the realization of the modernizer Self through agro-industries. This entails a "powerful intensification of activities and rural transformation, (DSCE, 2009:209) as well as contract farming to corporations which brings "foreign [direct] investment and technology infusion in agriculture" (N'cho Oguie & Charlier, 2009:192). This is in tune with the neoliberal discourse propagated by the duo of the Goc and World Bank according to which, the West is the very embodiment of technology. Such narratives cast Africa as continually on the losing side of harmful binaries – primitive/civilized, traditional/modern – and in an eternal developmental lag. Peasants are presented as lacking technology and therefore their lack of modernity. They therefore also lack agency and must be rescued by modernizers (multinational agro-industrial corporations) who will bring technology. In the words of Escobar "technology [is] seen as neutral and inevitably beneficial, not as an instrument for the creation of cultural and social orders. The West possesses the expertise, technology and management skills that the non-West is lacking" (Escobar, 2009:47). Global news networks such as the CNN and Aljeezira constantly parade images of Africa's green wilderness and how Western technology through agricultural and other investments will transform this void. This is aptly encapsulated in former's signature tune to the programme *Inside Africa* in which land movers and tractors are seen ploughing the soil while the audience is constantly told that "Africa is ripe for business". This is a clear reference to both its natural and human resources that is increasingly up for grabs by foreign entrepreneurs who are allegedly bringing technology to the continent and creating employment opportunities. Similarly, the Cameroon CFA banknote initially carried the effigy of peasants hoeing the soil and therefore as lacking in modernity. An evolutionary analysis of changes in the banknote shows:

> a visual progression from an African community existing out of its pre-modern state in the lowest note to the Western conception of modernity in the highest. On one side of the lowest note there are African children learning math on a blackboard. The other side contains an image of farmland with a tractor on it (modernized agriculture) (Belaude, 2010:46).

Other images are those of land movers, a tractor, a massive dam. These evolutionary modernization guides are void of alternative ideals emphasizing equality, kinship, well-being (in contrast to wealth). They are a visual reflection of the state's growth strategy that represents peasants through their lack of modernity.

Additionally, it depicts that the land is a resource worthy of exploitation for the achievement of modernity. This is in sharp contrast to the African view of land as belonging to generations-past, present and future. Contrary to the primitive, deficient peasant image forwarded by modernization advocates, peasant movements counter by presenting "a culturally rich being with capabilities that the West lacks, namely, the ability to appropriately care for the land and the people" (Belaude, 2010: 46).

The modernization discourse of technology transfer is shared by Cameroon government authorities and technocratic institutions such as the World Bank, the EU, and multinational agribusiness corporations such as SPM, PHP, IKO and foreign state governments: France, America, India and China. This is in sharp contrast with the "food sovereignty ideology" held by Cameroon peasant organizations including Association *Citoyenne de Défense des Intérêts Collectifs* - ACDIC (The Citizens Association for the Defence of Collective Interests) - and the Centre for Environment and Development (CED), Cameroon who are ferociously opposed to large-scale land acquisitions and are calling for land governance reforms. The 2008 financial crisis that led to a spike in food prices was preceded by the large-scale conquest of land, water and other natural resources in the Global South including countries such as Cameroon. The GoC and the World Bank share the discourse of growth, production and competitiveness, the mantra of development ideology since the introduction of the SAP. However, the issues of addressing food security and inequality stare large: foreign investment cannot be out rightly and unproblematically equated with technology transfer as an act of benevolent redemption. It entails the subjugation and control of farmers who are turned into labourers, "full domination and control over food and agriculture from the seed to the plate in order to take in huge profits. This exploits workers, concentrates economic and political power, and destroys rural communities" (Campesina, 2008:58).

The Cameroon Growth Strategy (DSCE) was developed within the context of skyrocketing food prices "that rocked the country in February 2008" (DSCE, 2009:8). The government unwittingly plans to increase plantation area up to 500,000ha because of the enormity of arable land begging to be cultivated. This suggests that the mantra of the state's basic market-oriented strategy is the commercialization of smallholder agriculture. It further implies that the government is aware of the debilitating effects of the World Food Crisis as well as the need to address it. Additionally, this is also a tacit recognition of the unfettered effects of SAP and the supposed "trickledown effect" of allowing the poor to benefit from economic growth that did not materialize. These events led to a shift in the World Bank's discourse from exclusive to "inclusive growth". Cameroonian authorities also shifted from the fundamentalist rhetoric of

exclusive growth: the DSCE "places the strong challenge of growth and employment creation in the centre of its strategy for reducing poverty (preface). Whereas "authorities are convinced that the creation of wealth is essential to reducing poverty, it must be accompanied by a strong link to redistribution, which is that of employment" (DSCE, 2.3.133). Despite the cautious tuning down of the modernization discourse, the gulf between the modernization and food sovereignty ideology persists: the failure of the modernization advocates to address the historical context that have affected smallholder farmers in the last three decades, the understanding of the agency of the peasant as well as the relations of production, power and distribution (Belaude et al., 2010: 44). The government's DSCE curiously makes no relationship between farmer's conditions and colonialism or SAP. Against the backdrop of SAP, the government withdrew subsidies from farmers, thereby endangering food production and the right to adequate food. Bello (2009) attests that SAP led to food dependency in Africa and the continent went from exporting small quantities of food to importing 25% of its food needs. The World Development Report 2008 recognized the bank's short-sightedness about the prospect of the SAP to yield the expected market-based results: "dismantled the system of public agencies that provided farmers with access to land, credit, insurance, inputs, and cooperative organization". In the wake of these reforms, the bank laments that "incomplete markets and institutional gaps imposed huge cost in forgone growth and welfare losses for smallholders, threatening their competitiveness and, in many cases, their survival" (World Bank, 2008:138). Ironically, despite this recognition of woeful failure, the GoC and the bank's analysis make no correlation between low peasant productivity and the scourge of SAP.

The Cameroon government's ambitious plan called Vision 2035 is to be achieved partly through grandiose infrastructural projects including dams and hydro-electric plants, the modernization of agricultural technology as well as a significant increase the cultivated land surface. Modernization here should be read as meant to downplay the importance of agriculture in the national income as well as in the labour force so as to catalyze industrialization and make Cameroon a developed country by 2035. The modernization of agricultural is expected to lead to a 3.3% to 8% increase in agricultural production between 2010-2019. This will come about by:

> increasing yields and land farmed, the development of partnerships with a high potential for productivity and competitiveness as well by strengthening the use of inputs including fertilizer, seeds etc. "In 2009 the government signed a funding agreement over 20 years with Indian partners to create 5,000 hectares of rice and 5,000 ha of corn (DSCE, 2010,6.1.2.1.380).

Additionally, the government concluded the interim Partnership Agreement with the EU so as to progressively increase the production of banana exports by increasing the plantation area. The neoliberal alliance of the government and the World Bank believe that "there is no shortage of land, with significant stretches of arable land remaining to be cultivated"(N'cho-Oguie & Charlie, 2009:185). In the light of this, all land is state land and definitely becomes empty insofar as state priorities dictate. The state's control of land through the *terra nullius* narrative that is embedded in "state priorities" is an assertion of state power. Through this same ideology, the state controls people and their resources.

The exploitation to which labourers at SPM and PHP are subjected to resonate with local people's experience with the Chinese project in Nanga-Eboko where there are few signs that IKO is going to improve their future. Workers at the site are paid about US$2 a day, with neither any benefits nor a contract. The workers are disgruntled and do not know where the rice they produce on a daily basis is marketed. One worker at the Nanga-Eboko site, Keman Essam stated that: "We don't even see where the rice goes that we die producing every day. It's too much, and I'm going to leave if nothing changes"[10]. Like the bananas produced by the troika of agro-industrial complexes in the Littoral region, this suggests that the rice is not meant for the domestic market, but rather to feed foreign populations, including China's burgeoning population at home. Although the lands are currently used by local communities for farming, hunting and gathering, it is evident that IKO will throw them out once full-scale production begins since the government has unilaterally ceded the land to IKO.

Presently, the construction of the "training centre" is continuing at the Nanga-Eboko station. The Chinese are constructing a "training centre" which is one of 15 agricultural technology demonstration centres that the Government of China committed to build in Africa at the Beijing Summit of Sino-African Cooperation in 2006. In this case, the overlap between China's cooperation programmes as well as the EU's interim partnership agreement with Cameroon and the interests of its companies is clear. Additionally, there is a massive influx of low-skilled Chinese workers working in most of the major major infrastructural projects being undertaken by Chinese companies in Cameroon. This is contrary to the law and is leading to public outcry. The centre in Cameroon, which currently houses about 60 Chinese workers, serves as the site for the development of IKO's rice operations and will be used by the company to promote its model of agriculture in this region where small-scale peasant agriculture and pastoralism dominate. The complete eviction of smallholders looms large in the horizon and is just a matter of time since they are seen as standing on the way of progress and as therefore hampering the regime's agenda.

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[10] Jean-Bruno Tagne, "Enquête sur la riziculture chinoise," Quotidien Le Jour, 18 August 2010. - See more at: http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/16485#sthash.71dlV1wG.dpuf.

The foregoing case studies underscore the fact that while the global expansion of the culture of capitalism has benefited many; smallholders have incurred the greatest loss in terms of broken livelihood because the expansion of large-scale agriculture has transformed them from relatively self-sufficient food producers to dependent labourers. More recently, economic globalization and the withdrawal of government support has made it difficult, if not impossible, for small-scale farmers to compete with multinational agribusiness. The novelty of today's rush for land is underpinned by the new mechanisms of land control, justifications and alliances for 'taking back' the land, as well as the political economic context of neoliberalism (Peluso and Lund 2011:672).

Conclusion

Reminiscent of colonial development ideology and spatial practices, today's enclosures involve the taking away of native land without consultation and for the production of crops for foreign markets-what Annelies Zoomers (2010) aptly describes as the 'foreignisation of land'. It is also accompanied by the reordering of nature and man-nature relationship. State developmentalism through the creation of territories is recasting the state's internal landscape, consolidating the state's sovereignty as well as signifying its hegemony. As corporate actors increasingly enter the agricultural scene:

> the cosmography of power justifying enclosures is shifting from conceptual mapping to an officially transformed cartography of land use. After the state's identification of its terra nullius, the state in alliance with corporate capital can now offer developmental opportunities to fill them in (Makki and Geisler, 2011:14).

The World Bank has played a significant role in this process, by conducting research to identify 'areas of growth potential, where increased public investment in specific geographic and development areas might make an optimal contribution to economic growth' (World Bank, 2006:i). In the wake of neoliberal globalization, international forces and organizations (the World Bank and the EU) and foreign governments (French, Chinese, Indian and American) are shaping the neoliberal Cameroon state's production of territory through the creation of frontiers for large-scale agricultural investments that transforms, but at the same time, negatively affect local livelihood systems. This entanglement of global and local forces calls for a 'critical junctures perspective' (Kalb and Tak, 2005): the need to examine relations in and out of a place, to take note of history and locality in the analysis of large-scale agricultural investments that are a replication of colonial relationships and are located on traditional colonial frontiers in Cameroon. As an analytical lens,

enclosures captures the large-scale mechanization of agriculture and the subsequent reconstitution of heterogeneous spaces aimed at constructing the 'homogenous abstract space-time of commodity production and circulation' (Makki and Geisler, 2011:16) that this development entails. This reconstitution further entails the representation of places as backward, and away from the redeeming logic of modernity. It is rationalized through discourses of improvement and development that are meant to mask the harshly lived experience of violence to which peasants are now subjugated in the 'last frontier' of capitalist rationalization.

The socio-economic, political and psychological effects of social emptying out (displacement) have been well documented (Cernea et al. 2000; Chatty and Colchester, 2002; Richards, 2013). In the Njombe region, large-scale plantations also cause air and water pollution destabilizing the socio-economic system and the natural environment (Gyau et al. 2014). The fate of farmers has become connected to a network of supermarket chain and they have been transformed from landowners to labourers. The *terra nullius* ideology that underpins state developmentalism is "an act of dispossession" (Harvey, 2003) that threatens national, regional and global peace. A land governance reform that re-infuses the modern tenure system with traditional land tenure norms will allow local communities to negotiate with multinationals on their own terms and will also ensure the need to respect internationally recognized environmental standards. Furthermore, it will also permit peaceful co-existence between private companies involved in large-scale plantations and small-holder farmers who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, instead of the present legal hierarchy that represents them as primitive subjects of development who have to be acted upon.

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PROPERTY MATTERS: THE HISTORY AND PRACTICE OF PRIVATISING LANDS IN PERIURBAN GHANA

RALUCA PERNEŞ*

ABSTRACT. International donors and states in the global south are promoting the virtues of private, legally sanctioned property, with the promise that once achieved this will bring about more fairness in the distribution of resources and more economic opportunities. I look at the case of periurban Ghana to show how indeed this is the case for a narrow elite of owners and entrepreneurs, while the same mechanisms works to exclude and make vulnerable former holders of rights in the same lands. Moreover, I suggest that for most of the citizens of the country, the privatization of land rights through titling and registration is simply not an issue. I look at the divergence between the expectations of the state and international organizations in terms of property management and the practices of the citizens. I take the case of a local community in order to gain insights into how the present day situation came to be as a result of land relations and land policies in the precolonial times, during colonialism, after independence, during the structural adjustment programmes, and, finally, during the most recent Land Administration Programme.

Keywords: Ghana, West Africa, property relations, land privatisation

Introduction

In the last years, land has been again at the top of the agenda. Large land transactions, often described as land rush or land grabbing, are raising concerns about the vulnerabilization and exclusion of the local populations, and about the environment. The relentless advance of capital is visible in large scale investment in commodity crops, biofuel production and mineral mining across the world. At the initiative of states and, perhaps just as often, under

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* *Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, e-mail: raluca.pernes@socasis.ubbcluj.ro*

the pressure of international organizations and corporations, land policies are constantly redrafted so as to accommodate these evolutions and, occasionally, to resist them. The landscape of land relations is far from becoming homogenous. Nevertheless, most of those involved in the production of land policies collectively sing the praises of the same core of values: deregulation, decentralization, and privatization. Anthropologists have been long at work scrutinizing the underpinnings of the theory and practice of property. A large number of recent discussions focus on the plight of the populations for whom the neoliberal promises of equity and prosperity – both expected outcomes of the march for transparency in land transactions and the achievement of private property – never materializes (Berry, 2013; McMichael, 2012; von Benda-Beckmann, von Benda-Beckmann and Wiber, 2009; Amanor, 2008).

In this paper, I take as a starting point the history, transformations and present day implementation of the drive for the privatization of property in a particular context in order to explore the ways in which states and international organizations and corporations attempt to define and contain ideas about and practices of property at large. An indispensable part of the process of making land into a resource, land privatization, in particular through land titling and registration becomes the privileged lens through which I make visible two processes: on one hand, states do the work of making the practices of property (globally) intelligible and neatening them; on the other hand, global capital continues its march unabated and its mechanisms of deepening inequalities mean that even the aspiring model citizen risks to be marginalized or excluded in terms of land rights. I use the ethnographic case of a periurban location in the south of Ghana[1] to show how multiple legal orders, overlapping and competing institutions, and the general messiness of history construe situations in which implementing the recommendations of the government and international donors in matters of land relations is either impossible, severely limited, or ill inspired.

I introduce my case by putting to work some of the manners of thinking about property in recent anthropological literature. I then proceed to look at the history of property relations in the Gold Coast and Ghana. Against this backdrop I cast a closer look at the case of Dawhenya, a periurban town in the south of Ghana in which common property over land becomes privatized with dire consequences for most of those involved. I conclude with a few remarks about.

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[1] I have conducted fieldwork in Ghana between 2009-2010. This was possible thanks to an Early Stage Training Marie Curie Fellowship, MEST-CT-2005-020702.

Thinking through property: tools and concepts

Discussing the idea of property is an exercise anthropologists have performed since the beginnings of the discipline. Though the concept itself is central to anthropology, the one common theme that emerges in analyses of property is that its meanings are not universal, but specific to historical contexts and forms of capital accumulation (Verdery, 2003). This elusiveness, as well as the diversity of contents that make the concept of property for anthropologists have been enough to discourage some authors into discarding the concept altogether (see von Benda-Beckmann, von Benda-Beckmann and Wiber, 2009, Verdery, 2003). In disagreeing with them, I do not to say that there is no point in discussing property at a global scale, but merely point out that property is a cultural category too, that carries meaning strongly connected to the historical pathways of particular contexts. I therefore see property as marking a relationship that is first and foremost between persons about objects and secondarily between persons and object. In the case at hand, namely property in land, it is also important to stress that property must be regarded as a process (see also Falk Moore 1978), rather than a distinct transaction at a moment in time. Implicit here is the idea that even within the social and political context in which it is embedded, property does not carry the same meaning across time.

In thinking about property in land, there is consensus on the fact that it is a complex process whose understanding is blurred and complicated by ideas about ownership, tenure, and rights, as well as practices of land holding and land use. Faced with this complexity, most of the recent anthropological literature on property adopts one of two strategies: either to bring clarity to the concept by breaking it into its building blocks and understanding how these work together in concrete circumstances, or to construct categories of analysis that allow for the untidiness of the social relations associated with property. While heuristically different, the two strategies rely on the same principle of identifying the layers of property relevant for both legal institutions and social actors. The former risks reductionism to the normative. The latter, falling in the trap of rejecting systematization altogether. I will show how one of each approaches helps make sense of the particular site of my research.

Verdery (2003) suggests that where values, cultural meanings, and social and power relations are stable, we can speak of a property regime. As is the case with most analytical concepts, in reality few societies are likely to practice just one property regime. However, investigating the shifting proportions between the different property regimes at work in a social context can prove a useful heuristic tool to visualize the gist of the historical transformations in that context. Thus, many of the precolonial areas in sub-Saharan Africa have been

idealistically imagined as the site of the perfect commons, while colonialism and structural adjustment programmes are supposed to have rearranged them into progressively private property oriented regimes, with remnants of collective and state property. In fact, as shown by Hill (1963) in the case of Ghana/Gold Coast, at the end of the 19th century many of the lands in the forest belt were converted into cocoa farms and sold to migrant farmers. The growing importance of this cash crop led in a short few years to a frenzy of land transactions and a steady stream of immigrants, sometimes from long distances (see also Amanor, 2008). Rather than encouraging this practice of treating lands as private property and land transactions in general, colonial administrators promptly intervened and curtailed the land sales, pushing for the idea that the ultimate rights in land were inalienable from the local communities. Moreover, even though changes have been major indeed, most of the lands in Ghana could still pass muster as collective property. This is not to ignore the fact that there are large differences between the manner in which these relations are coded in legal and institutional terms and the way in which lands are actually managed and used. With the exception of lands in the major cities and, increasingly, in the periurban areas, private property has made little headway. Also, in the case of Ghana, 20% of the land is owned by the state.

Following on, Verdery (2003) looks at property regimes as organizing persons with respect to one another and to things through various devices, themselves materialized in specific idioms. This is a perfect window to show the extent to which property regimes overlap in periurban Ghana. Organizing devices in the case of my research include: purchases on the land market, inheritance, settler rights, or state court rulings. The same plot of land can be claimed under several of these criteria. Often times, lands really are claimed by more than one "rightful" owner. The first premise that makes this possible is the principle of legal pluralism, with both statutory and customary law at work, sometimes on the same matters. While the law of the state places responsibility for land dealings in the hands of the traditional leaders – most often chiefs, many of the conflicts connected to land transaction are dealt with by state courts of law. Throughout most of Ghana, lands are collectively owned by communities and managed on their behalf by the traditional leaders, who also have the authority to allocate rights in land. However, only the "autochthones", descendants of the settler families, can gain such rights.

Perhaps one of the most useful concepts to depart from the complexities of empirical arrangements around property is that of bundle of rights. While not new, the idea of the bundle has in the more recent period been used as a useful metaphor that can capture analytically all of the rights and obligations that can be bundled and distributed over different holders of such rights and

obligations (von Benda-Beckmann, von Benda-Beckmann and Wiber, 2009). Part of these bundles are not just rights of access to land, but also the rights to manage, transfer and inherit the land. In Ghana, unbundling the idea of property is a necessary first step to be able to account for the particular and unequal positions held by the different members of a community, even though in theory they are all, collectively, owners of the lands. For any plot of land, ownership lies with the community and the allodial right with the chief or other traditional leader. Plots of land allocated to a household based on need can be transferred through inheritance, but in some of the areas only men inherit. Land use is subject not only to limits set by the local communities, but also to state regulations, through instruments such as town planning. The concept of the bundle of rights proves useful to capture the many layers of rights and duties connected to land, especially in a context of legal pluralism. Moreover, we can think of it as a device that helps offer a more nuanced view of property relations in the global north. One could be forgiven for believing that the holy grail of private property has already been achieved in many parts of the world, and so we can focus all efforts on persuading the global south to follow route. In fact, private property rarely brings with it the complete bundle of rights in a piece of land. All over the world, public legal regulations of rights limit the choices of owners. The common good, environmental protection, historic conservation, or land use planning take precedence over any preference of the legal owners (von Benda-Beckmann, von Benda-Beckmann and Wiber, 2009). From this perspective, not only the idealised private property never existed in Europe in the first place, but the current trend is to move further away from it.

Legal pluralism and property relations in Ghana: an historical account

Property in present day Ghana is shaped by norms and practices that precede the colonial times – though calling them "traditional" would require a hefty number of footnotes –; by laws and practices introduced by the colonial administration and the mutations they underwent through the hybridization with the local ones; by law, land policies and various projects funded by the government and international donors after Independence. Recent policies tend to fetishize the purity of the traditional, customary law but, as I will hint at below, at this point it is impossible to untangle and locate the origin of the various strands that have been incorporated in contemporary land law(s).

Legal and institutional pluralism have been a feature of Ghana since the early colonial period, at the end of the 19th century. The land question became crucial once the former protectorate has been turned into a colony in

1895. Not only did the number of land transactions explode, due to investors interested in mining in the Ashanti region, but many of the concessions were conducted by property speculators who then sold them on to gold mining companies (Amanor, 2008). Meanwhile, in the cocoa belt in the centre of the country, traditional leaders were selling land to immigrant farmers, who in their turn made the most of the opportunity by contracting and paying deposits on several plots before finalising payment on any of them (Hill, 1963). Also in the 1890s, the colonial government attempted to enact a Crown Lands Ordinance, which was to place all waste land, forest land and mineral under the British Crown, thus permitting the government to manage concessions from that time on. This attempt at declaring all unused land as "waste land" was promptly protested by the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS), an alliance of chief and elites of the Gold Coast (Berry, 2013; Amanor, 2008). The argument put forward was that lands that are not used are not without owner. Many such lands are simply let fallow. Some belong to stools or skins[2] and are to be allocated in the future to members of the lineage that come forward to claim them, based on need. ARPS also argued that the Gold Coast has been established by a treaty, and not by conquest, therefore such a proposal was unconstitutional (Amanor, 2008). Not only did their argument prevail, but it was at this point that systematic accounts of what traditional law was and how it varied across the territory of the Gold Coast started being produced, by the local elites and by colonial commissioners alike.

The attempt to accurately depict the elusive "traditional law" and to map land boundaries turned into a Sisyphean task continued throughout the colonial period. It wasn't long until, due to the colonial administration stressing just how important property was, recent history began to be rewritten in different terms. Thus, even though contracts documenting transactions in the cocoa belt mentioned outright sales of land, by mid-century all reports are of the ultimate right in land inalienable from the local communities.

While present day Ghana was ruled by the British as Gold Coast, traditional leaders were co-opted by the colonial power as part of the administrative apparatus. The structure of the administration was modelled on the practices of the Akan, which were most familiar to the British as the largest ethnic group in the area and the inhabitants of the gold rich area of the Ashanti kingdom. Their chieftancy system was falsely assumed to be representative of the organisation practices of the smaller ethnic groups. Moreover, as in the

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[2] The stool in the south of Ghana and the skin in the north of the country are the artefacts that represent the power of the chiefs. The words are also used at shorthand to refer to the domain of the chiefs. We can therefore speak of "skin revenue" or "stool lands".

case of many other areas in Africa, the British displayed an inflexible preference for hierarchical administrative structures. As a consequence, newly appointed traditional leaders in some of the areas bore no relation whatsoever to tradition. In many contexts, traditional leaders were arranged in hierarchical structures that did not reflect previous arrangements or were severely overplaying them (Kumado 1990-1992 in Ubink, 2008). The chiefs became at best intermediaries between the central government and local communities and at worst extensions of the colonial administration in the territories. The new positions of authority needed to be sanctioned by the government. The judicial powers and, in part, the power chiefs exercised over lands, were limited. In terms of accountability, too, the chiefs became only partly responsible to their subjects, and partly responsible to, but also supported by, the government (Kumado 1990-1992 in Ubink, 2008). Predictably, indirect rule brought about a larger number of conflicts between chiefs and their subjects, with several attempts at destoolment. Also relevant is the fact that the institution of the paramount chief, introduced under colonialism, subordinated chiefs that were ruling up to that point autonomously.

After independence in 1957, the post-colonial government largely continued the policy of indirect rule (Lund and Boone, 2013) and adopted a mixed strategy of continuity and reform. Resources for a massive overhaul of the land management system were lacking. The state claimed a privileged status in relations to land and carved a legal space for itself to become a land owner. Through the State Lands Act of 1962, the president, acting on behalf of the state, can acquire the absolute interest in any land that is needed for the public interest. What "public interest" was, however, was not clearly outlined at this stage – nor later. For any lands acquired by the state in accordance with this act and its subsequent incarnations, former owners had to be compensated either financially or through the allocation of other lands of equivalent value. Through the Lands Act of 1962, the state was firmly marking itself as essentially different from the colonial administration, and therefore entitled to property rights in land. It was also asserting its interests as being above those of any individual community. In practice, during my stay in Ghana, the legitimacy of the state as a land-owner of resources expropriated from local communities was publicly contested only when the ill-defined public interest proved to be centrally located land to be developed for the residences of state officials.

In 1983, under the government of Rawlings, Ghana embarked on an Economic Recovery Programme, soon to be followed by a formal Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), thus aligning with the IMF's and World Bank's heavily neoliberal policies. Under the conditionalities of the SAP programme, the Ghanaian state actively promoted land titling and registration. Toward the end of the century, the focus of the SAPs remained private sector development, to

be achieved through macroeconomic stability and structural and institutional reforms. However, good governance and the role of civil society also made an appearance on the agenda (Briggs and Yeboah, 2001). In terms of land management, Ghana and several other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa made efforts to transfer more of the responsibility for land dealings in the hands of the state. By the beginning of the 2000s, the recommendations of the international organisations had changed and Ghana started a heavily donor financed Land Administration Project for which the government collaborated with six agencies, including the World Bank, with the explicit purpose of divesting the Government of responsibility for the management of lands. The Customary Land Secretariats were to take over, under the authority of the traditional leaders (Ubink, 2008). The project ran from 2003 to 2011 and made great strides in decentralizing land management and consolidating land agencies. However, the final report of the World Bank was rather bleak. In spite of the fact that many of the objectives of the project had been fulfilled, these seemed to solve very few of the problems associated with land transactions in present day Ghana (World Bank, 2013). The administratively consolidated land agencies continue to run as separate institutions. Attempts at "harmonizing" state and customary law could not turn a blind eye to the fact that rent collected from leasing out the lands was used mainly for the benefit of traditional authorities, creating a conflict of interest between the two legal regimes. The number of cases of land disputes overwhelming courts has gradually decreased over the years the programme was unfolding, but litigation remains rampant, multiple claims to land under different legal orders lead to dramatic tenure insecurity, and the profits drew by some from the commoditization of land act as a harsh exclusionary mechanisms affecting those with no acknowledged rights in land.

Overlapping legal orders and property at work: The case of Dawhenya

At the level of local communities, the evolutions outlined above have effects that are most times divisive. Through the manipulation of customary law and the reinvention of tradition, some of the traditional leaders and their allies gain privileged access to the priciest lands. Where these are leased out, especially in the areas with valuable agricultural lands and in periurban areas, most of the income is capitalized by the same leaders. The procedure is not technically illegal. Lands belonging to the communities are leased out by chiefs in exchange for a sum of money for the lease itself and the "traditional" gift of a bottle of schnapps. As the values of lands increased, the schnapps, serving for the pouring of libation upon closing the contract, became a secondary accessory to the transaction. Most of the money passing hands between the

tenant and the chief are given in the form of "drink money", an extension of the proverbial bottle of schnapps, with only a small part of the total amount in the form of money for the lease, which by law needs to be invested in the interest of the entire community.

Lands in the major cities have become the subject of special legislation, with the allocations of land managed by the local administration. The frontier of contestation and negotiation has now moved to the periurban areas. In the next section I will take a closer look at how individuals jostle for the right to the land in one of these periurban towns.

Dawhenya is situated in the south of Ghana, 15km from the industrial town Tema and 40km from the capital Accra, along the international road from Accra to the border with Togo. In the last two decades, this formerly agricultural town has undergone major transformation due to its gradual incorporation in the periurban area connected to the two main cities in its proximity. Under colonialism, Dawhenya, a small farming community, was part of the Prampram paramountcy, its chief subordinated to the paramount chief, in keeping with the hierarchical preferences of the colonial administration. Prampram, the centre of the Prampram Traditional Area, is currently a smaller fishing town located on the coast, some 6 km from Dawhenya on a secondary road.

Nowadays, Dawhenya is the site of some of the most numerous, acrimonious land litigations – outside of the major cities, that is – pitching land-owning families against one another, while aspiring urbanites jostle for the right to lease one of the residential plots of land, so that they can put up houses, move in and commute to either Tema or Accra. The picture is completed by the acquisition of lands as investment, peppering the landscape with partly developed plots. These relatively recent developments can only be understood in the light of longer length processes that have transformed the status and meaning of property in land in this particular location.

Under Kwame Nkrumah's policy of self-sufficiency, several large agricultural projects were heavily subsidized by the state to ensure the production of sufficient foodstuffs for the population of the country. One such initiative was the Dawhenya Irrigation Project, conceived in 1959, implemented starting with 1975 and operational from 1979. In the frame of the project, 200 ha of land were acquired by the state and two small rivers were dammed to provide irrigation for this surface. The farm, initially designed for vegetable cultivation meant to provide food to the Accra-Tema metropolitan area, ended up operating as a rice farm. Farmers recruited by the government from all the regions in Ghana – positions were advertised through the national radio stations – moved to Dawhenya to work on the farm with their families. The 200ha were divided in 1ha plots and

each plot was given for cultivation to one of the farmers. The costs of running the farm, especially the electricity needed for the operation of the water pumps, were heavily subsidized by the state.

The farm ran at its maximum capacity for almost two decades, until subsidies were withdrawn in acknowledgement of the fact that most years the farm was running at a loss. Parts of the farm continued running until 2005 with the support of various agencies. In 2009, when I became acquainted for the first time with the farm, the state had not made any decision about the future fate of the land. About 40ha out of the 200 were still cultivated with rice in informal arrangements. Some of the farmers were former employees of the state farm, some were newcomers. Those who had been allocated 1ha plots further afield from the dam had moved closer and were paying a share of crop to the former tenants of the plot they were working on, in acknowledgement of the fact that they would have had priority in working those lands. Virtually all of the farmers were practicing intercropping, growing cassava and some vegetables on the margins of their plots. This practice had been common on the state farm, with the management tacitly turning a blind eye. The fringes of state property were intimately appropriated by the tenants, no questions asked. Irrigation, excessively costly when powered by electricity over such a large farm, was now done with petrol powered pumps, sometimes shared by two or three farmers.

The status of the farmers formerly employed by the state to work on the rice paddies is particularly vulnerable as only a tiny minority can call Dawhenya their hometown. Through customary law, the non-autochthonous population is excluded from rights to land. Having worked on the farms for a number of years, farmers and their families were recalcitrant to return to their "hometowns", where they could in theory claim rights in land from their own lineage. In Dawhenya, they could also hardly afford formally renting agricultural land in an area where periurban developments led to the explosion of prices.

On the outskirts of the state owned land, other farmers also made use of the proximity of the dam and the river to cultivate various vegetables. One of them cultivated vegetables on a portion of land under litigation, using his own irrigation system that drew water from the dam and was mainly powered by gravity. The portion of land he cultivated was under litigation, so he did not pay rent for the land, but also could not anticipate at what time he was going to be evicted, once the "rightful" owner would have his decision in court. This did not prevent him from being awarded a prize for young farmers by the government. Another farmer was growing vegetables along the river, downstream from the dam and in close proximity to the residential area in old town. The land he was renting was available in such a valued location because it was

unsuitable for residential development due to the immediate vicinity of the river. While the dry season sometimes led to the river bed drying out completely, sometimes in the rainy season the land was so saturated with water as to affect the crops and the stability of the terrain.

Managing risk was a part of everyday life for these farmers. As noted by von Benda-Beckmann, von Benda Beckmann and Wiber, "in most societies a major distinction is made between rights to regulate, supervise, represent in outside relations and allocate property on the one hand, and rights to use and exploit economically on the other" (2009:17). The former part of this bundle of rights might seem superior to the latter, but, as the examples of illicit, yet legitimate farming indicates, those with no access to ownership make do with temporary use rights. In fact, a significant proportion of the population of Dawhenya was made up by people with no formal rights in land, who nonetheless lived off the land – growing food, gathering wood, using undeveloped house plots as pasture lands. These individuals were not invisible to the "rightful owners", nor to the state, as the case of the award winning farmer shows. They collected residual, unclaimed rights in land and inserted themselves in the cracks created by the dysfunctional formal allocation of such rights.

In Dawhenya, most agricultural lands have been converted into house plots and incorporated into the residential area sprawling from the suburbs of Tema. Three tracts of land have been compartmentalized and built on by three real estate developers. Individual plots host completed buildings, but also partly built houses, buildings that have been put up to lintel level, or simply pillars delineating the property and building blocks. It is a melange that looks chaotic to the uninitiated, but is dense with markers of different relationships between persons and between persons and land. A significant proportion of the residential plots in Dawhenya have been leased as a long term investment, either by Ghanaians working abroad who make plans to move here upon retirement, or by small entrepreneurs expecting that the prices of lands will continue to increase. Others have been leased by people who cannot yet afford to build. In order to mark the fact that the lands have been "bought", all tenants mark the status of the plots through very visible forms of occupation, meant to prevent multiple sales of land. Piles of sand or blocks of cement deposited on a plot rarely meant that the beginning of construction work was imminent. The larger the investment in marking the land, the stronger is the belief that tenure security is guaranteed through it. Land owners who did not live on their lands needed to make claims on their lands continuously. Part of this exercise of claim making was regularly visiting their own lands, to check that no one has encroached on their lands, to verify any changes in the status of the neighbouring plots, to be seen by others in the act of acknowledging their property as such.

Dawhenya New Town, the newly developed residential area, is also the main part of the town where lands have been titled and registered. In 2011, about 30,000 of the 6 millions of plots of land in Ghana were registered under the title registration system introduced in 1986. An unknown number of plots are also registered under the deeds registration system of 1962 (World Bank, 2013). One of the objectives of the Land Administration Programme in its first phase was to use part of its generous funding and access to experts to register lands in 50 customary traditional areas. They failed spectacularly. By the second phase of the project, they went for the more modest aspiration of registering lands in ten areas instead. By the end of the project, they succeeded in marking the boundaries in ten areas and still registered none (World Bank, 2011). One of the aims of the project was to generate 300,000 land titles. Over a period of eight years, they managed to issue 8,000 (World Bank, 2011). Land titling and registration have been on the agenda of the Ghanaian state since the first reforms after Independence. In the 80s, making headway in registering land became a priority again under the structural adjustment programme. Very recently, the case of the donor-led LAP programme shows clearly just how elusive the objective is. Having strengthened the authority of the traditional authorities and decentralized land management institutions, the programme found that their employees could simply not bypass the opposition of these leaders, who refused to cooperate and offer information about boundaries and land owners. In some cases, consultants were chased off the lands they were attempting to map.

Land titling still is a futile exercise for most Ghanaians who have access to land on the basis of customary law. Most owners only title their land in preparation for land transactions such as leasing out parts of their property. Even where the purpose is leasing, in areas with reduced competition for land such arrangements are still conducted under customary law, without any state-recognized deeds. Many of the sought-after plots in the residential area of Dawhenya New Town have in fact been "bought" with a down payment before the owners even produced their land titles. In this context, land titling and registration mainly serve the interest of new tenants of lands in highly valued locations throughout the country, predominantly in the major cities and periurban areas.

Just like in most regions in the south of Ghana, Dawhenya lands have been managed as stool lands at least since the beginning of colonialism. In December 2008, the Accra Fast Track High Court ruled that the Prampram Paramount Stool does not own land and that lands in Prampram were owned by families, clans, and quarters. This was a clear instance of the state sanctioning the reinvention of tradition. It was the end of a fight led jointly by

two of the family heads in the Traditional Area, one of whom was the chief of Dawhenya. The stake was not purely theoretical; what was debated was the allodial right over a terrain of a little over 100ha that had been allocated by the two family heads to Central University College, a private university affiliated with one of the largest charismatic churches in West Africa that has recently opened a new site in Miotso, just out of Dawhenya. Thus, the first battle that has been settled was that of moving the allodial right from the level of the paramount chief to that of family or clan heads. Starting with 2008, each family started allocating its own lands, mainly as residential plots leased out for a period of 99 years in the case of residential plots and 49 years for commercial plots. The decision of the state in this case is far from being a move towards the gradual privatization of rights in land through decentralization in the hands of individual families. Instead, the court of law was persuaded by a team of lawyers, including the corporate lawyer of the organization managing the university, to consolidate the privileges of a major investor in the area, who, at the time the case first went to court, had already started building the university campus on the contested lands. The stories of two of the tracts of land acquired by the real estate developing agencies are not dissimilar. Both companies dealt smoothly with land litigation on the areas they were developing, thanks to the access to good lawyers and the sheer scale of the projects they were running, which meant any dissatisfied land owner could potentially be compensated for their loss, while building on the projects continued.

In the instances where land titling and registration worked, such as in the case of the residential plots in Dawhenya, the effects advertised by the neoliberal discourse, such as increased land tenure security and opportunities for economic development, did indeed materialize. However, this is only holds true for a narrow elite, which was in a privileged position in the first place. Pushing for the creation private, state recognized property had as an effect the accumulation of resources by two types of actors: traditional authorities, legitimized on the basis of the idiom of tradition, regardless of how often or how recently this tradition has been reformulated; and wealthy owners and entrepreneurs. The securitization of their rights happens at the cost of the vulnerabilization and exclusion of the non-autochthonous population and of the poor, who are pushed back from the resources they had used until then under arrangements not recognized by the state.

As I have shown previously, the distinction between private and common property is a bit of a red herring. It disguises the fact that private property does not guarantee access to all of the rights in land, just as the legal label of common property can cover a diversity of arrangements, including some in which rights are concentrated in the hands of few. In anthropology,

the virtues of common property over land have been often extoled for providing the best chances at a fair distribution of the resources (ex. Berry, 1997). This is very unlikely to happen in situations with high competition for lands. It is also in opposition with the policies of international organizations setting the agenda of national states, which push forward for the simplification of land tenure systems and increased transparency. Both of them are ideally represented by private property, formally registered as such.

Ghanaians resist land titling and registration as the form through which private property is sanctioned by the state. I do not claim that this is a concerted effort at deliberate resistance to state and international donors' policies. On the contrary, as research by the World Bank indicates (2013), many of them are not even aware of the weight the state recently places on the the legally sanctioned privatization of lands. Instead, we are dealing with a case of the citizens not being capable to render intelligible the exercise of the state (Roitman, 2004). Private property is a relevant concept and practice only in certain areas of the country, usually those permeated by the global capital, and it remains pointless for all the others. Even for those interested in the activity of the state, its workings remain ambiguous as long as it also formally recognizes customary laws and traditional leaders. The Ghanaian state does not have any high modernity stakes (Scott, 1999); it does however aim to make its territory readable by international donors and investors, especially in urban and periurban locations and in the major sites for agricultural investment. For now, though, any attempts at forcing legibility have made little headway.

Conclusion

This paper contributes to the body of literature documenting the works and the effects of state and donor led advancement of the privatization of lands. Many ethnographically informed examples from the global south indicate that regimes of legal pluralism, superseded by new policy recommendations, produce situations that are complex, messy and hardly generalizable. While this is true for every situation, my case also suggests that this complexity allows for degrees of freedom in allocating land rights, which can benefit the otherwise likely to be deprived population.

The case of Ghana also shows that land policies are undermined by internal contradictions and incoherencies that become understandable in a historical frame. Under indirect rule, the colonial administration mapped property relations and boundaries, but let land matters in the hands of traditional rulers, who from this point on gained a privileged position in relation with both their subjects and the state. Post-independence, land reform was postponed for lack

of resources and legal pluralism was favoured once more. Throughout the decades that followed, structural adjustment programmes and, increasingly, donor-led projects pushed for land titling and registration with little success. State institutions dealing with matters of land keep failing in implementing their own policies, for reasons that I suggest are related to the particular position of citizens in relation to capital: securitization of land tenure relations is only an issue for individuals with access to sought-after locations changing hands for large sums of money. The rest can comfortably remain between the confines of the customary law regulations. Ghana is the favourite West-African destination for investors due to its political stability and democratic institutions, touted as a model to the other countries in the region. I choose it as a locus from which to explore the interplay between the legal regimes regulating property relations because here this interplay has the highest stakes for state and investors alike.

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SMARTPHONES AND THE EUROPEAN FLAG:
THE NEW HUNGARIAN DEMONSTRATIONS FOR DEMOCRACY

ÁGNES GAGYI[*]

ABSTRACT. The article places Hungarian demonstrations in autumn 2014 within an overview of the construction of the political idea of democracy in post-socialist Hungarian politics, and the changes induced by the Fidesz government after 2010. Instead of a short-term, politically focused analysis, it understands recent changes as part of a long-term history of integration into the history of the capitalist world-system. In that interpretation, I rely on the collective work of the Budapest-based Working Group on Public Sociology "Helyzet". Based on the national and international press of the events, as well as on my previous knowledge of movement groups, I explore the ideological forms through which mobilizations' issues are channelled into more politicized vocabularies. Although a full analysis of this complex and hierarchical process falls beyond the purposes of the present paper, it nonetheless points at a major factor within the local dynamics of politicization: that of vertical alliances within a renewed geopolitical tension, framed in the vocabulary of a "New Cold War".

Keywords: capitalist world-system, social movements, democracy, Hungary

Introduction

On 25 October 2014, tens of thousands in Budapest marched against the government's new proposal to introduce a 0,5 EUR/1GB tax on Internet data traffic. After organizers officially closed the event, protesters moved on to the headquarters of the ruling party, Fidesz, brought down part of the fence, threw old computer parts at the building breaking windows, and put EU flags on the balcony. Protestors announced another demonstration in 48 hours in case the Internet tax was not revoked. Fidesz reacted immediately, passing a bill to cap the Internet tax at 2.5 EUR for citizens and 16.5 EUR for companies. This time, its technique of announcing harsh measures that can be reduced later, did not work. On Tuesday, October 28 even greater numbers went to the

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[*] *George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, e-mail: agnesgagyi@gmail.com.*

streets in Budapest, and smaller demonstrations were held in 13 Hungarian cities. With a relatively ad hoc organizational base, protests continued in the autumn. The October events could be numbered among the row of pro-democracy and anti-austerity mobilizations in the world after 2008. Eastern European mobilizations from this family shared the concerns over austerity and democracy, as well as a characteristic which Western activists and commentators described as a disillusionment with the tools of representative democracy. However, similar claims relate to different histories in different parts of the world. In this paper I will discuss the context of the problematic of austerity and representative democracy in contemporary Hungary, starting from the 25 October march.

World Capitalism, Semi-Peripheries and Democracy

The relationship between democratic representation and people's sovereignty/political participation is classically defined as a relationship within a nation-state. That premise obscures the global relationships of power that define power struggles and rooms of manoeuvre for actors within a nation-state. Once those global relationships are taken into consideration, to speak of democracy within a country, one needs to situate that country within the history and hierarchy of the interconnected system of world capitalism. Sovereignty, citizenship and democracy will refer to different objective circumstances and opportunities in various moments and positions within that history. In most cases, with the deepening and expansion of the integration of world capitalism, citizens of one country will hardly have the power to govern their own lives through democratic means within their own states, and such chances will vary enormously according to the hierarchical position of their countries within the present cycle of the world system. Typically, elites of semi-peripheral and peripheral countries will find their decision-making power curtailed by their country's economic and political dependence from the centre. The employment and working conditions of the labour force will depend not only on their own bargaining power within local politics, but also on the priorities of the economies they depend on. Class dynamics within states will take shape not only relative to each other, but relative to transnational alignments of coalitions within the space of the world system (Arrighi, 1994).

The history of Hungarian class and elite formation is embedded in changing relationships of dependence. In a semi-peripheral position in the world economy, Hungary's history has been also shaped by the influence of neighbouring empires, increasing or decreasing according to their own positions within cyclical shifts of global historical capitalism. The modern idea of democracy in Hungarian

politics was shaped in local struggles wrought in that context. The symbolic opposition of East and West, born in geopolitical struggles, was embodied and manifested internally throughout Hungarian history by various groups who strove for influence on local politics along various vertical coalitions within the power field of multiple dependence. Needless to say, the historical form of those struggles, and the consequent meaning of historical forms of the idea of democracy, did not equal the textbook form of liberal democracy (Janos, 2000).

Hungary's postsocialist transition to "democracy" happened in a position of dependence on the Euro-Atlantic centre through high state debt, loss of Comecon markets, and the need for credit and FDI. Hungary's unequal development traditionally featured a struggle with technological backwardness and foreign debt. Soviet-type industrialization led to a search for Western loans as soon as 1952. On the eve of the financialization of the postwar world-system under US hegemony, and resulting zigzags of adjustment efforts in global financial flows, Hungary, similar to other East European and Latin American countries, first took up a series of cheap loans in the 1970's, and then found itself in a debt trap by the 1980's. During the 1990's, the depreciation and privatization of state companies, and the partial reintegration into global production chains fed into another mechanism of the financialization period of the US hegemony: the depreciation and movement of productive assets from the core to the peripheries. Hungary's main resource, its working population, was first pushed out of the full employment positions of the socialist economy, then reintegrated in global production in a new position, as relatively skilled, but cheap labour (Éber et al., 2014).

What does it mean to be "disillusioned" with the tools of representative democracy in the 2014 Hungarian demonstrations? In the following, I will sketch out an overview of the construction of the political idea of democracy in post-socialist Hungarian politics, and the changes induced by the Fidesz government after 2010. Instead of a short-term, politically focused analysis, I will understand recent changes as part of a long-term history of integration into the history of the capitalist world-system. In that interpretation, I rely on the collective work of the Budapest-based Working Group on Public Sociology "Helyzet". Based on the national and international press of the events, as well as on my previous knowledge of movement groups, I will give an impression of the ideological forms through which mobilizations' issues are channelled into more politicized vocabularies. The paper does not aim to give a full analysis of this complex and hierarchical process – that is the aim of an ongoing research. It does, however, point at a major factor within the local dynamics of politicization: that of vertical alliances within a renewed geopolitical tension, framed in the vocabulary of a "New Cold War".

The transitional package of democracy-cum-capitalism

During Hungary's post-socialist transition, through the privatization of state socialist economy, capital was concentrated in the hands of national and western capitalists. Simultaneously, the population, previously proletarianized by state socialism, was deprived from the means of production and the political guarantees of work and welfare. For them, post-socialist transition to capitalism and democracy brought an economic crisis comparable to the 1930's Great Depression, and the prospect of decades-long austerity measures. In the transition to political democracy, the economic interests of this proletarianized population did not come to be represented.

New postsocialist elites soon stabilized into two competing blocs of political-economic networks (Stark and Vedres, 2012). In the relation of the national economy to the global economy, both blocs played the role of connecting the Hungarian economy to the capitalist world system in a dependent position, and drawing some profit from it for themselves. Their profiles, however, in fulfilling this function, were different: while one bloc worked as the local technocratic mediator of the interests of international capital, the other focused on the interests of national capital, and the use of the state both in its necessary connections, but also in its antagonisms with international markets. The dominant political ideologies produced by this power structure contained, consequently: in the first bloc, the uncritical embracement of Euro-Atlantic integration, and in the second bloc, a nationalist critique of Euro-Atlantic power, connected to the requirement of a strong state to resist international capital and make space for national bourgeois interests.

In terms of "democracy", the process of post-socialist transition contained an irremediable contradiction. The transitional package of democracy-cum-capitalism, accepted and served by new elites in the objective situation of Western dependence, contained the requirement that in capitalist integration, the economic interests of social groups proletarianized under Socialism will be harmed. To bridge that contradiction between democratization and interest exclusion, post-socialist elite blocs developed two mutually reinforcing constellations of discursive bridging techniques.

The post-socialist right wing claimed to defend the "national" interest against the coalition of old socialist power and foreign capital, invoking sentiments of national identity to symbolically bridge the gap between the interests of national capital and proletarianized groups. The Socialist-Liberal coalition took over that right wing definition of "national interest", and built its legitimacy on defending democracy from the nationalist, populist (and often antisemitic) claims. Based on that technique, they came to call themselves "the democratic side".

They identified democracy with a necessary introduction of Western-type institutions of market and democracy, if necessary, against local resistance, with the help of Western powers. Local discontent, defined in terms borrowed from the national bourgeois bloc's bridging technique, that is, in terms of national self-defence, served as yet another proof of the regressive (nationalist) quality of local society, in itself a threat to the democratic progress. The bridging efforts of the national bourgeoisie, in their turn, could rely on the Socialist-Liberal coalition's denial of the significance of economic grievances and the symbolic downgrading of the local population. To the ascetic of the "democratic side", formal and Western-looking democratism they contrasted the compensatory recognition of the values of the Hungarian "people", where the lack of focus on representation of interests could be bridged by national sentiments and attack on the "democratic side" as agents of foreign powers. (Gagyi, 2014)

For two decades after the regime change, an inflow of foreign capital in forms of foreign direct investment (FDI) (1990s privatization) and transfers (credits in the 2000s) helped the Social-Liberal coalition to maintain its power position as mediator of those flows. However, neither new credits or EU transfers, nor partial reindustrialization on a lower position of the industrial value chain based on FDI could finance a budget burdened by mounting debt service. Already by 2006, before the global financial crisis, Hungary's weak ability to service its debt invited scrutiny by international financial capital. Due to the constant debt service pressure on the state budget, consequent governments were in need to push for a centralization of domestic income. High taxes tended to push private consumption and investment into stagnation, and threatened to turn politically active higher-income groups against the political leadership. To compensate higher-income groups for the high degree of income centralization, fiscal policies were designed to channel wealth from the bottom up. Lower-income groups were compensated through private Keynesian tools, including monetary and fiscal support for household borrowing.

The financial crisis of 2008 hit Hungary in a state of mounting private and public debt, recession since 2006, and the complete delegitimation of Western-looking Social-Liberal leadership, following on from decades of austerity and social polarization, the depletion of the sources of their economic strategy built on Western capital inflow, and a political scandal following a leaked speech of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, in which he admitted lying to the people on budget prospects. It was on this basis that, in 2010, the 2/3 parliamentary majority of Fidesz emerged.

Fidesz's "Freedom Fight"

In power, Fidesz announced a national "freedom fight" against dependence on Western capital, and a "centralization of the power field" in domestic politics in order to rule out its internal agents. In both symbolic programs, it could rely on strong discontent with Social-Liberal governments and their decades-long devaluation of local society in face of "Western values". In the years following 2010, it performed the centralization of the power field through multiple changes of the constitution, rewriting electoral law, and bringing state media and cultural infrastructure under its control. Its actual economic policies were aimed at broadening the space of manoeuvre of national capital, through centralizing non-tradable markets (such as telecommunications), reducing state debt, and attempts to substitute dependence on Western capital with multiple dependence. Moves to benefit national capital, at the same time, tightened the opportunities of working people. Consumption taxes were raised, and consequent savings of higher-income groups were channelled into the financing of state debt. Taxes on consumption, on the other side, meant a pressure on the living standards of those on the lower end of the income spectrum. Steps to promote reindustrialization in lower positions of the value chain, also advertised as a policy to create new jobs, included an even harsher reconfiguration of the labour code, and a reorganization of the education system to channel labour in low skill jobs. Fidesz's quest to substitute Western dependence with multiple dependence led to contracts and concessions hardly any more favourable for Hungarian working people than previous Western requirements. Alongside further marginalization of social costs, new measures of discipline and penalization were introduced.

In 2014, Fidesz was able to keep its 2/3 majority in the parliamentary elections, and won a sweeping majority of local governments on the local elections. Both results were partly due to the lack of a legitimate opposition, and Fidesz's new election rules. They were also due to its existing broad legitimacy. That legitimacy, however, is threatened by its own aggressive centralization of wealth. To keep its political camp together in spite of those tensions, the government presses for further ideological battles against Western domination, and tries to sustain the idea of fighting for general wealth through measures of symbolic redistribution (such as the reduction of the price of energy bills at election time, and the previous nationalization and political redistribution of licences for tobacco shops). After the 2014 election victory, however, an ever greater austerity package is on the way. The idea of the Internet tax itself was born in ongoing bargains between data traffic providers and the government over the distribution of burdens of new telecommunication taxes.

Fidesz's efforts to frame its own power bloc's accumulation strategy as the freedom fight of the nation against Western neoliberalism finds its mirror image in the interpretation of Fidesz politics by its opposition and Western press as coming from some irrational drive towards authoritarianism and nationalism, which hinders Hungary from becoming a Western country. On the ideological level, that battle is wrought for the well-being of the Hungarian people, based on the bifurcated ideological truths of Western-type liberal modernization versus community-based national development in a multipolar world. On the level of concrete accumulation projects, however, that battle is fought by capitalist fractions over the labour and purchasing power of the Hungarian people. That collision of interests is silenced by decades-long hegemonic constructs of the two fractions' mutually supporting bridging techniques.

Democracy and Geopolitics in the October Protests in Hungary

During the 2014 October protests, speeches and interviews of organizers framed the case of the Internet tax in terms of democracy, freedom of information, and the importance of civil activism in face of the government's antidemocratic measures and curtailing of civil rights. Another strong frame was that of corruption, and the unsatisfactory economic policies of the government. Contrasted to the background of the United States' recent blacklisting of top Hungarian officials (according to some sources, including the head of the National Tax Office), the Internet tax was featured as symbolic for citizens being made to pay excessive amounts which get lost in the labyrinth of corruption. The bridge between the two frames was constituted by the idea of civil society reclaiming its democratic power and protecting its economic interest. As one organizer put it during the Tuesday Budapest demonstration, "Corruption, lack of principle and irrationality pushes this country into decay. If we can believe in our own strength, we will be able to stop the Internet tax, and the politics that disregard Hungarian society." (Károly Füzessi, quoted by Czenkli, 2014)

Among demonstrators, interpretations were more varied. Similar to recent Bulgarian and Romanian protests, the bulk of demonstrators came from a relatively well-to-do middle class, experiencing a squeeze on its economic as well as moral well-being. The big numbers of protestors are most probably due to higher turn-out among members of this group who so far did not mobilize in response to invitations from politically active opposition groups. Typical answers given by such participants to journalists state a distance from politics and parties, and an outrage on the Internet tax, as well as other taxes, cuts, and corruption.

One of the politically active smaller groups in the events is a loose network coalesced through the various civic mobilizations since Fidesz came to power in 2010. In student demonstrations, groups against the transformation of the cultural infrastructure, and numerous actions in the support of constitutional rights and civil liberties, this network pushed a critique of Hungary's "democracy problem" under the Orbán government. A significant difference that set this network apart from older members of the disintegrating Social-Liberal coalition is that they spoke in the name of civil society, and did not support the former party coalition.

Other politically active groups present in the demonstrations include a small fraction of ultras, who gathered on October 25 for a previously announced demonstration against new regulations at football games, but later joined the events at Fidesz headquarters. An anarchist group and neo-nationalist voices were also present at the October 25 event. At that moment, the promotion of the EU flag was criticized by requests for Hungarian flags to be used too. However, by October 28, the European flag ran the show, as protesters tried to impose one on Parliament, chanted 'Europe! Europe!', and saw three Socialist representatives hang another EU flag out from a Parliament window.

Anecdotic experience and random mini-interviews by the press convey a broader range of frames and motivations. Beyond freedom, human rights, indignation over taxes, and European values, protesters speak of rage over elite consumption, poverty, lack of economic opportunities, and migration. In mainstream "democracy" framing, these topics are less prevalent, and appear as illustrations of "unfreedom".

On the government's side, a so far unprecedented silence and rigid reaction followed the events. While head of government Viktor Orbán was vacationing in Switzerland, Fidesz politician Szilárd Németh claimed that the bill on Internet tax will be passed, providers will be prevented from passing the burden on to consumers, and demonstrators will go home, as they had previously done. Government controlled state media kept almost complete silence in relation to the demonstrations, while government media attributed the protests to a coalition of opposition parties and foreign powers, with allusions to a possible Maidan scenario. A few days later Viktor Orbán withdrew the plan for the Internet tax in its planned form. Some of the protestors announced a victory gathering, while others continued to organize another demonstration against the Internet tax, state corruption, unreasonable taxes, the present direction of foreign policy, and for Europe, freedom, transparency and responsible government.

US and European press gave strong visibility to the demonstrations, featuring them as a case of conflict over democracy and civil rights. The European Commission reacted with unusual promptness to the idea of a data

traffic tax, and condemned it as part of a larger pattern of Viktor Orbán's government rolling back freedoms. This treatment of the demonstrations did not come as a surprise. In the couple of weeks preceding the demonstrations, Washington and Brussels went beyond earlier expressions of concerns over Hungarian democracy. President Obama condemned Hungary's curtailing of civic freedoms, and bracketed it together with non-NATO countries Azerbaijan, Russia, Venezuela and Egypt. Assistant secretary of state for European affairs Victoria Nuland made it clear that there is a tension between NATO membership and Orbán's politics. In mid-October, top Hungarian officials were blacklisted by the US on grounds of corruption, an evocative gesture towards the government. Calls to exclude Hungary from the EU made it from US to EU headlines. The news on new demonstrations fell into that framework.

One of Viktor Orbán's main policy lines was to broaden the space of manoeuvre for his national bourgeois power bloc trading unilateral (Western) for multiple (Western and Eastern) dependence. What he described to voters as a broad opportunity for Hungarian business in a changing world order, however, turned out rather to be the eye of the needle. His efforts to gain a bargaining position as a "bridge" for Eurasian and Chinese economic interests to the heart of the EU happened to hit a nerve at a time of US concerns over Euro-Atlantic unity in the face of Putin's Eurasian Economic Union and Europe's continuing energy dependence on Russia. In the context of ongoing war in Ukraine, geopolitical tensions with Russia came increasingly to be framed in the terminology of a new Cold War. Orbán's nuclear plant contract with Russia, support for the Southern Stream gas pipeline despite EU prohibition, refusal of gas supplies to Ukraine, criticism of EU economic sanctions on Russia, and a recent scandal of Russian espionage among Hungarian politicians put Hungary in the role of a possible crack in the Euro-Atlantic shield. The new wave of attention to Hungary's "democracy problem" is undoubtedly linked to that broader constellation.

Internal and external thematization of the Hungarian demonstrations broadly fed into the logic of the new Cold War discourse. In Western coverage, the Internet tax was featured as representative of Orbán's authoritarianism, as opposed to the Western values of civil liberties and the free market. Hungarian opposition media followed that track. In the formulation of one major liberal news outlet's analysis, people went on the streets because the Internet tax is the embodiment of the illiberal state. Its analysis found the Internet tax representative of the Orbán regime for four reasons: 1. the rejection of the basic workings of the market and capitalism; 2. the rejection of the rule of law, contractual discipline, and the value of the given word; 3. the questioning of European values; and 4. a basic misunderstanding of youth, the generation of the future. The

government's reaction gave further fuel to the debate in the same terms, as it treated demonstrations in terms of an anti-government political movement, supported by internal opposition helped by the Western powers. Protestors themselves accepted and propagated the new Cold War framework – to give one well intended, but evocative example, in the New York Times front page article on the Hungarian demonstrations, the main organizer defined the Internet tax as "an attempt to create a digital iron curtain around Hungary".

In the 2010-2014 cycle, movements which spoke against the Fidesz government were successfully reintegrated in the coalition of Social-Liberal opposition parties. However, movements' constituencies did not follow the movements' brands in that process of incorporation, as illustrated by the same parties' poor performance at the elections. With that additional blow on their low legitimacy, new demonstrations would be harder to incorporate. New opposition parties are, with the exception of the extreme right Jobbik, very small, and their criticisms against the bifurcated system of political legitimation are still silenced by the dual media system of the old parties. But among the Westward-looking educated strata, the main constituency of the present protests, the old Social-Liberal bloc is considered as corrupt and as illegitimate as Fidesz. Does that distance mean a possibility for the new demonstrations to break out of the old dual bridging techniques of dependent accumulation projects, and formulate a new agenda that looks at the interests of working Hungarians?

The most important factor going against that opportunity is the objective circumstance of a geopolitical situation which makes the idea of choosing between dependencies inevitable – since the great powers put the question that way. As Orbán's efforts push the country in the grip of a new geopolitical tension, the traditional duet of local political ideologies gains new power. The well-being of the people is ever more readily translated into a choice between directions of dependence – and a choice between ruling elites mediating it.

Second, the sphere of political publicity in which the voices of the protests resonate is one formed by interconnected local and external power projects, and their ideologies. Local opposition media as well as Western media eagerly translate the fact of the protests to their own diagnosis: the conflict between Orbán's nationalist authoritarianism and Western democracy. Mirroring government framings support those frames from the other side.

Third, protestors themselves speak a political language close to that of the former Socialist-Liberal bloc, and through that, their words are easily fed back into opposition discourse as well as the new Cold War discourse. The most evocative symbol of the events, in that respect, is undoubtedly the use of the EU flag. The historical irony of the case is that while in the regime change, the civil society discourse of an intellectual minority came to legitimate an

exclusionary practice of Western-oriented accumulation in the name of democracy, now a broad mobilization of civil society is being channelled into the re-legitimation of that same project.

Activists with a stronger political vocabulary connect the case of the Internet to the idea of an active civil society as the way towards a socially just democracy, similar to dissident ideas before 1989, and the democracy-as-participation ideal of many post-2008 mobilizations around the world. As much anecdotic evidence suggests, the politically less active constituency relies less on complex political ideologies than on assessments of practical interests, and a sense of indignation in face of Fidesz's aggressive accumulation project. Europe, in the sense it appeared in such comments after the demonstrations, "means a better life than Russia".

Conclusions

The present Hungarian demonstrations feed into geopolitical struggles and the local political binaries formed in power fields shaped by those struggles. As demonstrators today refuse to ally with the opposition side of the old political divide, there seems to be an opening towards a formulation of claims critical of the previous bridging techniques, which aligned the vocabularies of local politics with the interests of two competing elite blocks. So far, powerful framing by international and local opposition media, as well as protestors' own use of the EU flag and of the democracy-autocracy framework, make that unlikely. In either case, the contradiction between the new promises of existing accumulation projects and the actual effect of those projects is not likely to be solved in the near future, and portends future tensions. In dealing with the way such tensions are articulated into movement claims, the paper suggested a view that translates universalized notions of democracy and popular sovereignty into historical forms of democratic ideas, situated within a long history of dependent integration of local political systems within a hierarchical global system.

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THE CRIMINALISATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM IN EUROPE

MANUEL MIREANU[*]

ABSTRACT. In this text, I briefly analyse the ways in which environmental activism is being criminalised and treated as terrorism. I will illustrate the text with instances of such treatment from Romania, Italy, France, Greece, the UK and the US. Such a long list of examples is needed in order to argue that the criminalisation of environmental activism is far from being an isolated aspect of one government's policy. It is part of a global trend whereby the contemporary capitalist state is repressing any significant interference in its strategic alliance with multinational companies. It is also part of a global trend in which governments articulate certain forms of civil disobedience as security threats for the infrastructure of the state. In this process, the "terrorist" label functions as the most important alarm that justifies a host of heavy repressive measures against environmental activists. The label of "eco-terrorism" plays a crucial role in cracking down on any form of radical dissent towards the activity of big companies.

Keywords: environmental activism, global capitalism, resistance

Introduction[1]

When the chief of Romanian Intelligence (SRI) declared last autumn that there are "eco-anarchist elements" infiltrated in the Roşia Montană protests, very few people took this statement serious. The general attitude has been to dismiss the statement as being paranoid at best, and ludicrous at worst. However, when a few months later, the protest area in Pungeşti became an exceptional territory, flooded with police, and thoroughly controlled, it was clear that the Romanian state is not joking. Environmental activism is strictly

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[*] *Central European University Budapest, e-mail: manuel_mireanu@ceu-budapest.edu.*

controlled, and any time the government perceives some excess, it steps in to curtail the process. For the general public, this heavy-handed treatment of a democratic right is legitimised through security concerns.

In this text, I will briefly analyse the ways in which environmental activism is being criminalised and treated as terrorism. I will illustrate the text with instances of such treatment from Romania, Italy, France, Greece, the UK and the US. Such a long list of examples is needed in order to argue that the criminalisation of environmental activism is far from being an isolated aspect of one government's policy. It is part of a global trend whereby the contemporary capitalist state is repressing any significant interference in its strategic alliance with multinational companies. It is also part of a global trend in which governments articulate certain forms of civil disobedience as security threats for the infrastructure of the state. In this process, the "terrorist" label functions as the most important alarm that justifies a host of heavy repressive measures against environmental activists. As I will show, the label of "eco-terrorism" plays a crucial role in cracking down on any form of radical dissent towards the activity of big companies.

On a more theoretical level, I will argue here that the instances of repression against environmental activism illustrate the intimate link between state security and private property. Indeed, the activities of radical activists engaged in environmental work are seen as a terrorist threat not because any lives are being jeopardised, but because they attend to the integrity of private property. This is a crucial argument, because it goes against the mainstream explanation, which sees security as being connected to identity.

On an activist level, this text serves as a sort of warning. Environmental activism seems to be no joke for the state. The repressive apparatus that governments have been building in the past three decades to counter environmental activism is dense, insidious, cunning and oftentimes impenetrable. The state is infiltrating, intimidating, tear-gassing, beating, threatening and often even murdering those that stand in its ways. This text is written by someone who does not have any involvement in any form of environmental activism, for those groups that already have such experiences. It does not pretend to speak on behalf of any of these groups, not to lecture anybody on what environmental activism is or how it is done. It merely wants to uncover some of the repressive tools of the state, which activists should probably be aware of.

The first part lays down the starting theoretical premises of the analysis. I show how the state uses security and property in order to transform the legitimate political actions of environmental activists into criminal and terrorist acts. Subsequently, I start the analysis with the "green scare" in the US, since the Washington government has been for decades in the frontline of repression against activists. I then turn to Romania, in order to make the analysis relevant

to the public that this text is intended for. Furthermore, I embed the Romanian case in the wider European context, by highlighting the EU practices of criminalisation. Within the EU, I look at three specific instances – the UK, Italy and Greece, because in these countries the repression against environmental activists has been probably the most severe, with infiltrators and imprisonments. I end the article with some reflections on security and property, by bringing the discussion back to the alliance between the state and the corporations in the realm of preserving property in the name of national security.

Criminalisation as a technique of government

The criminalisation of environmental dissent functions as a mechanism of governance that seeks to survey, control, tame and punish the population. As I will show, the accusation of eco-terrorism has little to do with the acts that one has committed. In many cases, people have been labelled terrorists for merely filming inside animal testing facilities or farms, for publishing news about animal liberation, or for possessing literature on deep ecology. Suspects are being criminalized for what the state imagines that they might cause in the future, rather than for actual deeds. Suspicion can also be caused by association: 'someone is suspected because they know someone who is suspected.' As such, legitimate acts of non-violent political dissent become dangerous.

Suspicion is itself a part of the government technique: presupposition becomes a form of knowledge for the state, and it is grounded on the need to reveal what is thought to be hidden and secret. Terrorist activities are generally thought to be concealed, and therefore the state has to constantly invent new ways of dispelling secrecy through "locating connections, links and movements [and also] through the use of algorithms that can detect patterns of behaviour" (Aradau and van Munster, 2008: 36). In this way, anything becomes incriminating: conference and protests attendance, reading lists, emails, photos, friends, clothing etc. Moreover, the search for patterns means that certain behaviour can also be criminalised, if it fits the established "terrorist *modus operandi*" that the state works with. In this way, the government is creating dichotomies between good and bad protesters, between activists and terrorists. Although everyone is being watched and recorded, there is a need to establish a category that gets demonised, in order to justify repression (Loadenthal, 2013: 95). Furthermore, this boundary-making between good and bad activists implies that the latter are a threat to the general security, while the former are just like the rest of "us". Such distinctions between the "good us" and the "dangerous them" are at the heart of state violence in the name of security (Buzan et al., 1998; Mireanu, 2012).

The state officials articulate a discourse of generalised threat, whereby particular behaviours and people are deemed to be threatening. This threat needs to be addressed immediately, otherwise it can lead to the shattering of the existing peace and order. The ways in which the state addresses this constructed threat – or legitimizes other actors to address it (security companies, experts and the corporations themselves) include on the one hand direct intervention, through policing, repression and incarceration, and on the other hand more subtle ways such as media propaganda, infiltration and provocations. The direct interventions are legitimised to the general public by the need to urgently keep off the danger posed by the threatening elements. Thus, acts such as drastic and violent police confrontations in protests are usually motivated as a response to the protesters' own violent acts, which can lead to the destruction of urban infrastructure and even injuries.

Conversely, the indirect interventions of the state in order to uphold security are slightly more difficult to legitimise to the public. When the authorities are publicly demonising environmental activists, infiltrating their groups and labelling them as "terrorists", they need more effort to ensure the population that these are legitimate actions. As such, the state constructs a narrative of danger and fear that goes beyond the threat of immediate violence posed by some protesters. The narrative articulates a solid connection between property, freedom and security. In order to be fully free, we are told, our property needs to be secure. And in order for the free market to function freely, its actors – the companies – must also have their property ensured. Whatever threatens property becomes the biggest danger of the moment.

In this context, the strategies of environmental activists, which involve anything from animal liberation to blockades and sabotages, are constructed as one major threat and presented as such to the public. The severe repression against these activists is legitimised in the name of the general security. If we do not stop them, the narrative goes, the activists will elicit a series of destructions and damages to private property, and this can misbalance the existing democratic order. In this way, political action is labelled as terrorism. There is little or nothing mentioned about the motives of the activists, the connections between their strategies and the actions of the companies they target. The political element is completely taken out of the picture, in favour of a legalistic discourse. The activists are not political actors with a legitimate set of ideas behind their acts, but mere criminals, with the sole intention of instilling damage for the sake of damage, violence for the sake of violence.

The following illustrations will highlight these mechanisms of criminalisation and securitisation of environmental activism. I have chosen a rather Euro-centric approach with European cases, because I am closer to these settings than to others.

I have used mostly media reports and newspapers. In the general discussion about the EU setting, I looked at some official reports, and in other cases I used literature written by environmental activists, such as the *Green Anarchist* journal from the UK. I focused on the most visible stories, and the "bigger" cases, leaving aside the daily interactions between the state and environmental activists. My purpose was to highlight the general picture in order to give some idea of the extent to which the state is criminalising activists. Of course, there are a cohort of instances and cases that have been left out, but the general trend can still be discerned. The state is treating environmental activists as terrorists, and is presenting them to the public as a scaremonger, a generalised threat, a "green scare".

"Eco-terrorism" and the "Green Scare" in the United States

I start with the United States, because the term 'eco-terrorism' originates and has been diffused from there. In 1983, anti-environmental activist Ron Arnold invented the term in order to aid his campaign against environmental regulations for companies (Vanderheiden, 2008: 303). It has been from the outset associated with another contraption, the term "ecotage", which refers to acts of sabotage against property, with a strict requirement that all precautions are taken so that no life is harmed. Unlike "ecoterrorism", ecotage is a term coined by activists themselves, especially by people from *Earth First!* and the sister *ALF* (Animal Liberation Front) and *ELF* (Earth Liberation Front) groups in the US.

The association between ecotage and terrorism has been quite effective in demonising the image of environmental activists. "Eco-terrorism" is a term that generates at the same time fear and rage from the general public. On the one hand, it creates the image of people that would stop for nothing in pursuing their agenda, and this may include ravaging attacks of vandalism on critical facilities and infrastructure; on the other hand, it conjures the image of the deviant anarchist, who is outside and against society, ready at any point to unleash chaos and destruction, but with no respect for the work of others. Such was the so-called "Green Scare" in the US in the mid-2000. Environmental activism was attacked from two sides – from the side of the media, which was generating and reinforcing some of the stereotypes mentioned earlier, and from the side of the government, which unleashed a considerable and disproportionate crackdown on the "radical green" movement (Potter, 2009). Both these elements have been shown to be orchestrated by large companies with a direct interest in minimising the threat of activism against their practices and facilities (Potter, 2009: 683). As I will show in the next cases, the criminalisation of environmental activism follows this three-fold pattern of media campaigns, heavy state repression and corporate interests.

In the US, this process has been augmented after 9/11. The Patriot Act of 2001 stated that attacks against property by animal rights activists is a terrorist activity. In 2005, the US government launched "Operation Backfire", after which eleven activists have seen their punishments increased by "terrorist enhancement". "This legal provision can add up to twenty years to prison sentences, and in some cases, quadruple prison time" (Potter, 2009: 673). It allows harsh restrictions and places the defendants in maximum security prisons. As Potter insists, the US government chose this legal path due to the political nature of the crimes under trial, not because of human losses – of which there were none (Potter, 2009: 684).

In 2006, the US government passed the "Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act", which criminalizes any damage or loss of property associated with animal enterprise. This acts was rushed through the Congress without much debate, at the request of several corporations, like Pfizer and United Egg Producers (Potter, 2009: 680). American corporations are also organised in lobby groups such as ALEC, which consists of organisations typically targeted by environmental activists, and which push for protectionist legislation that includes criminalising dissent (Loadenthal, 2013: 105). The *Green Scare* was meant to protect corporate profits from any acts of eco-sabotage, but also generally from media campaigns that would jeopardise their image – as was the case with the SHAC campaign, which will be explained in the UK section of this text.

Romania

I will now move to the Romanian context, to show how the "eco-terrorist" label was used there. In September 2013, the Romanian chief of Intelligence, George Maior, created quite a fuss when, in the context of the Roşia Montană protests, he talked about "tentativele unor structuri extremiste eco-anarhiste de a exploata sau de a deturna mişcările protestare, de altfel legitime".[2] When pressed for an explanation over what exactly "eco-anarchist" structures mean, his institution replied that it is a term used in connection with violent acts that have environmental motivation. These violent acts are able, in the view of the Intelligence Services, to endanger the safety of citizens and the security of the state.[3] Also, according to Maior, such acts are undertaken by groups that may "exploit" or "embezzle" otherwise legitimate protests. Finally, his institution declared that it has been working actively to prevent such acts from happening.

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[2] 'The attempts of some extremist and eco-anarchist groups to exploit or hijack the otherwise legitimate protests' http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-15694537-george-maior-sri-nu-poate-pronunta-asupra-oportunitatii-implementarii-proiectului-rosia-montana-acordat-atentie-asupra-riscului-grupari-extremiste-deturneze-miscarile-protest-legitime.htm [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[3] http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-15806882-sri-raspuns-organizatiei-active-watch-intrebarea-sunt-eco-anarhistii.htm [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

The Roșia Montană protests were generally peaceful, and despite some incidents of police brutality, there were no serious problems with the authorities. However, the Romanian state does not have an overall good record with these things. In 2008, the NATO summit, also dubbed a matter of national security like Roșia Montană, was heavily policed and the counter-protests ended in a shameful episode of brutality. The Gendarmerie intervened violently in the virtue of intelligence that there were "anti-social" preparations during the protests, intelligence that was never publicly confirmed by the SRI.[4] Yet, the latter institution did orchestrate infiltrations, phone tapping and internet surveillance as means of repressions against "the anarchists" that were preparing the counter-demonstrations in Bucharest.[5]

Therefore, it should have not come as a big surprise that only a few months after Maior's declarations, the protests against Chevron in Pungești were brutally repressed – without any publicly available evidence of 'eco-anarchist' infiltrations. Pungești became a "special public security area", where the gendarmerie came in big numbers to prevent a handful of locals from destroying the property of the giant oil company.[6] Several basic rights have been disregarded, without any visible responsibility from the Romanian authorities.[7] Moreover, the prime minister declared that the intervention is justified because the company's private property must be respected.[8] We thus get already an inkling of the intimate connection between state and capital when it comes to criminalising environmental activism. This is a connection that will be developed further in the next examples. What is useful to take from the Romanian case is the eagerness to prevent through repression, in the name of national security. By using the trope of "eco-anarchism" as a fear monger, the state moves the discussion from the political level to one in which any repressive measure can be justified publicly as "national defence" against extremists.[9]

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[4] http://www.activewatch.ro/ro/freeex/reactie-rapida/6-ani-de-la-summit-ul-nato-la-bucuresti-jandarmeria-gasita-vinovata-pentru-abuzuri-asupra-cetatenilor-dar-lasata-nepedepsita [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[5] http://www.criticatac.ro/22045/democraia-pumnului-cinci-ani-de-la-represiunea-manifestanilor-anti-nato/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[6] http://www.gandul.info/stiri/jandarmeria-pungesti-a-fost-declarata-zona-speciala-de-siguranta-publica-11748601 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[7] http://www.apador.org/show_report_nf.php?id=338 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[8] http://www.mediafax.ro/social/ponta-despre-pungesti-nu-vom-accepta-sa-se-incalce-legea-actiunile-jandarmilor-sunt-legale-11735131 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[9] http://www.criticatac.ro/24014/sri-violena-politic-cand-anarhitii-devin-problem-de-securitate-naional/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

The European Union and "ecological terrorism"

The actions and discourses of the Romanian state are of course embedded in a larger context. At the European level, environmental activism has increasingly been articulated as a security threat and criminalised. In 2011, one of the institutions that coordinate anti-terrorism activities at the EU level, Europol, published the EU *Terrorism Situation and Trend Report* (TESAT). It contained a section devoted entirely to "single issue terrorism", which focused exclusively on "extremist environmental activities" and "animal rights extremism" (Europol, 2011: 31). [10] The report found that such activities increased during 2010 in the EU, and raised the alarm for governments to stay alert.

It is interesting to quote from the report, in order to show how this alert against environmental activism is being articulated at the European level:

> Environmental extremism is increasing and gaining support from other extremist groups. Some anarchist groups appear to be attracted to environmental and ecological causes. […].There is a dynamic interaction between groups and individuals in different countries, with language or nationality forming no barrier to cooperation. Extremist groups and individuals from different countries and groups participated in protests and attacks all over Europe, uniting their forces in common initiatives. […] Single-issue extremist groups are becoming increasingly network-based.' (Europol, 2011: 32)

Such an alarm is based on a number of "violent incidents", of which the report exemplifies actions such as "blackmail, sending threatening emails or making warning phone calls to their targets, often threatening their family and committing physical assault against their property", or the "mass release of animals", and even "disinformation methods in order to discredit their targets and weaken their public acceptance. Images of sick and abused animals are embedded in video footage and made public" (Europol, 2011: 32). All of these actions are carried out against companies and their property. Therefore, it becomes very difficult to understand the heightened concern that the EU has towards such activities, which, as Statewatch comments, "often reflect the alarmist internal discourse of governments" (Maccanico, 2012: 22).

But the issue at stake here is not necessarily the alarmist discourse, but indeed the categorisation of such acts under the label of 'terrorism'. The subsequent TESAT annual reports have all kept this category. Several environmental movements in Italy, UK and France (detailed later in this text) were highlighted as being especially problematic. In 2011, The *Routledge Handbook of Terrorism*

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[10] "Single-issue terrorism is violence committed with the desire to change a specific policy or practice within a target society. In Europe, the term is generally used to describe animal rights groups and environmental eco-terrorist groups" (Europol, 2011: 31).

Research published a "World directory of extremist, terrorist and other organisations", with lists of "terrorist" groups in each country. It is interesting to look at some of the European countries: Austria has one entry ("Militant Forces against Huntingdon Life Sciences"), the Netherlands has also one entry ("Animal Liberation Front"), but the UK has no less than six groups of environmental activism in the list.

Throughout Europe, repression against environmental activists increased, and more and more cases are being treated under the accusation of "terrorism". In Spain in 2011, the state arrested 12 activists, members of different animal rights groups, for liberating 20000 animals from a fur farm. The Judge in charge of the case declared to the press that the activists have cause important damages to the pharmaceutical industry, and therefore will be accused of eco-terrorism.[11] In Finland, in 2011, four people were arrested for posting videos taken by an animal liberation group inside pig farms in 2009. The farms demanded compensations that amounted to 175,000 Euro.[12] In Austria, after systematic investigations from the authorities, which included email interceptions, phone tapping, and infiltration, ten people were arrested in 2008 for being connected to animal rights groups. All of them were suspected of belonging to criminal organisations, and some of their activities that would normally be legitimate civil society acts such as organising conferences and workshops, were seen as signs of terrorist activity.[13]

The United Kingdom

The repressive apparatus of the former empire is still one of the best functioning police and intelligence systems in the world. For more than two decades, this apparatus has been aimed discriminately at environmental activists. It has used techniques that at least for this observer seem cut out straight out of Orwell's dystopia. I will give three examples of this: Operation Washington,

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[11] "Vázquez Taín ha defendido el calificativo de "ecoterrorismo" porque lo que hacen estos activistas, según ha recalcado, "no es ecología" sino que "causan terror", ya que "algunas granjas han tenido que cerrar" tras sus acciones."("Vasquez Tain defended the term 'ecoterrorism', because, he underlined, what these activists do is not ecology but terror, since some farms have been shut down because of their activities")
http://www.europapress.es/galicia/noticia-juez-santiago-instruye-causa-contra-ecologistas-radicales-sostiene-hay-indicios-imputaciones-20110623133422.html
[last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[12] http://yle.fi/uutiset/pig_farm_activists_face_damages_of_175000_euros/5442500
[last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[13] http://owni.fr/2012/06/26/lecoterrorisme-debarque-en-europe/
[last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

Mark Kennedy and the SHAC case. First, in 1995, the UK government launched operation "Washington", which intended to curtail "eco-anarchism". Tens of bookshops, homes and printing houses were raided by anti-terror squads. The press officer of ELF, Robin Webb was arrested for delivering press releases, after a framing operation that included planting a shotgun in his car.[14] Soon after ("Operation Washington phase 2"), three editors of *Green Anarchist* (GA) were convicted of "conspiracy to incite criminal damage".[15] The evidence used was environmentalist journals and zines, including GA[16], which published "direct action diaries" of animal liberation actions. As one of the editors put it, "Basically, we six were being held responsible, not just for what we ourselves had written, nor collectively for each others' writings, but for any and every other radical piece of protest literature collected during the 55 police raids, and produced or sold between 1990 and 1996."[17] The case uncovered the work of an "agent provocateur" - Tim Hepple – who had infiltrated the GA.[18] It also coincided with a fear-mongering media campaign that labelled environmental activists as "eco-terrorists".[19] As the GA wrote in 1997, "MI5 defector David Shayler said [...] that *eco-warriors* were the Security Service's prime target now after the Northern Ireland ceasefire. Using the Gandalf[20] trial to showcase militant Greens as *eco-terrorists* would certainly serve their ends well".[21]

The Gandalf case highlighted the desperation with which the state is eager to consider activism against corporations as "conspiracy", and to transform anything random into "incriminating evidence". Few years later, the criminalisation of environmental activism by the intelligence units of the state surfaced again, with the case of Mark Kennedy. In 2011, *The Guardian* uncovered the work of

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[14] http://www.eco-action.org/dod/no5/paranoia_green_anarchists.htm
[last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[15] http://www.bluegreenearth.com/site/archive/article/2002/green_anarch1.html
[last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[16] One person was arrested just for possessing GA (Stop the Show Trial, *Green Anarchist*, no. 47-48, 1997)

[17] http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/stephen-booth-operation-washington-and-the-gandalf-trial-a-personal-view-by-stephen-booth [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[18] Larry O'Hara writes: "Hepple offered Green Anarchist arms and high-tech communications facilities, and gave them lists of fascist names and addresses (many wildly inaccurate) to print and distribute as their own work. The reasoning for doing so was the gross fiction that *the BNP have published the membership lists of Class War and Red Action.* This was a blatant lie, but Leftists receiving these lists, and then acting on them, wouldn't have known that." See http://www.searchlight.org.uk/o-hara/hepple.html [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[19] See http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/stephen-booth-operation-washington-and-the-gandalf-trial-a-personal-view-by-stephen-booth#toc4 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[20] GA-and-ALF stands for the acronyms of Green Anarchist and Animal Liberation Front

[21] Scenes from the Show Trial, *Green Anarchist*, no. 49/50, p. 9

several officers who had infiltrated environmental groups. Mark Kennedy had been involved with activists for seven years, before being uncovered by his partner.[22] He got embedded in the activist scene and participated in several direct actions, where he had an organising role. Thus, he was able to supply the police with all the data concerning the tactics and intentions of the activists. He tipped the police on the hijacking of a coal train, on occupying a power plant and even on actions happening in the famous Copenhagen squat *Ungdomhuset*.[23]

One of the crucial things that emerged during the Mark Kennedy scandal was that his work was requested by companies such as E.ON and EDF.[24] The police acted in close tandem with these companies, exchanging information about the actions of environmental activists.[25] E.ON and other companies also hired private security firms to spy on activists and protest organisers.[26] More recently, the cooperation between energy companies and the UK government surfaced when EDF sued a group of *No Dash for Gas* activists for occupying and shutting down a coal power plant in 2013. The police intervened in the case on behalf of the company, although it was a civil matter and it had no competence to do so.[27]

The third case of criminalising environmental activism in the UK is related to the Huntingdon Life Sciences animal testing laboratory. Since 1999, activists in the UK, US and the Netherlands have been campaigning to close down this lab, by sending letters to other companies working with HLS and informing them about the horrors that the animals were being exposed to. In 2007, the UK government arrested 32 people for conspiring to blackmail HLS.[28] In 2012, four more people were arrested. They were accused of "SOCPA

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[22] http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/jan/10/mark-kennedy-undercover-cop-activist?guni=Article:in%20body%20link [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[23] http://www.earthtribe.co/hot-topics/infiltration-of-environmental-and-left-wing-movements/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[24] See http://www.bath.ac.uk/ipr/our-publications/policy-briefs/policy-brief-corporate-and-police-spying-on-activists.html [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[25] "Documents released to the Liberal Democrats through FOI show that intelligence passed to the energy firm by officials from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) included detailed information about the movements of protesters and their meetings."
See http://secretmanoeuvresinthedark.wordpress.com/2013/02/20/not-just-lobbying-also-spying-a-joint-effort-e-on-and-the-government-undermine-eco-protest/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[26] http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/feb/14/environmental-activists-protest-energy-companies?INTCMP=SRCH [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[27] http://brightgreenscotland.org/index.php/2013/02/we-must-make-edf-regret-their-choice-to-sue-activists/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[28] http://325.nostate.net/?p=10284#more-10284 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

145 (interfering with a contractual relationship so as to harm an animal research organisation) and SOCPA 146 (intimidation of persons connected with an animal research organisation)",[29] which are laws that were introduced in 2005 and that transform minor offences against vivisection into serious crimes with severe punishments. Thus, the accused received up to 6 years in prison for taking part in the campaign against HLS.[30]

Greece[31]

The story of the mining project in Skouries has a lot in common with the Roşia Montană case: a corporation steps in a zone regarded as beautiful pristine nature at a time of material deprivation for its residents, promising jobs and dividing the public opinion. The government presents the investment as a golden opportunity. The ancient forest of Skouries has been the main site of contestation between Hellas Gold and Greek police on the one hand, and the area's inhabitants on the other hand. In the past, there have been other plans for the exploitation of the area, but they were halted due to the inhabitants' vigorous opposition. Notably, the mining facilities have been fenced and equipped with cameras and alarms, while security guards have been reportedly asking for citizens' ID cards to allow them to pass.[32]

In October 2012 the police responded to the over 2500 protesters by beating and attacking them with teargas. Fourteen arrests have been made[33]; one of the protesters prosecuted was a fifteen year old boy.[34] A few months later, in February 2013, forty hooded people set the mining facilities on fire after having immobilized the security guards. The police detained 27 people, but no evidence was found against them.[35] The arson attack gave the police a much needed pretext to terrorize the locals, randomly detaining people and even forcing them to give DNA samples, even though no charges could be pressed against them.[36] The culmination of this intimidation campaign came a few days later, when 6 squads of riot police stormed the nearby village of

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[29] http://www.stopukrepression.org/?page_id=77 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[30] http://325.nostate.net/?p=1197 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[31] I acknowledge Maria Gkresta as the co-author of this section

[32] http://www.smallplanet.gr/en/documentaries/chronologically/2012-2013/313-golden-times-cassandras-treasure [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[33] http://left.gr/news/skoyries-halkidikis-agria-katastoli-kai-14-syllipseis-diadiloton [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[34] Σάκης Αποστολάκης, «Διεθνείς μισθοφόροι θα φυλάνε τις Σκουριές», (18/12/2013). http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=405360 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[35] http://www.tovima.gr/en/article/?aid=498846 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[36] http://international.radiobubble.gr/2013/03/skouries-from-intimidation-to-terror.html [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

Ierissos. The police detained seven people as suspects for the attack at the mining facilities[37] and, as residents reported, they conducted house searches.[38] According to the residents, the police used teargas excessively (an accusation that the police representatives deny), while the media failed to give an impartial account of the events in Skouries, placing the weight on reporting the viewpoints of the state authorities and the company's.[39] Clashes between residents and police were frequent, with citizens (women, school kids, disabled people) often being prosecuted for participating in protests and blockades,[40] held by the police without being able to contact their lawyers, and coerced to give DNA samples.[41] But intimidation and oppression is not limited to protesters' persecution. The phones of residents are being tapped and the State Security closely watches their houses.[42]

In Skouries a citizens' movement for environmental justice is being labelled as a "criminal organization." In October 2013, the police presented Tolis Papageorgiou, a vocal activist of the anti-mining movement, as its founder, accusing him of spreading propaganda aimed to influence public opinion through his interviews in Greek and international media.[43] The State Security had used the interviews as part of the case file, in order to prove that criminal activities were taking place in Skouries.[44] Throughout 2014, the police continued its violent repression when confronted with peaceful protesters. In February 19th, a group of women formed a human chain to prevent workers' buses to reach the mining field. The riot police arrested many of the protestors, while some of them were hospitalized due to injuries and extensive use of

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[37] http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=348838 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[38] Ιερισσός 7/3: Έρευνες στα σπίτια μετά συνοδεία μουσικής, published on March 7th, 2013
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MR47xwqtx1Y

[39] Ντίνα Δασκαλοπούλου, «Μη με κοιτάτε Φοβάμαι...», (10/03/2013).
http://www.efsyn.gr/?p=30087 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[40] See, for example http://www.newsit.gr/default.php?pname=Article&art_id=208894&catid=6 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[41] Amnesty International Public Statement, Greece: Need for investigation of police conduct towards residents of town objecting gold mining operations, 22/03/2013
http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR25/004/2013/en/c6ae7452-3b08-42c9-8e59-f333e8544091/eur250042013en.pdf [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[42] http://international.radiobubble.gr/2013/03/rbnews-international-show-16-march-2013.html?spref=tw [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[43] http://www.thepressproject.gr/article/49372/Apomagnitofonimenes-tilef-sunenteukseis-proonta-upoklopis-sti-dikografia-gia-tis-Skouries [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[44] http://www.thepressproject.gr/article/49522/I-ESIEA-epitelous-diamarturetai-gia-tin-poinikopoiisi-ton-sunenteukseon [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

teargas.[45] Lately, locals accused for forming a terrorist organization and had to give genetic material have had to present themselves in front of police officers and the prosecutor on almost an everyday basis. As it has been shown in the recent case of one inhabitant's prosecution, the process of DNA identification is completely arbitrary: his genetic material was identified in a cigarette butt found on the mountain. In addition, according to the Greek law, the accused should be notified for the identification of their DNA in order for them to be able to take legal action.[46] The brutal repression together with the arbitrary process the police followed in obtaining and handling DNA material are clear indications that the rights of the locals involved were violated.

Italy and France

The French and Italian examples of environmental activism criminalization will be presented together, since they share many similarities.[47] The *No Tav* and *La Zad* movements are running in parallel, and are being repressed using almost the same means: brutal police intervention on the one hand, and labelling activists as terrorists on the other hand. The most straight-cut case of this occurred in 1998 in Italy, when three No Tav activists (Silvano Pellissero, Edoardo "Baleno" Massari and Soledad "Sole" Rosas) were arrested for eco-terrorism.[48] Amidst an absurd trial with no clear evidence against them, and amidst a media backlash against "ecoterrorists",[49] two of them (Baleno and Sole) committed suicide in their cells.[50] Their arrest was accompanied by police raids to two squats in Turin. The Italian Anarchists declared that these were more than suicides, they were cases of state murders.[51]

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[45] Gold Mine Protesters Injured after Confrontation with Greek Police #skouries, 19/02/2014 http://antigoldgr.org/en/2014/02/19/gold-mine-protesters-injured-after-confrontation-with-greek-police-skouries/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[46] Σταυρούλα Πουλημένη, Άκυρη η διαδικασία λήψης DNA στις Σκουριές, 07/03/2014 http://www.alterthess.gr/content/akyri-i-diadikasia-lipsis-dna-stis-skoyries#.U2p0dgdvdXk.facebook [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[47] https://zad.nadir.org/spip.php?article2175 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[48] The exact accusation was 'subversive association having the purpose of terrorism'. They were also accused of belonging to the 'grey wolves' organization, whose existence has actually never been proven, and of having explosive weapons and fake documents. See http://www.ecomancina.com/sole.htm [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[49] See http://www.tmcrew.org/csa/l38/info8/tuttosquot.htm for some of the headlines. See also http://archiviostorico.corriere.it/1998/marzo/29/Ecoterrorismo_Anarchico_impicca_cella_co_0_98032912514.shtml [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[50] Read about the protest (in Italian) here http://feartosleep.blogspot.hu/2012/03/il-processo-pellissero.html [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[51] http://www.j12.org/ps/italy.htm [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

The struggle against the high-speed train continued to be criminalised by the Italian state. The area where the working ground is located has been cordoned off and militarised. The police is using CS tear gas against the protestors, who have been continuously labelled as "terrorists". (Mazzotti, 2013: 5) In January 2014, the No Tav activists issued a statement according to which 'The accusation of "terrorism" has very serious legal consequences. But this time the Prosecutor went even further and used, for the first time in Italy's history, sections of the Penal Code that define any form of resistance to economical and political powers as "terrorism".'[52] Crucially, the accusations of terrorism are motivated by the fact that the Tav working ground is a "public structure and a site of national interest".[53] Thus, we see that just like in the Romanian case, the state is delimiting an area as being of strategic national interest, and criminalising any illegal activity inside it as an act of terrorism.

An identical story happened in France, where the opposition to the Notre-Dame des Landes airport has been going on for decades. In 2012, the police attempted to evict the large occupied area of the La Zad movement, and transformed it into a militarised zone where the normal rules of democracy cease to be valid. The protesters are also accused of terrorism. One local politician declared that "the institutional opposition to the airport must stop being a legal mask for an armed movement".[54] The Paris government has labelled the movement as "ultragauche", which covers the accusation of terrorism and associates the activists with the Tarnac Nine case.[55] This refers to nine people accused of terrorism and suspected of writing the tract "The Coming Insurrection".[56]

Conclusion: Security and property

In this text, I showed how the criminalisation and repression of environmental activism operates in different states. I looked at several instances of this criminalisation in order to highlight a more general pattern that governments

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[52] http://325.nostate.net/?p=9663 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[53] http://torino.repubblica.it/cronaca/2013/07/29/news/no_tav_notte_di_perquisizioni_a_torino_e_in_val_di_susa-63905194/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[54] "L'opposition institutionnelle à l'aéroport de Notre-Dame-des-Landes doit cesser d'être la vitrine légale d'un mouvement armé" http://zad.nadir.org/spip.php?article2225 [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[55] http://earthfirstjournal.org/newswire/2012/11/17/rural-rebels-and-useless-airports-la-zad-europes-largest-postcapitalist-land-occupation/ [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

[56] http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2009/jan/28/human-rights-tarnac-nine [last accessed on: 18.12.2014]

follow. Environmental activists are labelled as "terrorists", and their acts are devoid of their political meaning, in order to be articulated by the state as "terrorism".

Finally, I would like to emphasize that what is generally valid for the treatment of terrorism needs a slight adjustment in the case of "eco-terrorism". When terrorists become a security problem, they are usually represented, as I have mentioned, as the "dangerous them" who are fundamentally opposed to "us". This is an identity marker that functions perfectly for the state, because it harvests legitimacy beyond the confines of democratic political nuances. Somebody can be labelled as dangerous in virtue of their difference to the majority. However, in the case of "eco-terrorists", the identity dimension gets complemented by an economic one. As I have shown in each case, the criminalisation of environmental activism is strictly connected to corporate demands that private property damage gets severely punished. The ideological dimension of this activism gets sidelined in favour of the damage that it can (potentially and allegedly) cause to private firms. Environmental activists are not terrorists because they kill people, but because they kill profit.

In this process, the state plays a crucial role, by aligning its repressive apparatus with corporate demands. The alliance between state and capital is transparent: the trope of terrorism is being used to silence and delegitimise people that threaten the ways in which corporations exploit for profit. Sometimes, this alliance is grounded on the idea of "development", such as in grand projects like TAV and Roşia Montană. But oftentimes, the state conspires with capital on a daily basis in order to prevent any form of dissent that would go too far against corporate interests: writing about, uncovering, denouncing, imagining alternatives to corporate exploitation – all these acts become criminalised. To put it bluntly, the state penalizes the critique against corporations and in this way it alters the way of thinking about politics. The state acts politically by de-politicizing critical voices. The criminalisation of dissent has the potential to silence out and discourage those who would like to imagine and practice alternatives to the existing economic system.

Or maybe it doesn't.

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SPATIAL TACTICS AS AESTHETIC URGE. A CASE STUDY ON TIMIŞOARA'S PARTIALLY FAILED URBAN ACTIVISM

CRISTIAN BLIDARIU[*]

ABSTRACT. There is much talk today, especially in academic circles, around the need for a new paradigm in urban design policies. Participatory processes, guerrilla tactics, appropriations of liminal space, urban pioneering, all gathered under Lefebvre's banner proclaiming "our" *right to the city*, seem to be today's fashionable calls to arms for a generation of disgruntled young urban planners, architects, artists, urban geographers, sociologists, and with your permission anthropologists. And how can it not be so. The speculative, neoliberal - to use a much hated word - societal and spatial condition that we find ourselves in, especially in post-socialist Romania, has left a serious mark on an already dysfunctional public space. In this chaotic context, this call is by all means a necessary call. We do need to reconsider both our discourses and practice when it comes to public space. We do however live in a equally strange condition, that of post or late post-modernity, a time of flows of power and hyper-real places, where, as Castells (1996) notices, the structures themselves have become ubiquitous, where the militant, revolutionary urges of Lefebvre (1974) or Debord (1967) are sometimes nothing more but a fashionable simulacra devoid of power and meaning. In the age of trans-aesthetics everything can be turned into an aesthetic experience, into a fashion statement. Assuming the role of the much hated devil's advocate, I will try to put forth just such examples, of so called do it yourself tactics that turn out to be nothing more than the aesthetic manifestation of these tribal fashions, as Bauman would call them. I am assuming this role as a self aware member of just one of these tribes, as a participant to some of these tactical appropriations in my own city of Timişoara, discussing their intentions, projections and ultimate failure within the greater societal spectrum.

Keywords: spatial tactics, situations, urban activism, aesthetic impulse

I will begin this essay on a personal note with a confession which acts as a disclaimer and as a rectification of some sort. In 2012 I published a text: *The superhero perspective or why architects dress in black;* based on my own

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[*] *Universitatea Politehnică din Timişoara, e-mail: cristian.blidariu@upt.ro*

personal experience, I can assess that its main argument proved out to be partially false. In it, following Michel de Certeau (1984) observations on the lack of focus, or detail, specific of any aerial perspective on things, I argued weather we, as architects, when looking at our subject, the city and its multitude of building blocks, are not somehow trapped by this superhero altitude and ultimately attitude. What I was trying to suggest was that by assuming this superior instance, the black clad self-righteous architect has a tendency to watch the space below him, or the drawing board for that matter, as a mere set of rules and dispositions. Rules that can be adjusted, tweaked and fine-tuned as if it, the space, were nothing more but a giant game board. To add a colourful undertone to my argument I compared this attitude to that of the archetypal and iconic, figure of the ultimate harbinger of justice: Batman. As a member of the elite, of the patrician class of Gotham, he also has this tendency, to adjust things, to try to impose social justice, after carefully observing life's tribulations from above, from the shadows of some high spire. This silent guardian, enters the realm of the living, their streets and gutters, administering a form of justice that is by all means distorted by his own particular point of view, or to be more precise worldview. For this reason in spite of his mostly ethical approach, his actions are always controversial, his victories questionable. In a world of greys he paints in black and white. Architects, whom are in many respects themselves trapped by this superhero attitude, should, I argued, by all means try to descend into the streets, and thus better understand the greys. There, there is no black or white. I thus argued for participation, for street level tactics, for appropriation of space from a ground level. I ask now what happens then when these streets do not need a hero. What happens when even in this new, down to earth, posture the hero finds himself to be out of place, out of time, still working in blacks and whites? What happens when his worldview, motives, and good intentions are out of tune with the general strings of life?

At this point I have to make a second confession. For the last three years I have lived, much like our hero Batman, a double life, a nocturnal and a diurnal one. By day I tried my stab at architecture, teaching and parenthood. At night I became a dilettante anthropologist, documenting for my PhD thesis some of the activities that a certain group of urban activists performed in my home town of Timișoara. They, much as I envisaged, descended into the streets, like vigilantes of space, placing their finger on its contradictions. To what effect? Hard to say. In spite of their good intentions and well planned tactics, the very nature of these situations or *detournements* of space, found little resonance within the larger spectre of the communities they targeted. I asked myself why. Were they the victims of a displaced ideology, of academic fashion and discourse? I know for a matter that though they are architects, artists and entrepreneurs

some of them are also, like myself, linked to the academia. Were they, even in this horizontal plane of action, still foreign and out of place? Without further ado in the following pages I will try to put some light on these faceless actors. But first, as in the case of any good origin story, we need to establish how they came to be.

For the past decade Timişoara, the cradle of Romania's fight for democracy, the place where the anticommunist revolution has started, has relapsed into a state of complacency. The city is half asleep on its new found prosperity. Considering the entrepreneurial and bourgeois nature of its culture, one might argue that it was no accident that the anticommunist revolution started within its walls, and streets and squares. It was after all a much needed break for a community that in spite of its desire to be free from ideology and repression, it was, first of all, entrepreneurial, even at a time when such a thing was virtually impossible. Once this collective urge was satisfied, the other calls; for economic equality and spatial justice were gradually diluted in its collective rush toward prosperity. Unlike its other Romanian counterparts the city inherited, to its advantage, an urban structure that suffered little within its historic core, and posed lesser social problems in its communist era developments. This led to a sort of short-sightedness, in which its many inhabitants, all wrought up in their own constant quest for personal success, gradually became satisfied with the already existing spatial patterns. Ironically spatial progress within its historic core was slow. Space is, has been, and will be. Its multiple minor alterations have thus become invisible. There is no real critique of space, because few see these changes. In fact there is virtually no serious opposition now in Timişoara, towards anything. And how can there be any, since, as Debord would put it, its new patrician class, the techno-peasantry, who lives in apathy in the newly erected suburban heterotopias or "planned environments", is unable and unwilling to fight for a space that no longer represents it.

The little civil society which there is, remains mostly caught up in linguistic battles, debating on ends the meaning of life. There are virtually no NGO-s dedicated to these issues and the participatory governance that the local administration parades is nothing more but a simulacra. Thus, the few critical voices that address these spatial problems are at least from the administrative point of view irrelevant. The little media exposure that they get is rapidly branded as a political attack on an administration that won its office in a landslide victory. This has most recently happened to the local professional associations (the *Architects' Order*, *The Urbanists' Registry*, *The Landscape Architects' Association*) after trying to signal the procedural abuses of the local administration, regarding the issue of public space. This therefore causes a real legitimacy problem that cannot be easily addressed, since nobody is willing

to take any further political and personal risks. As suspected, some of the worst spatial problems are a direct cause of poor or discretionary decision making: privatization of public space, degradation of green areas and parks, a disproportionate emphasis on large public roads and rapid transit systems, and poor quality works.

It comes as no surprise then that in this Gothamesque *status qvo*, at least for the past few years, the critique of space follows a nocturnal timeframe, in the form of agitations, or, if I am allowed, situations. Since I have of late taken a special interest in these alternative performative tactics, I shall consequently try to discern their impact. It would be unfair however to address this problem without mentioning their diurnal counterparts, for the city had its fair share of activists. Surprisingly they were not generated from within the architectural field, but of the underground artistic circles of the city. I would mention here the shock tactics of the anonymous artistic group *Monotremu*. The *Simultan* and *H.arta* groups, that have been curating for the past three years the Waiting Spaces art platform, are also to be noted. Their approach towards spatial issues is however purely subjective, and to a certain extent ideological. It is, in my opinion, by all means an aesthetic approach, since it uses the derelict industrial or liminal spaces that it explores as backdrops for ideological diatribes against capitalism, with discourses that favour the ever fashionable issues of neo-liberalism, post-socialism, neo-colonialism, class distinctions and even feminism. Since their public is mainly composed of their peers, their carefully curated and documented artistic performances and public actions are, for that matter, bound to fall short of their intended targets. In this respect, their impact on a broader palette of societal and community groups is highly questionable. I call this approach aesthetic, for the themes themselves, real as they are, turned from discourse into a mantra, they are transformed in the end into nothing more but a pure commodity, a commodity with its own special public I might add. The sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2000 [1993]) would call these aesthetic phenomena as momentary synchronizations of feelings. Moments that describe the short term fashion specific for these contemporary neo-tribes. When fully assumed in the name or the ideology of the tribe, when signed as most artistic acts are, these processes, and agitations, turn into fashionable discourse. In the end all that we are left with is a contest within this "tribe": who can provide the best critique of space, of capitalism, of neo-liberalism, whereby one understands best the most oblique, abstract, and personal reading and rewriting of space.

Enter A.U. (*Acţiunea Urbana*). I followed AU and their nocturnal tactics for the past two years. Unlike their diurnal counterparts, AU are nocturnal vigilantes, working in anonymity, sometimes not even signing their work. They chose this tactic ever since it became clear that in Timişoara, at least for

the moment, the bridges between the civil society and the administration are burned. They do not favour the liminal but subjects that are in plain view, streets, squares, buildings... defaced, distorted, destroyed by public policy and neglect. Their first action that was fully assumed was simple and effective. It happened on the 1st of June 2013, in front of the children's Park in Timișoara. Several weeks before this incident, the administration cut down six lime trees, each as old as 35 years, fearing their imminent collapse. The trees, lining the boulevard in front of the entrance to the parks, were in perfect shape just a year ago. They were however suffocated by the concrete poured around them during the last street rehabilitation, an act that practically made them incapable of retaining any water. The response came as a commentary of this neglect, a neglect on behalf of the administration, a neglect on behalf the population that went over this incident as if nothing had happened. The action was meant as an agitation of public space. Early in the morning, as parents and children flocked to the park to celebrate the 1st of June, they were greeted with the image of six huge black balloons floating were the trees once stood. Tied to their ropes, funeral shrouds, with the message "Rip Tilia Tomentosa, 35 years old". Children, impervious to this message, dragged them down, played with them, showed them to their parents, asked questions.

Many other such actions followed. I would focus my attention on just one: the case of the Bălcescu Square. A former historic merchants square within the old district of Elisabetin, its public space was permanently damaged in the 70, when the decision to cross it right in the middle with a rapid thoroughfare was made. Since that moment all subsequent adjustments to this space favoured the transit systems and not the quality of the actual space. The final blow was given last year when a new design was implemented. It was done solely on the basis of a infrastructure project. No architecture, or urban scheme was done. No social impact or economic study was presented to general the public, as the administration's sole justification was the fluidization of the rapid transit systems. When asked of its intentions by the architects order the administration refused to answer. More over the community was not invited in the process of redesign, since the project lay almost hidden until the start of the construction site. The main looser of this new proposal was the tiny park that was still in existence on one half of the square. Since the proposal favoured a large roundabout, the park was demolished arbitrarily. In spite of all its weaknesses and shortcomings the original project did not favour this solution and somehow managed to leave the park intact. What was left was a huge empty space occupied by roads, cars and tramlines. Due to neglect the so called "green island" left in the middle is currently a well deserved shrubbery.

Figure 1.
First of June balloon action. Photo courtesy to AU, 2013.

AU tackled this issue in tactical steps, targeting a possible response from the local community on three different levels; agitation, consultation, and situation. In the first nocturnal action, just as the roadworks started, it filled the square's lampposts, tram stations and even the heavy machinery found on site, with posters that read observations from the most forward thinkers of public space, Gehl, Jacobs, Mumford, and so on. The action was rapidly disseminated by independent media channels in the local press and social networks. The second tactic, which tried to speculate the momentum, was to launch a public consultation process via on-line questioners. This however failed since it became evident that the questioner was unable to penetrate the public realm beyond the networks that affiliated themselves with the AU online page. Outside these circles people just didn't seem to care. It became evident at that point that there is no public. Moreover, the people that I personally questioned regarding the matter, were, to my surprise, in favour of the new rapid transit system, and just didn't understand what was wrong with that, or with the disappearance of the trees for that matter. Were our anonymous heroes wrong? Were they the antiheroes? In this context, with the battle lost, and no community response the final action was meant more as comment on the situation. It exploited a

much publicized event that happened just a week before the grand opening of the square, when the newly arrived and only zebra of the local zoo, escaped her layer during her presentation right in front of the mayor, and tragically drowned herself in a pond. But, as H. P. Lovecraft would put it "From even the greatest of horrors irony is seldom absent." Speculating this incident and the zebra linings that now mark almost 30% of the squares no go zones, the final agitation filled the emptiness of the green island with a herd of 200 small cardboard zebras. Again the main target audience were the children that fill this space every morning while going to the public school that flanks one of square's sides. Indirectly it targeted the parents that fill the square with their cars during their daily routine of leaving and taking their children. The action broke the internet, to use a euphemism, but it was too late, since the damage had already been done... the square was already a wasteland, devoid of trees, of any real places, filled only with roads, cars and parking lots. It did however start a momentary online viral campaign against the arbitrary actions of the mayor's office, that was soon taken over in the local media.

Figure 2.
The zebra action. Photo courtesy to AU, 2013.

Is there any resolution to these kinds of actions, to these tactics of agitation? Recently the mayor's office, encouraged by the lack of a strong response from the local community, defaced the second most important square of the town. Acting against the specifications of the project - for this time the project was extremely detailed in all its parts - it cut down virtually

all the tress in the now ongoing rehabilitation of Liberty Square. Only a single tree escaped, due to the nature of its origins - it had been planted there by King Ferdinand himself as a symbol of the reunification of Romania. The pleas of the local Architects Order, professional associations and even of the responsible design team were left unheard. The civil society was almost silent: no protest in the square like the one we've seen of late in Iasi, not to mention Taksim. AU stood on the side, documenting online the destruction process. It became evident that there just isn't a strong enough critical mass to support a counteroffensive. The superheroes were alone. Their worldview just did not strike a chord with that of the communities they were fighting for in the first place. They, the communities, were impervious to the message, or just simply did not care much about it. In this scenario one might ask if the hero's actions follow an ethical or an esthetical approach. Is this lack of legitimacy turning the ethical battle into an aesthetic choice? For that matter it comes as no surprise that seldom such actors join the battle solely because it is fashionable, because it grants a superior instance.

Some might place their finger on the logic of Maslow's pyramid of basic needs. As we have seen before if the upper levels of the pyramid- for these creative areas usually provide the tacticians- are not followed by the lower levels, the success of any social upheaval is questionable. I know for a matter that the anonymous members of AU are all part of these higher levels. Are they unwillingly irrelevant because of their social condition, because of their still superior worldview? I would not call this the case of AU. I cannot however not think of such an observation when judging the limited and superfluous actions of other tactical operatives that seem to place aesthetics before results.

Perhaps this is the reason why so many fail. As an assistant professor in the local architecture school I have seen many of my students obsessing over participatory process, grass roots movements, revolutionary tactics. I have nothing against them, I even encouraged them to try these processes, but with one condition: not to assign or to project their own ideologies or quality expectations on target groups that are unable to comprehend, and embrace them. When the process follows a fashion, it simply becomes an aesthetic choice, a simulacra devoid of meaning. Tactics applied among friends, are deemed to fail, unless you have many, many friends. As we have seen in the case of Taksim, this worked only after the agitators were joined by other groups, when the protest transcended aesthetics, or ideology. Sadly this is not case for Timişoara, for the reasons I explained above. Timişoara has, in my opinion, simply gone too far down the path set forth by the spectacular consumer society predicted by Debord (2004 [1967]). As the Critical Art Ensemble suggests, in this new state of affairs...

... nothing of value to the power elite can be found on the streets, nor does this class need control of the streets to efficiently run and maintain state institutions. For Civil Disobedience to have any meaningful effect, the resisters must appropriate something of value to the state. Once they have an object of value, the resisters have a platform from which they may bargain for (or perhaps demand) change (Critical Art Ensemble, 2014).

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Romanian Sociology Today

Editorial Note:

This is a special section dedicated to research articles from the field of Romanian sociology.

DEATH, GOLD AND THE SQUARE:
RHYTHM-ANALYSIS IN A TIME OF PROTESTS

RALUCA SOREANU*

ABSTRACT. The article discusses the creativities of protest as phenomena of rhythm. Theoretically, I propose translating Cornelius Castoriadis' regional ontology of selves into a problematique of rhythms. I argue for an artisanal way of using the Castoriadian conceptual pair autonomy/heteronomy, focusing on moments rather than on entire societies. Furthermore, I introduce a notion of concentricity of rhythms that allows us to capture the polyrhythmic complexity of protest situations, which become psychic situations, involving presences, as well as absences, half-absences or spectres. Thus, I aim to contribute to a psychosocial understanding of the creativities of collective action. Finally, I analyse the concentricities of rhythm in a site of protest in Romania. The organisation Alburnus Maior protests against the project of a gold mine based on cyanide technologies. It performs a complicated political choreography, centred on the symbolic pair gold-death. Listening to the rhythms of the square enables a reflection on autonomy, recognition and post-oedipal politics.

Keywords: Cornelius Castoriadis, Henri Lefebvre, rhythm, radical social imaginaries, protest

Introduction: A Diagram of Rhythm[1]

Is there a rhythmic common thread connecting Tahrir Square, Syntagma Square, Puertas del Sol, Zuccotti Park and other places of mobilisation around the globe? While it is crucial to acknowledge the singularity of the rhythms of protest in each of these sites, what they share is a capacity to create strong political symbols, such as the "indignados" or "the 1%". Fredric Jameson argued

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* *Birkbeck College London and Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, e-mail: r.soreanu@bbk.ac.uk*

that "[o]ne wants to think of formulations (and indeed diagrams) for collectivities that are at least as complex and stimulating as those of Lacan for the individual unconscious" (2004: 405-406). He thus invited us to draw the collective unconscious. In what follows, I discuss the problem of the formation of collective subjectivities[2] in terms of the rhythmic emergence of the collective. My diagram of collectivity is a diagram of rhythms. In drawing this diagram, I have two enduring commitments. One is to acknowledge the deep creativities[3] of the new forms of mobilisation taking place in the past three years, and their potential in bringing about a re-distribution of the sensible[4] (Rancière, 2004) and in creating a new repertoire of political symbols. The other one is to trace the direction of this qualitative rupture as a phenomenon of rhythm: as a *spacing of time*, or as a rhythmic achievement which spatialises. Rhythm that has the capacity to reconcretise abstract space bears revolutionary qualities, and it carries us to a dense political realm of autonomy and recognition.

I begin with ontologies. I discuss the conception of "selves" in Cornelius Castoriadis and show how it makes a good house thinking collective subjectivities through rhythms. The second part of the paper brings a vignette on rhythm, starting from the choreographies of protest of a particular site in Romania, in the city of Cluj-Napoca. The organisation Alburnus Maior protests against the project of a gold mine based on open cast cyanide technologies in the Romanian town of Roșia Montană. A project driven by transnational capital is thus met with an anti-capitalist opposition. As we discern the concentric rhythms in the square, we also illuminate moments of autonomy, recognition, and post-oedipal politics. Political form emerges without necessary reference to Authority and to the Law of the Father (Reason, Order, the State, the Market). The powerful symbols construed in these choreographies of protest (centred on the symbolic pair gold-death) are able to stir waves of national mobilisation, having their climax in the autumn of 2013, when Romania is met with large-scale protests in several of its major cities.

In drawing the diagram of rhythm, I rely on Henri Lefebvre's conception of "rhythmanalysis". This gesture is part of a project of arriving at a psychosocial understanding of current forms of political protest. The innovations of this project are twofold. First, rhythmanalysis is situation-centred. But situations run deeper than the interactionist sociologist has acknowledged; they are *psychic situations*, involving presences as well as absences, half-absences, or spectres. Second, rhythm is a curious concept in social theory, escaping definitional approaches (Meschonnic,

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[2] For discussions on collective subjectivities and political transformation see Rancière (1995), Balibar (2002), Badiou (2005).

[3] For commentaries on the deep creativities of Occupy Wall Street, see Brown (2011) and Protevi (2011).

[4] By "distribution of the sensible" Jacques Rancière refers to the practices by which we make sense of our communities, through "a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise" (2004: 12).

1982). The coexistence of linear, cyclic, alternating or juxtaposed rhythms in the emergence of collectives needs new analytical tropes. Here, I introduce the idea of *nested rhythms:* a rhythm within a rhythm, within another rhythm. Only by listening across the concentricities can we reconstitute psychic situations.

Radical Social Imaginaries and the Problem of Rhythm

For Cornelius Castoriadis, all revolutions are shifts of the social imaginary. The imaginary is first and foremost a capacity: it is the capacity of a society to create meaning, through which it brings itself into existence as a society. But the imaginary is also the resulting core of social meanings, emerging from a society's capacity to create significations (Castoriadis, 1987). Thus conceived, the imaginary is not reduced to a psychological attribute, while it also parts ways with the Lacanian imaginary (Lacan, 1954).[5] Instead, it is the point of intersection between the psychic dimension and the social dimension of life. By making space for these two dimensions – the psychic and the social – Castoriadis takes us on an important journey away from some impoverishing oppositions of social theory: between the individual and society, between individualism and holism. As he puts it "[t]he individual is not, to begin with and in the main, anything other than society. The individual/society opposition, when its terms are taken rigorously, is a total fallacy" (Castoriadis, 1991: 61). The very terms of debate in the human domain shift to a non-dualistic understanding of psyche and society. In an indirect dialogue with different strands of structuration theories (Giddens, Archer)[6], Castoriadis clarifies that it is simply unhelpful to state that "society produces the individuals, which in turn produce society" (Castoriadis, 1991: 145). Any such idea of circular constitution obscures not only the fact that "society is not a property of composition" (1991: 145), but also that the entire edifice of wholes-and-parts thinking collapses when we are speaking of society, and what emerges is "a type of relationship which has no analogy elsewhere" (1991: 145). It is not only that the "whole" contains a qualitatively different surplus to the sum of its "parts", but also that the "parts" are the particular forms of being and becoming that they are only by virtue of their participating in the "whole". The "whole" in its turn is unreadable in its particularity of being and becoming without the "parts". This complication pushes us toward forms of epistemological pluralism where collective process is understood starting from the very impossibility of an ontology based on wholes-and-parts.

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[5] In short, the Marxian inflection in Lacan renders the imaginary as an illusion, while the Freudian inflection renders this illusion as a fantasy, a fantasy that responds to a psychological need – that of an ego that can function autonomously and integrally. For discussions on the imaginary in Castoriadis and Lacan see Stavrakakis (2002) and Strauss (2006).

[6] For a critique of elements of co-determinism (i.e. explaining social phenomena as the effects between agency and structure) in thinkers such as Giddens or Archer, see Dépelteau (2008).

What can be the positive formulation of this impossibility? How can we arrive at a constellation of affinities that transforms a pluralistic disposition into a new direction of studying collective process? I will here talk about a constellation of affinities among ontologies that afford us a notion of rhythm. First, Gabriel Tarde (1962), in *The Laws of Imitation*, brings his own understanding of intersubjective space inflected by rhythm. He speaks of a harmony that is "the felicitous interference of two imitations, occurring first in one single mind"; and of "successive complications and harmonizations of the harmonies" that bring about the fruits of social creativity, starting from schemes of aesthetics to encyclopaedias or even to a certain organisation of labour (Tarde, 1962: 94-95). Second, for Deleuze and Guattari the dualism individual/society is overtaken by "the molecular", a domain of "flows, becomings, phase shifts, intensities" (Guattari and Rolnik, 2008) which refuses itself to operations of categorisation, identification and totalisation. Here, the individual becomes a type of fiction, or, as Guattari puts it "the 'objects' that we are dealing with are not homogeneous 'subjects', entities that we can define, not even in relation to an individual bodily unit. They are subjective-objective assemblages of heterogeneous components whose outline can never be defined reliably" (2008: 369-370). The collective becomes a "multiplicity", a series of encounters and interlinkages of lesser or greater stability, all happening within an unstoppable flow, but which generate social fields with distinct characteristics in terms of rhythm and affect (Brighenti, 2010).

Third, Castoriadis meets us as a regional ontologist of the self. He performs a radical rewriting of what we understand by "self": in a sense he de-psychologises the self and dissolves its necessary connection with the human domain, and especially with the conscious human domain. The self – a term that he uses interchangeably with "the for-itself" – is an emergence that has self-finality, is capable of self-preservation, it reasons (in the broad sense of engaging in some form calculation, and not in the narrow sense of rational operations), and it incorporates a world of its own (Castoriadis, 1987; 1989). The self has differentiated regions: Castoriadis describes six of them.

First, there is the living being, which includes even the simplest forms of life, such as the single living cell – it, too, contains a world of its own. Second, there is the human psyche. As I see it, for Castoriadis not every human subject "has" a psyche, following the model "one body, one psyche", but rather every subject participates in the psychic region. To complicate things even further, regardless of the way we chose to engage in the modelisation of the psyche, the intrapsychical agencies or instances we identify (such as in Freud's later model, the ego, id and super-ego) will count as "selves" in their own right. Third, there is the social individual, which Castoriadis casts as fabricated by society through a series of transformations of the psyche. While the social individual is one of the most stable fabrications of our contemporary times within the horizon of "selves", our sociological eyes and our psychoanalytic ears (Chodorow, 2004) will

remain alert to the emergence, the existence and persistence of social "dividuals" (Sahlins, 2011; Strathern, 1988; Bastide, 1973). Dividuals have aspects of what we usually regard as a "person" divisible, distributed and participating among others; they also have aspects of others participate in themselves. A scene of becoming associated with a totem is a good instance for the emergence of a "dividual": here, we have a vision of an "external soul" coexisting with one of an "internal one" (Bastide, 1973). The person and the totem are no longer two distinct realities that we can keep apart, but they become a single new emergence. Equally, a scene of coming together in a site of protest, in a square, in a synchronic movement, is, as we will see further, another instance of "dividual" emergence.

Fourth, society is a form of self. It exists for itself, it shows an inclination to self-preserve, it is characterised by some form of (non-rational) logic, and it incorporates a world of its own. Yet, Castoriadis warns us that society is not a "subject" (or a "hypersubject", or a "subject of higher order") endowed with collective consciousness. If we were to consider society as a "hypersubject" then we would attribute to it some type of self-awareness, and even a capacity to turn reflexively upon itself and to deliberate while taking itself as an object. This would be a misjudgement of the ontological region of "society". It is only the fifth and sixth ontological regions described by Castoriadis that possess the capacity to turn reflexively upon themselves; these are the human subject and autonomous society. What brings these last two together is the fact that they are "projects" – they are contingent formations, which mirror each other in the fact that neither recognises the will of an external other (or principle) as the ultimate ground for its existence. In short, they both acknowledge their self-constitution as self-constitution.

The split between the "individual" and the "social" is far from being merely a theoretical problem: instead, there is a stable separation of the human domain carved by the forces of hypermodernity and neoliberalism (Frosh, 2010). While "individuals" proliferate in economic fields, in fields of knowledge production, or in erotic fields, "dividuals" are scarce. In all their scarcity, moments of dividual emergence are some of the most hopeful ones for adding to the modelisations of the psyche. How does a rhythm-analytic project enter this conversation on the modelisation of the psyche? From the idea of inescapable transmission – something always travels within the psychic domain – we can leap forward to becoming alert to the situations when something travels differently. Or when something travels differently across different regions of the self. If something indeed travels, it leaves rhythmic markers. Beats. Accents. Tempos. Crescendo. Decrescendo. Polyrhythmia. Eurhythmia. Arhythmia. Each of the regions of Castoriadis' ontology has a rhythm of its own. Each self (or for-itself) has a rhythmic constitution. The meeting of regions generates a coming together of rhythms, a polyrhythmia. The most complicated composition of rhythms emerges when we consider all the regions of the for-itself in the same description: there, what we might hope to register with a good-enough ear is the polyrhythmia of the for-itself. Thus, Castoriadis'

regional ontology is a good container for our rhythm-analytic project; it allows stories about rhythm to be told. As I see it, the agenda of rhythm-analysis is to translate a regional ontology into a problem of rhythms.

A first opening in Castoriadis, which can ground this translation, stems from the way he conceives of the psychic sources of creativity. A crucial deadlock is that philosophers have too often assumed that the imaginary is merely a copy or reflection of the outside world. Rejecting this standpoint, Castoriadis argues that imagination renders the relation of mind and world possible. "The imaginary," he tells us, "is the subject's whole creation of a world for itself" (1997 [1984]: 5). The imagination is constantly creative, the surging forth "of a spontaneous and unmasterable flux of representations, affects, and desires" (Castoriadis, 1997: 356). It is the origin of both the psyche and society. The images of the psyche can never be reduced to a more "real" or material foundation (Castoriadis, 1987: 127–128, 144).

In his discussion of the Freudian unconscious, Castoriadis insists that any linguistic reformulation of it is actually a failure, because it misses out on some of the energetic and affective phenomena of the psyche. As he tells us "[t]he psyche is not socializable without remainder – nor is the Unconscious translatable, without remainder, into language. The reduction of the Unconscious to language (where Lacan and Habermas curiously meet in agreement) is alien to the thing itself (and obviously also to Freud's thought: 'in the Unconscious there are only representations of things, not representations of words')" (Castoriadis, 1997 [1989]: 376). Castoriadis engages with what he considers a reductive visual Lacanian elaboration on the imaginary. For him, the radical imaginary is not the creation of images in the mind or in society, but it is the signifiable. In his words "one of the gross inadequacies of Lacan's conception of the imagination is his fixation on the scopic. […] For me […] the imagination par excellence is the imagination of the musical composer […] Suddenly, figures surge forth and they are not in the least visual. They are essentially auditory and kinetic – for there is also rhythm" (Castoriadis, 1995a: 182).

The psychoanalyst and the interactionist sociologist here meet in resonance: "for there is also rhythm". Not only is the unconscious rhythmic, but it is also contributing to various sorts of polyrhythmic forms of emergence: in the encounter with other parts/agencies of the human psyche; and in the encounter with other regions of the for-itself. Psychic rhythms are not a private affair. Through rhythm and conflict, the human psyche is politicised and becomes a "public" domain. The largely self-generated streams of unconscious representations – or images that are not "subject to determinacy" (Whitebook, 1995: 169) which constitute the imaginary – reveal themselves to us as something that cannot be "privatised". These images can and do break into social life; they subvert and transgress existing ways of thinking, doing, relating, thus being resources for founding new social and political imaginaries.

The way Castoriadis elaborates on the connection between the radical imagination of the human psyche and the radical imaginary of society is through his very concept of "society", which he sees as a form of self-creation. This means that social forms are not the product of forces external to society, but they are determined within society and by society itself. If all societies are indeed self-instituted, there is a crucial difference between the ones which recognise this matter of ontology in themselves, and see themselves as the authors of their own laws; and other ones which disguise it, and place society's self-institution into a principle outside society (among the gods, God, the ancestors, the laws of Nature, the laws of Reason, the laws of History – and, we might add, the laws of the Market). This is how Castoriadis construes the distinction between autonomous societies and heteronomous societies. Autonomy must entail "positing/creating not only new institutions, but a new mode of instituting and a new relation of society and of individuals to the institution" (Castoriadis, 1987: 373). This means that autonomy brings about a particular type of closure – or stabilisation into social institutions – that is actually always and essentially open to modification. So it is a closure that entrenches openness, that permits, enables, and even encourages the constant re-evaluations of existing institutional forms and political solutions stabilised into institutions.[7]

What I here propose is to depart from a holistic and ontologising way of drawing on this conceptual pair, autonomy/heteronomy; and to use it in an artisanal way, informed by interactionist sensibilities to the importance of moments and situations. In other words, we are often at a loss if we look for autonomous or heteronomous entire societies; but we shall be the finders of many valuable moves in the social imaginary if we look for autonomous and heteronomous *moments*. Crucially, autonomy and heteronomy circumscribe different worlds of rhythm. Is there a way to capture the "beats" of autonomy? Is there a discernable rhythmic trace in our modes of collective semiotisation in the moments when we recognise ourselves as the authors of our own laws? I hold these as guiding questions for what follows. Also, I walk the path from the polyrhythmia of autonomy to recording a rhythm that is perhaps the most accomplished "beat" of social creativity: *post-oedipal politics*. As I show, we are closest to the theoretical ideal of autonomy when a political form emerges without a necessary relation to Authority and to the Law of the Father (Reason, Order, the State, the Market).

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[7] Castoriadis, who talks in the same terms about autonomous subjects and autonomous societies, describes the autonomous subject as "a pseudo-closed sphere that can dilate on its own" (Castoriadis, 1989: 169).

All entanglements of the human domain, be they centred on fear, love, hatred, or subordination, are grounded in rhythm. Both social reproduction and the situations of change and revolution have their own "states of rhythm". But rhythm resists definition. Lefebvre (2004: 15) arrives closest to a definition, noting that: "[e]verywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm".[8] I see rhythm-analysis as a pluralistic method of psychosocial analysis, having strong affinities with interactionist sociologies, but crafting its own ways to make claims about the irreducible psychic dimension of social life. Epistemologically, this takes us to a place of thoroughly embodied analysis, where the corporality of the analyst is claimed by and given to rhythms. In his unhyphenated version of "rhythmanalysis"[9] Lefebvre wished to do no less but to capture the "beats" of capitalism. He avidly searched for a language to describe the way daily life – or the polyrhythmia of the for-itself – is impoverished and evened out by the beats of an order that contains at its core a reproductive impulse. As he writes "[c]apital does not construct. It produces. It does not edify; it reproduces itself. It simulates life. Production and reproduction tend to coincide in the uniform!" (2004: 53). Within Lefebvre's "theory of moments" time is qualitative: it resists calculation, measurement, or abstract generalisations; it is mostly lived time, sensorial time, the time of bodies pulsating with life and movement. Lefebvre thus meets interactionists in privileging the instant over duration.

As the embodied rhythm-analyst lingers on in the square, the task of capturing the polyrhythmia of the for-itself makes demands from the body. The body becomes a fleshy metronome. The rhythm-analyst needs a technique of sensorial bricolage to get to the many strands of rhythms that grow the different regions of the for-itself. Here, what I add to Lefebvre's propositions on the coexistence of rhythmic phenomena is the idea of *nested rhythms*. Rhythms are not only linear, cyclic, alternating or juxtaposed; they sometimes are *nested* in one another: a rhythm within a rhythm, within another rhythm. The beats of the largest circle of rhythm are those of capitalism itself, producing evenness, repetition and abstract space.[10] In order to get to the pulsations of the other frames, we need to hear-across this one. The second circle brings an orchestrated irregularity: a carefully choreographed political protest, using bodies, artefacts,

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[8] As Lefebvre (2004: 60) elaborates on the triad "time-space-energy", "[t]hese three terms are needed for describing and analysing cosmological reality. No single one suffices, nor any single term-to-term opposition. Time and space without energy remain inert in the incomplete concept. Energy animates, reconnects, renders time and space conflictual. Their relation confers concrete universality upon these concepts."

[9] I preserve the hyphen as a marker of the ontological strength of rhythm. In my version of analysis, rhythm is the thickest substance we work with.

[10] See Lefebvre (1991) on the triad of space.

space, pulse and silence with an anti-capitalist agenda. Yet the third circle is a spontaneous irregularity, a moment of autonomy and political recognition emerging through powerful emotions of shame, irony, and through silence.

The description of the threads that link one rhythmic frame to another is one of the most fruitful ways to capture the relationship between heteronomy and autonomy. While hearing-across the circles, the rhythm-analyst will come across many "uncanny" things, invisibles, half-presences, half-absences, or spectral events. The alertness to this "uncanniness" is at the core of a sociology of the invisible that discerns a locality through its nested rhythms.
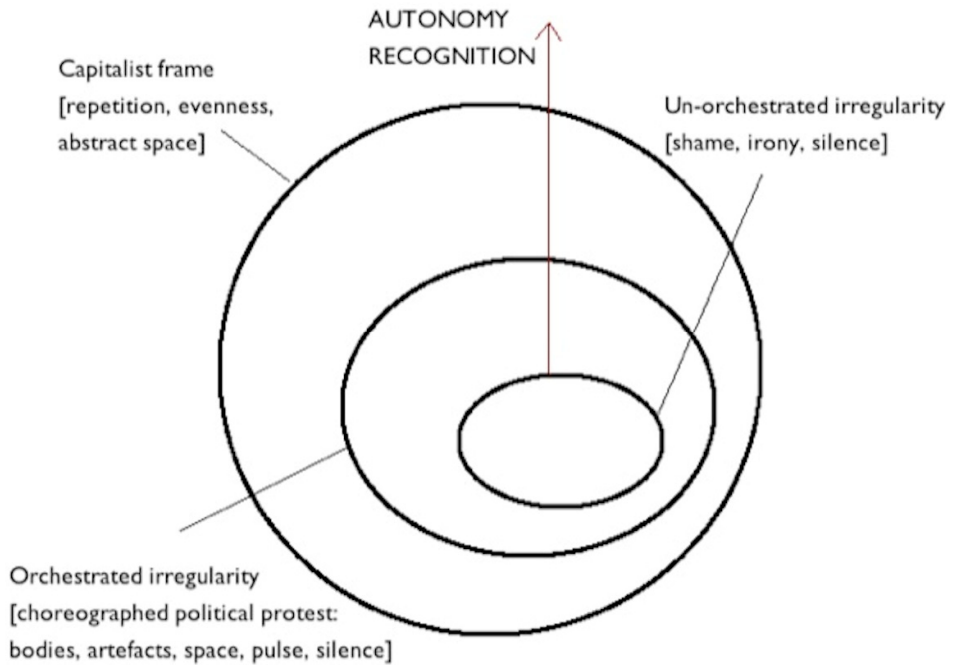
Figure 1. A diagram on nested rhythms.

Death, Gold and the Square: A Vignette on Rhythm

The Square and Its Ghosts

Something travels across the square. Urban space is overloaded with hauntings – the beats of past times reoccurring in the present (Frosh, 2013; Gordon, 1997; Pile, 2005) – so the rhythm-analyst will start from these spectral

beats, from ghostly rhythms. The rhythms of past losses, traumas, injustices, conflicts, dispossessions, or exclusions have been imprinted in materialities and in memories of movement. But ghosts can also be reparatory and transformative: to walk with them is also to walk the path from unmourned loss to mourned loss (Pile, 2005). Our vignette on rhythm is set in a central square of the Romanian city of Cluj-Napoca, Matthias Corvinus Square. Squares are themselves great bearers of ghosts – and this is the case because of their many symbolic reconversions, because they had to re-invent themselves in resonance to the rhythms of different eras. Squares are places where executions happened, where witches were burnt, with capitalism thus emerging from the smoke of their flesh (Federici, 2004). Squares are places where fights of national construction unfolded, leaving a dense tissue of symbolic markers. Squares are also places where consumer culture successfully multiplied its reflections of lack in shop windows. Here, the *cul-de-sac* of desire (Debord, 1956) fabricated by capitalism is most acute: vortexes of desire are opened, with lures of colours and flashes of lights, but the elicited desire can never be met. Finally, squares are places of contestation and protest, where some of the elements of these histories of loss and injustice can become associated in a new synchronicity.

A post-socialist city of over three hundred thousand inhabitants, with a significant Hungarian minority of nearly twenty percents, Cluj-Napoca brings us a square that is traversed by heavy lines of ethnic and class competition over space. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the square has known an important reconversion of its mainly commercial function to an arena for national self-affirmation (Lazăr, 2003). The equestrian statue of the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus dominates the square, speaking of Cluj's historical belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The statue is part of an invisible moving tissue of monuments, commemorative plaques, or street names marking the symbolic claim over space by both Romanians and Hungarians. One can literally follow some statues moving around in the city, falling into cones of obscurity, or brought back into the light, according to political stakes. A symbolic belt of Romanian-ness is closing in on the Hungarian markers. The most dramatic piece of this belt was an archaeological excavation displaying Roman vestiges, and thus the entitlement of Romanians over the square. The excavation was the product of a local administration with strong nationalist leanings, part of an ensemble of ostentations and forms of symbolic violence (Lazăr, 2003). The excavation broke the horizontal rhythm of the square and it produced another dimension – a spatialisation which was actually dragging passers-by to a different time. Through a "politics of the beneath" employing vestiges and trajectories of movement in the city centre, the excavation neighbouring the statue of the Hungarian leader was cast as a constant and potent reminder to

Hungarian ethnics that they are on Romanian land. The square was eviscerated, in search of a line of mobilisation of its underground in the Romanian national narrative, construed around the myth of merging between the Roman colonists that conquered the territories in 105-106 AD and the Dacian indigenes. Passers-by were to fall into this spatial-temporal syncope and acknowledge the Romanians – the descendants of the Romans – as the most legitimate ethnic group on the land. Through this spatial-temporal trick, Hungarians were exposed as nomadic, as root-less, and therefore without the proper grounds for a spatial entitlement. The extreme visibility of the excavation and the associations it allowed with a graveyard meant that "the hole" – as it was ironically referred to locally – became a symbolic object where the tensions between an ethnic and a civic conception of the nation were played out. It also interlocked different groups of experts, archaeologists, architects, academics, journalists, bureaucrats (and inhabitants more broadly) in a polarised exchange about the future of the city centre and its nationalist symbolic overload. The civic association MindBomb launched the campaign "Fill the hole", with posters surrounding the excavation. The change of the local administration brought the filling and paving of the hole in the ground,[11] but the lack in the acknowledgement of otherness that this message marks is still creeping up in the square and its surroundings, leaking out of the former excavation that has been muffled with cement and cobblestone, puncturing daily lives, and producing a double time of celebrations and commemorations: a Hungarian time, and a Romanian time.

All these "ghostly" references are a way of reading space through time. They are ceaselessly actualised in the square by psychic transmissions about movement and about movement frozen into the materiality of paths, shortcuts or monuments. Through them, we follow pulsations of lack, absence and otherness in the square, and thus we compose more of the rhythm-analytic frame.

Short History of a Movement

The protest I here analyse belongs to the campaign "Save Roşia Montană", carried forth by the Romanian activist organisation Alburnus Maior.[12] Roşia Montană is a scenic mountainous locality in Romania, which is at risk of being turned into one of the biggest open cast cyanide gold mines in Europe, through a project advanced by Gabriel Resources Corporation (or Roşia Montană Gold

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[11] After the refurbishment of the square, the original excavations were entirely covered, and a new smaller one appeared at a different location in the square, protected by smoked glass, and surrounded by places for sitting. Thus, the open graveyard gave way to a covered crypt, as a quieter place of memory.

[12] See http://rosiamontana.org/.

Corporation). In short, the mining project would imply the resettlement of some 900 families living in farms and houses, it would eat up the ecosystem by the use of cyanide-based leaching technology – or the extraction of gold via open cast mining. The corporation has been ardently present in the locality for several years, purchasing private property wherever owners could be convinced to sell, relocating the inhabitants in a colony built in another town, demolishing the houses that were not legally considered historical monuments, and conducting minor or demonstrative restorations of the ones featuring on the list of patrimony, as part of a scenario of putting Roşia Montană on the map of European tourism. The corporation also has given employment to some of the locals, who irrespective of the levels of loyalty to the agenda of Gabriel Resources, are day-to-day bearers of the symbolic markers of the enterprise (uniforms, banners, cars). These moves have created a very dramatic split in Roşia Montană, where a part of the inhabitants chose to defend their self-concept centred around their being the descendents of gold miners, by using their property as a resource for resistance and refusing to sell their land and houses to the ever-expanding corporation. Plaques bearing the inscription "This property is not for sale" are integrated into a chain of symbolisations meant to assert a resilient historical and biographical connection to the locality.

Despite many elaborate choreographies of protest authored by the organisation Alburnus Maior throughout major Romanian cities, the logic that guides governmental decisions affecting Roşia Montană remains undisturbed: it is an economic one, reflecting a neoliberal consensus politics that merges the interests of business and government. The ideas of market and competition themselves become sites of veridiction, the only way of speaking the truth. Ultimately, this enactment of a consensus model of governance displaces contestation, empties collective life of a vocabulary of inequality or injustice, and thus corrodes the very grounds of legitimacy for collective mobilisation. Subjects are seen as integrated into the rhythms of a project of macroeconomic growth (with referents to the country, but also the region, or the European Union), while the corporation is presented as bringing a unique chance of training "human capital" into the new modern technologies of mining, while breaking with the traditional or early industrialisation backward way of mining. The juridical sees important mutations as well, as law itself is transformed into a set of economic guidelines, facilitating regulations, and concessions for the cyanide-based mining enterprise. For instance, the area has been declared a mono-industrial one, which literally outlaws other productive activities, thus radically breaking the rhythms of both production and daily life in the area, as well as putting a strain on the many kinds of informal economic activities through which people sustain their livelihoods. Ultimately, a mono-industrial zone is an encapsulating monolithic rhythm.

On the site, in Roşia Montană, the preparations for aligning all movements to this monolithic rhythm are dramatic. Orchestrating an ample exercise of de-synchronisation, the mining company is converting the locality into a theatrical space, staging the illusion of its integration in the touristic circuit, although the presence of cyanide technologies is very likely to actually turn away most tourists. Renovations are happening demonstratively in the town centre, in the high points of visibility, behind painted curtains that anticipate the look of the future façades, given away as mere textiles only by a slight movement in the wind. The company converted one of the buildings in the main street into a presentation centre, where two models hanging on the wall wish to project an image of a sleek, effortless, phased transformation, looking more like a work of "terracing", "systematisation" or "ecologisation", rather than a brutal intervention that will decimate one of the mountains nearby, which will literally be bathed in cyanide stone for stone. As many of the locals were lured out of their homes, buildings are slowly cracking and collapsing under the weight of the seasons, while the ruins of the ones that have already been demolished are overtaken by greens. Roşia Montană is becoming a small town of ghosts, while the "life" that the company's works and restorations is trying to convey is a simulation, a theatre décor, a double of something that is lacking. The décor generated by these interventions preview the smoothness and slenderness of the future space for consumption: when Roşia Montană will belong to the circuit of touristic resorts, the actual façades will be like the textile simulation of them that we are now observing. They will be the double of a double. The rematerialisation of an abstraction. Here, we discern the capacity of capitalism to abstractise space, to transform space into a ghost of itself. Most of the activists who are our protagonists have walked through Roşia Montană's capitalist theatralisation, so they carry with them, in the sites of protest of large Romanian cities, the memory trace of this abstractisation of space.

Rhythm-analysis in the Square

On the evening of November 11, 2011, in Cluj-Napoca's main square, the activists of Alburnus Maior organised a street choreography in support of their cause, called "Occupy Your Body with Cyanide". From the start, it claimed affinity with the "occupy" movements happening around the world, but produced its own corporeal and rhythmic realities of protest. The participants knew the choreography in advance: the sequence of the moves was disseminated through web-based social networks, blogs, and websites. Around four hundred participants came to the main square in Cluj-Napoca, at a given time, on a very cold winter evening. They were carrying candles. A few of the participants were wearing

masks of politicians directly involved in paving the way for the gold mining company to push its project forward. The masked participants handed out mints, which stood for cyanide. At a preset time, people swallowed the "cyanide", lit their candles and let themselves fall on the ground, where they laid silently for several minutes, on the frozen pavement. A staging of collective suicide. The square was transformed into a gigantic graveyard. After a few minutes, everyone stood up and walked quietly in different directions.

While being-with the square, what can we hear? Within the broader frame of rhythm, where capitalism endlessly repeats itself, there is a discontinuity, a caesura, an intervention. The choreographed irregularity creates a first nested rhythm: a rhythm within a rhythm. A collective political moment is achieved – curiously enough – because nobody moves and nobody speaks. Or rather, because all the bodies are attuned to not moving and to not speaking. Faking death, under the moonlight, at minus fifteen degrees Celsius, laying down in the square on the cobblestone, on the same beat. Staging the graveyard that the region would become once touched by cyanide. The three minutes of stillness count as a political caesura; they make something shift. Space – so far thin and abstract – reemerges as concrete, because of the workings of time. Time (the three minutes of attuned stillness) makes space (the square gesturing toward political autonomy). Three overlapping graveyards, each bearing their own time, account for the thickness of the new space: there is a performed graveyard belonging to the choreographed protest and to the breathing-in and breathing-out bodies in the square; there is the partly silenced graveyard of the veiled archaeological excavation, speaking of the two split ethnic temporalities (Romanian and Hungarian), and perhaps of the incapacity of Self and Other to be in the same time; there is the distant graveyard of the small town of Roşia Montană, which indeed lingers in a suicidal mode, at risk of accepting the true cup of cyanide. These transitions from time to space constitute a psychic situation. To remain bound together as a situation, they need the rhythm-analyst; like a fleshy metronome, she will listen to the nested rhythms, and find a way to narrativise the time-space conversions. The story of the first nested rhythm is thus one about the politics of not moving, about being silent, and about enacting death symbols. Ultimately, a shock for the capitalist order can only be syncope, caesura, stopping the flow.

Let us linger for a while on the way death assembles as political symbol. There are parallel moves of abstracting-reconcretising in the passage from money to gold, and from death to cyanide. In a cunning capitalist act, the mining company has managed to reconcretise the abstraction of money as glittery gold. The matter for the participants and supporters to the project is no longer just becoming rich, but getting to the gold that the mountain still carries. The lure of gold is transforming into a small-scale gold rush, with visitors venturing out to

Roşia Montană in the hope of finding the rock that will change their fortunes. While money functions well in the capitalist system as a way to regulate lack, allowing the capitalist master to identify with it as a signifier of the Other's desire (Vadolas, 2012), it seems that the lure of concreteness at times creeps up, orchestrating an (imaginary) caesura in the cycle of elicited and unmet desire: we now come to long for the very substance that money is made of, its heart-of-gold. While this configures yet another impossible object of desire (the heart-of-gold in money remains unachievable), it still signals an uncanny disturbance of neat cycles of abstraction. On the site, in Roşia Montană, the lure of gold is carefully tended by the mining company, through a capitalist theatralisation. The elements of décor (textile façades, banners, posters, plaques) work as intermediary signposts to the promised wealth and cast the endpoint of all the works of renovation and modernisation as a double of double, a double of décor. This is the eternally postponed concreteness of capitalism.

In a cunning anti-capitalist act, the protesters reconcretise death, by condensing it into a fake cyanide pill. The overload of death symbols, created by the overlapping graveyard references in the square, is surprisingly materialised and given form. In other words, a haunting is enacted. The activists "occupy" their body with cyanide, lending their corporealities to the square, and transforming them into sites of protest. The ingestion of the pill is a marked moment of synchronicity, as everybody swallows it at the same time. As the fake poison makes its journey through the bodies, the violences of an unjust system become exposed, and so are its attacks on the vitality of life, which risks being sacrificed for ideas of local, regional or global economic growth. The fast death – the staging of a collective suicide – is a speed-inversion of the slow death that the political-economic-legal nexus would bring to the site. By an artifice of acceleration, by replacing slow with fast, and by locking death into the concreteness of a pill the protesters reveal that while the heart-of-gold in money is an illusion, death by poisoning is a perplexing reality.

In going back to being-with the square, the second nested rhythm makes itself felt. So far, we have heard an orchestrated irregularity nesting in the rhythm of capitalism, which operates as a frame; in what follows, we hear a spontaneous irregularity, a new kind of caesura, which uses the first discontinuity (the choreographed protest) as its frame and unexpectedly takes us to a time/space of autonomy. How so? During the three minutes of attuned silence in the square, from a group of on-lookers on the edges of the square, somebody addresses the protesters in a mocking voice. But before even finishing his sentence, a few seconds after, he is cut short and silenced by one of his companions, while the choreography is allowed to unfold. His voice cannot carry through with the irony, and instead, shame protects the quietness of the political protest. What

do these ten seconds of spontaneous disturbance tell about the space of the square? The psychic situation here is made up by two tableaux, occurring in a short sequence: one on irony, and one on shame. A dividual (the small group of on-lookers) meets another dividual (the larger group of protesters). In the encounter, one distrusting dividual inspects the other dividual, which is in a high state of attunement, faking a collective suicide. The first dividual has an inner rupture and stabilisation of emotions, going from irony to shame; the syncope of this stabilisation is a moment of political recognition. This new kind of sliding into silence, which is neither demanded, nor enforced by the protesters or by the authorities, but instead stems from the inner workings of another group, solidifies the space of the square on novel grounds: it is a space that holds an anti-capitalist moment and does not fall back into abstraction; it is a space that allows the self-institution of autonomous society (Castoriadis, 1987).

The square is split, by way of temporalities: in the past two years, radical anti-systemic politics has coexisted with conventional politics – the latter bearing its markers of being associated with a political party or leader, formulating social and economic demands, or engaging with the police in an antagonistic way. In other words, rhythms of autonomy have been heard together with rhythms of heteronomy, weaving the square as a space of the irresolute. Besides these splits, our protest is the carrier of a productive misunderstanding, which marks a crucial shift in the quality of the political space. Many of the on-lookers did not realise at the time that the protesters were seeking to put a stop to the cyanide mining project in Roșia Montană; they remained hooked to the performed graveyard while misreading the narrowness of the demands, and related instead to its symbols of death and vitality. Three years ago, this would not have happened: the space would have disintegrated at the work of awe, fear, and intolerance of being suspended in ambiguity, when the question "what is this about?" cannot be fully answered. This is as broad as signalling the emergence of a new social imaginary of protest, where it is conceivable to successfully under-address the Master, to not formulate narrow demands, without being effaced from the senses of the Other. Here, the Other lingers on, on the brink of giving recognition.

This emergent capacity to under-address the Master (in the hypostases of Reason, Order, the State, the Market), while being able to create political form, must bear a name: it is *post-oedipal politics*. The rhythmic entrainment of post-oedipal protest politics does not unfold around a particular political symbol or (Father) figure. It avoids both reification[13] and personalisation. In the discussion

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[13] See Brown (2012) and Vadolas (2012) on the constitution of the "1%" symbol as a form of reification.

around the failures of the Occupy manifestations the prevailing concerns are its lack of political leadership, its incapacity to articulate a programme with specific requirements, or even its momentary character of dramatic performance, rather than enduring social movement (Calhoun, 2013). This obscures the greatest shift in the political imaginary brought by the Occupy sites: a change in the relationship between political form and its environment. In other words, the question to ask becomes: is political form structured in relation to a unified external principle which is thus insinuated in the workings of its inside? If so, then it is Oedipal politics, or Castoriadian heteronomy. For any protest political form to be post-oedipal and autonomous, it needs the capacity to reflect on its self-constitution; as the vignette on rhythm shows, it also needs the capacity to incite recognition. The event of post-oedipal politics is bound to the sheer productivity of desire. As Guattari (2008: 319) tells us, "[d]esire is always the mode of production of something, is always the mode of construction of something." In its productivity, desire is not tied to the Oedipal triangle, which is not just a term in the organisation of psychoanalytic knowledge, but it is also a strong cultural trope and a constant movement in the structuralisation of the unconscious, accomplished through the workings of various societal instances and institutions (Guattari, 2008: 305). Oedipus creeps up in innumerable killings of the (political) father and reconstitution of a new one.

Conclusions: Rhythm-analysis and the Political Space

The rhythm-analytic project I propose unfolds at the intersection of a sociology of the invisible, a sociology of silence, and a sociology of attunement. With a both careful and adventurous epistemological leap, the rhythm-analyst can come to discern the polyrhythmia of society; and the different beats of heteronomy and autonomy. The rhythm of political form is different when it is made to fill the desire of an Other; and when it acknowledges its self-institution, and is thus able to turn reflexively upon itself. Cornelius Castoriadis's regional ontology of selves makes a good home for the rhythm-analytic project, while allowing us to construe the link between the radical imagination of the psyche and the radical social imaginary. At these confluences, a socioanalytic theory of dividual emergence (or what we usually refer to as "collective subjectivity") and a socioanalytic theory of protest can grow. Its first commitment is an interactionist one: rediscovering the importance of co-presence, of bodies coming together in the square, in synchronic entanglements. Its second commitment is a psychoanalytic one: listening closely to ghostly rhythms, to rhythms of absences or half-presences. In our choreography of protest, without discerning the overlapping graveyards

of the square, the anti-capitalist rhythm of the exercise cannot be heard. Its third commitment is a critical one: recording moments of recognition, even within a capitalist order where domination works as a collection of de-synchronising acts.

This does not mean that we are living in an "age of uprising", an awakening, or a return of history, as Badiou (2012) suggests. In fact, history keeps returning, sometimes in a frame of a few seconds, only to leave us again. The only revolutionary time is one which steals space away from abstraction and reinstitutes it as concreteness; revolutionary time is then akin to concrete space: it is time-as-space. Our analysis of the rhythmic double frame is a story of such spacing of time.

The spacing of time is what connects the square in Romania with the global scene of protest occurring in the past two years in Tahrir Square, Syntagma Square, Puerta del Sol or Zuccotti Park. The space of the square was reconcretised, through the operation of temporalities. In the rhythmic double frame, we learn to listen to one another; to be silent together; to reject and ironise the political rationality of capitalism – the Law of the Market/Father. We simulate death to arrive at the ten seconds of autonomy, and at the ten seconds of recognition. *Homo politicus* is actualised inside this choreography. *Homo politicus* reaffirms her life by staging her own death.

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STATUS ATTAINMENT PATTERNS IN ROMANIA.
A CLASS-BASED ANALYSIS

CRISTIAN POP[*]

ABSTRACT. In this paper I discuss the socio-economic status attainment process in contemporary Romania. I link this process with a class analysis that reveals some mutations in the general model. This general model is based on Blau and Duncan's work who rely on variables describing occupations end education for individuals and their fathers. My work is also a methodological contribution to the status attainment literature based on a new class schema fitted to explain the new realities from post-communist Romania. Using path analysis, I show that socio-economic background still has an important influence on the status attainment process of the individuals. Furthermore, the privileged and the middle classes follow a somehow different pattern from the deprived classes who reproduce their social status.

Keywords: status attainment, social class, occupation, education

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present and explain the relation between social class and social status in contemporary Romania. For this reason, my analysis is based on Blau and Duncan's (1967, 2008) model of status attainment applied on a national dataset[1], containing individuals born between 1917 and 1985. Also, this paper is a methodological contribution to the field, as it specifies

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[*] *Romanian Academy of Sciences, Cluj-Napoca Branch, e-mail: cristi.pop86@gmail.com*.

[1] I used the data from the STRATSOC 2010 project. This is a dataset collected from the research: "Class Structure and Social Stratification in Contemporary Romania". The research was conducted by the University of Bucharest (director: prof. dr. Lazar Vlasceanu) in partnership with the Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, the University of Oradea and the Centre for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS), with the financial support of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, Grant PN-II No. 92131/Oct. 2008. The sample design was multistage stratified-random sampling, and the final dataset included 4,508 respondents above 25 years old. The field research took place in November-December 2010, and it used face-to-face interviewing at the respondents' residence in order to fill in the questionnaires.

the internal logic of the status attainment model. Even though criticized by some scholars (e.g. Featherman, 1981) as being too quantitative and descriptive, the status attainment model casts an important influence as the variables on which is based (occupation and education) create important distinctions among the individuals in society. This model helps us find how and to what degree does the socio-economic background influence the subsequent social status. Moreover, it is useful in understanding how does attained status at one stage of the life cycle affect the prospects for a subsequent stage? I will concentrate on these questions also in relationship with social class as a dimension of the social structure.

I understand the social structure of a given country – using mainly Kohn and Slomczynski's (2006) work, but largely in line also with the approach of Nuffield school (primary John H. Goldthorpe, Abigail McKnight, Tak Wing Chan, Colin Mills etc.) - as a two dimension model which incorporates: 1. social classes and 2. social stratification. *Social classes* are groups defined in terms of their relations to ownership and control over the means of production, and of their control over the labour power of others. *Social stratification* is the hierarchical ordering of society in terms of power, privilege and prestige. *Class* is the fundamental concept, because it addresses the politic and economic organization of society. Furthermore, *class* is relational because social classes are defined and indexed in terms of their relations to other social classes and classes are distinct groups (Kohn and Slomczynski, 2006). In Wright's (1979) words, this is a relational approach to class rather than a gradual one, which implies positioning social classes "above" or "beyond" other social classes. Moreover, relational concepts define classes according to their structural social relationship to other social classes. Thus, social relations do not simply define classes, they also determine classes; classes, as social forces, are real consequences of social relations (Wright, 1979). Social stratification is conceived as a single continuum, an ordinal ranking from highest to lowest stratification position (Kohn and Slomczynski, 2006).

Building on Wright's (1979, 1979, 1997) Slomczynski's, et al. (2007), Kohn and Slomczynski's (2006), Slomczynski and Dubrow's (2012) and Domanski's et al. (2009) work, I constructed a class schema based on occupations that accounts for the current distinctions in post-communist Romania (Pop, 2013). This class schema uses several criteria: 1. type of sector of economy (agricultural and non-agricultural); 2. property and the control over the means of production (employers and employees); 3. control over the labour power of others (helps in separating supervisor from supervisees, and also from higher management) and 4. skills (are measured by the degree of expertise, proficiency, and know-how as a function of education, apprenticeship, and experience). As a result, a

ten point class schema emerged: 1. Employers; 2. Managers; 3. Professionals; 4. Supervisors; 5. Self-employed; 5. Technicians and office workers; 6. Skilled manual workers; 6. Service and trade workers; 9. Unskilled manual workers; 10. Farmers (peasants) (Pop, 2013). As I have argued elsewhere (Pop, 2013), these new categories describe new realities emerging in post-communist Romania, where inequalities became more and more visible and could escape through the "holes of the net" imagined by the current class schema(s). Also, this classification offers the possibility of explaining differences between individuals shaped by the class they inhabit. Even more, it has the advantage of flexibility, as it can be aggregated at different levels consistent with the research interest.

Class and status

Class and status are two important dimensions of the stratification order, and their analysis is based on distinct conceptualizations. These two terms are understood in different manners according to the paradigm one uses. A recent debate between John Goldthorpe and Mike Savage takes into account class and status seen through different lens. On the one side, for Goldthorpe the social class is determined by position in the economic system of production, as seen by both Marx and Weber. The status for Goldthorpe is related to the lifestyle of the individuals and also of their families, friends and community - seen in a Weberian perspective. On the other side, Savage builds his class-model with Bourdieusian inspiration, exploring the juxtapositions between economic positions and cultural orientations. For this scholar social class is definable only if one takes into account both class and status. For this reason Savage mobilizes also Bourdieu's concepts of social and cultural capital. In this debate, Savage and Goldthorpe (and their co-authors) employ several types of arguments that develop and become more complex in time, from one study to another, as I demonstrate in what follows.

First Goldthorpe and McKnight (2004:1) show that "class positions are seen as deriving from social relations in economic life or, more specifically, from *employment relations.*" The same authors present some economic factors that are likely to be influenced by the class position the individuals hold. First they talk about *economic security* which can be influenced by unemployment or job loss. The most exposed social classes to the risk of unemployment are the members of the working class, and unskilled, routine workers as a direct result of the typical form that their employment contracts take (Goldthorpe and McKnight, 2004). *The economic stability* for a short-term (from week to week or month to month) is also influenced by the social class that individuals inhabit, especially in the case of the working (blue-collar) class. They also show

that there are some differences between classes (not only age groups) in what economic prospects are concerned, mostly between those from the service class and those from the working class. Goldthorpe and McKnight (2004:24) conclude showing that individuals in different class positions could in fact be seen as living in quite different economic worlds, not just as regards their levels of material welfare but as the whole range of economic life-chances – of risks and opportunities – that they face.

A year after Godthorpe's study, Savage, Warde and Devine (2005) interpret in a new key the class analysis based on what they call CARs (capitals, assets and resources) which are, in their opinion, embedded in rational choice approaches to class analyses in different ways. First is the Marxian approach where CARs help specifying exploitation relations, and second is Goldthorpe's work where CARs are exogenous factors that class actors rely on (Savage et al., 2005). As a first critique, Savage et al. (2005) believe that, although assets can be distinguished from resources, it is difficult to see the meaningfulness of such distinction, for soundly explaining outcomes. As far as resources are concerned the authors criticize Goldthorpe's lack of conceptualization of this term and its usage in a "commonsensical way". Even more, Goldthorpe's work based on the rational action theory is seen as purely descriptive without a theoretical legitimization, or in his words: "the result is a technically impressive, variable-centred, approach to stratification which fails to provide a convincing reason for why we still need a theory of class" (Savage et al., 2005: 39). In his opinion, as a good counterpart for this shortcomings, is Bourdieu's work who tries to "direct attention away from the rather sterile debate about exploitation and how certain groups gain relative advantage towards a focus on the accumulation and convertibility of capitals which leads us to focus more on questions of temporality and process" (Savage et al., 2005: 43) as inequalities are dynamic.

However, in a subsequent text Goldthorpe and Chan (2007) react and further specify their position in a Weberian context. They restate their option and see the class structure as being formed by the social relations of economic life or, in other words, by relations in labour markets and production units. They show that at primary level we can distinguish as employment status between positions of employers, employees and self-employed. Furthermore, other differentiations between employers and employees are based on the type of employment contracts that regulate their relationship. In other words, Goldthorpe and Chan (2007) assume that individuals with similar employment status and occupation are likely to have similar forms of employment regulation and thus similar class positions. Moreover, they treat the social classes as unordered categorical variables and in this manner the afore mentioned researchers explain that this classes are not meant to capture "real" socio-

cultural collectivities that are recognized and subjectively meaningful to their members, and with well-defined social boundaries as created by processes of selection, socialization, or closure. They choose to understand classes as "a number of people who have in common a specific causal component of their life-chances" (Weber [1922], 1968:930).

Even more, the same authors consider also the social status. For this reason they present status order, in a Weberian perspective, as a structure of relations of perceived social superiority, equality, and inferiority among individuals. This reflects a prestige attached to some occupational positions. However, although the status is correlated with income and education, this correlation is rather modest and therefore Goldthorpe and Chan (2007) suggest understanding status as something more than socioeconomic status and more than the scales of prestige, as we can find a great deal of disparity within classes not only between classes. They propose understanding social status in terms of relatively loose social networks of individuals based on a shared lifestyle.

Goldthorpe's arguments do not convince Savage to consider class and status as two different variables that can influence individuals' life in different ways. Thus, in a recent paper Savage et al. (2013) elaborate a new model of social class where they use measures of economic, cultural and social capital combined in order to provide a new way of mapping contemporary class divisions in the UK. Before presenting the results of a large sample research, Savage et al. (2013) propose a five point critique to Goldthorpe's work and on EGP class schema. The first critique refers mainly to the inability of his class schema (EGP) to explain "the wider cultural and social activities and identities (...) which do not appear to be closely linked to people's class position" (Savage et al., 2013: 4). A second critique is the use of standard nationally representative surveys with moderate sample size in order to place people into social classes by some well known techniques (like log-linear modeling), and thus "Goldthorpe's class schema is dependent on the hegemony of a particular model of the nationally representative sample survey" (Savage et al., 2013: 4).

Thirdly, Savage et al. (2013) criticizes Goldthorpe's option for the approach of abstracting class from measures of income and wealth in order to derive class from measures of employment as the income variation within occupations is growing. Fourthly, the same researchers imply a feminist critique showing that "a focus on occupations as the sole measure of class occludes the more complex ways that class operates symbolically and culturally, through forms of stigmatization and marking of personhood and value" (2013:4). A fifth and last imputation is related to the validity of EGP schema which is incapable to take into account horizontal cleavages from the salaried middle class (Savage

et al., 2013). As an alternative the scholars suggest "a latent class analysis" based on Bourdieu's different types of capital (economic, cultural and social) that can be used in order to obtain a more complex and comprehending model of social class that is not of economic nature, but also can capture forms of social reproduction and cultural distinction.

This debate produces yet another episode when Colin Mills, like Goldthorpe and Chan a member of the Nuffield College, decides to comment on the results and methodology of Savage's et al. Great British Class Survey (GBCS). Mills (2014) presents a robust five-section critique to Savage's GBCS, first showing that it is not clear what is the class typology from GBCS meant to explain as it has no clear objective, more precisely: "What is clear is that their typology cannot have any role in *explaining* differences in the distribution of social and cultural capital for the simple reason that all of these things are built into the *definition* of their typology." (Mills, 2014: 439). Another relevant critique is of methodological nature and it's concerned with the sample selection. He argues that an Internet survey is subject to a self-selection bias and applying post-stratification weights (as Savage et al. did) is not a good option because it corrects only for variables with a known distribution in the population and this is not the case of social capital that is an important criteria for class construction in the GBCS (Mills, 2014). Another point is made in relationship with the way Savage et al. selected their model. Mills (2014) stresses that it is not enough only to present a formal statistical criterion (the Bayesian Information Coefficient in this case) in order to assess the goodness of the model it is also necessary to show if the model is solid in terms of the configuration of the variables that saturate it. The model proposed by Savage et al. is a function of the sample size and we know almost nothing about the model uncertainty. Mills' fourth critique refers to the measurement process, demonstrating that in the GBCS, although Savage et al. claim that conventional class categories are inadequate for the analysis of cultural taste and practices, they use these classes. Moreover, even though they understand the importance of wealth, not just income, for their analysis, they fail to collect reliable wealth data (Mills, 2014). The last critique mobilized by Mills takes into account the way Savage et al. interpret the seven social classes that they discovered mostly by "information quite extraneous to the latent profile analysis itself" (Mills, 2014: 443) and not, as we would have expected, by observed variables associated with the latent classes. Also, Mills points out that the authors put too much emphasis on age in the construction of classes, as age is a very important aspect in differentiating between tastes and activities that are valuable criteria for the construction of social classes in the GBCS (Mills, 2014).

All in all, the major determinants of any class schema are the socio-demographic ones that describe the realities of the economic life, from the labour market and have an impact on individuals' social status. As a result, even though my approach is based on social classes, seen from distinct perspectives, I can't ignore the social status, which is highly related to and influenced by individual's social class. For this reason I am interested in the status attainment process related to class - using Blau and Duncan's (2008) status attainment model. In addition, ethnicity can be an important explanatory variable in the status attainment process for Romania (Verdery, 1985; Emigh and Szelenyi, 2000). Yet, I am not able to use this variable as my work is based on a national sampling scheme, and groups of respondents belonging to the Hungarian or the Roma ethnic minority do not form representative sub-samples of their corresponding populations.

The general model

An important issue that I address in this paper is related to the influence of "inheritance" in the Romanian society. Therefore, the question is how and to what degree do social and economic background accounts for individual's subsequent social status? I address this question in different ways, first understanding the status attainment process for the entire population, then for respondents that occupy different social classes.

For the Romanian case I use Blau and Duncan's (1967, 2008) status attainment basic model based on five variables:

X - father's status;
V - father's education;
U - respondent's education;
W - respondent's first occupational status;
Y - respondent's last occupational status.

The V and U variables are expressed in years of attained education. As in the questionnaire the education variable is an ordinal one, based on levels of attained education a linear transformation is necessary (as presented in the first table of Annex A). I am aware that in some cases, the same level of education for father and for respondent can mean different things in terms of years of education, however the increase pattern remains the same. Moreover, for tertiary education I used mean values, as different domain tracks imply more or less years of education (in the case of postgraduates from 3 to 6). The status variables X, W and Y are all coded according Ganzeboom's et al. (1992, 2010) International Socio-Economic Index of occupational status (ISEI). I performed the analysis only with individuals that had at least one occupation, as a result

those that did not work at the time of the survey, were classified based on their last occupation. However, I had to exclude from the analysis individuals that never worked (i.e. house makers, students). Occupations taken from the Romanian Occupational Classification were assigned different values conforming to ISEI (were values range from 0 to 96). In order to explain the procedure in which they develop the ISEI, Ganzeboom et al. (1992) wrote:

> Our operational procedure is a direct consequence of concept of occupation as the engine that converts education into income: we scale occupations in such a way that it captures as much as possible of the (indirect) influence of education on income (earnings). SEI is defined as the intervening variable between education and income that maximizes the indirect effect of education on income and minimizes the direct effect. (...) The advantages of our procedure over the older one are simply that (a) the logical relationship with prestige is completely eliminated and (b) it gives a clearer interpretation to SEI (Ganzeboom et al., 1992).

As Blau and Duncan (2008), I make no assumption about the priority of V with respect to X, as the question to be answered is not concerned with father's career but with that of the respondents. As a result, these measures are contemporaneous from the son's viewpoint. For the same authors, U is supposed to follow in time - and thus to be susceptible to causal influence from - the two measures of father's status, a valid observation for the Romanian case. Another assumption made in Blau and Duncan's model is that W (respondent's first occupational status) follows U (respondent's education). In most of the cases this assumption is true for the Romanian context, but it should be carefully approached for younger individuals where there is a larger possibility that W is not subsequent to U. As a time succession I agree with Blau and Duncan (2008) that both U and W precede Y. All in all, the assumed model, event thought it takes a somehow idealized perception on temporal order, follows that of Blau and Duncan's (2008), and can be represented in the next form:

$$(V, X) - (U) - (W) - (Y).$$

Table 1: Simple Correlations for the Status Variables

	Y	W	U	X	V
(Y) Respondent's status - last occupation	-	.820**	.672**	.395**	.446**
(W) Respondent's status - first occupation		-	.642**	.400**	.434**
(U) Respondent's education in years			-	.429**	.585**
(X) Father's status				-	.549**
(V) Father's education in years					-

** p<0.01.
**Source:** STRATSOC 2010 dataset. Own calculations.

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Before specifying the status attainment model for Romania, a first step is to present the correlations between the five used variables. The simple correlation measures the gross magnitude of the effect of the antecedent upon the consequent variable (Blau, Duncan and Tyree, 2008). For the first value, r_{YW} = .820, an increment of one standard deviation in first job status produces (whether directly or indirectly) an increment of 0.8 standard deviations in the respondent's last occupational status. These correlations represent gross effects that the antecedent variable has on the subsequent one. The r_{XV} correlations has no directional ordering as no assumptions were made about the causal ordering of father's status with respect to his occupation. We can observe that r_{XV} = .549 is smaller than the correspondent correlation for the respondent's case r_{YU} = .672. This result suggests an increase importance of education in relation to status in the case of respondents compared to their fathers. However, Blau and Duncan, suggest a careful interpretation here as V and X do not represent a cohort of men, here designed as "fathers". In this case, they are a proportion a individuals who have children born between 1917 (the oldest respondent) and 1985 (the youngest one). The same authors, in describing the 1962 American society, show that if we think of X as the initial cause, we may focus on the extent to which its influence on Y is transmitted by way of its prior influence on W. Moreover, in terms of gross effects there is a clear ordering in influences on the first job: $r_{WU} > r_{WX} > r_{WV}$. For the Romanian case these inequality has a different ordering $r_{WU} > r_{WV} > r_{WX}$, as father's education seems to have a more important influence than father's social status on the respondent's first occupational status, this is the case also for the last occupational status. Even more, r_{UX} is smaller than r_{UV}, as father's education has a greater influence than his status on respondent's education. The main variable that is to be explained (Y) suffers a greater gross influence from respondent's first status (r_{YW} = .812) than from his education (r_{YU} = .672).

Table 2: Status attainment model - entire population

	Model 1 - Const. X			Model 2 - Const. U			Model 3 - Const. W			Model 4 - Const. Y		
	B	**S.E**	**Beta**	**B**	**S.E**	**Beta**	**B**	**S.E**	**Beta**	**B**	**S.E**	**Beta**
V	1.563*	.037	.549*	.435*	.013	.494*	.113	.059	.032	.023	.045	.006
X	22.267*	.326		.050*	.005	.162*	.172*	.019	.138*	.037*	.014	.028*
U	-	-	-	6.360*	.142		2.370*	.063	.570*	.997*	.057	.228*
W	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.060*	.698		.694*	.013	.660*
Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.865	.537	
	R² = .301			R² = .338			R² = .438			R² = .710		

V - father's education; X - father's status; U - respondent's education; W - respondent's first occupation status; Y - respondent's last occupation status *p<0.05.
Source: STRATSOC 2010 dataset. Own calculations.

Figure 1: Path Coefficients for the Stratification Process for Romania*
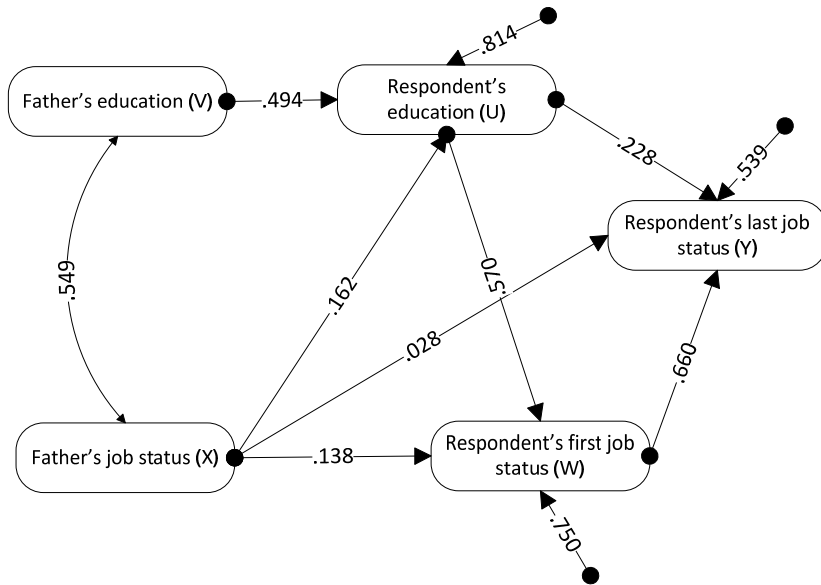
* *Based on Blau and Duncan's model*

Table 2 and Figure 1 represent the path coefficients from the basic model for the process of stratification (this is the result of path analysis). In Table 2 these values are represented as betas. Each model from Table 2 explains a different dependent variable by subsequently introducing the other variables as explanatory ones. For the first model the dependent variable is father's status which is explained by his education. In the second model respondent's education is accounted for by father's status and education. For the third model respondent's first occupational status is explained through his/her education and through father's education and status. In the last model (and the most complex one) respondent's last occupational status - as a dependent variable - is based on respondent's first occupational status, his education and father's status and education - as independent variables. The influences that are statistically significant are included in Figure 1. This general methodology is also applied for the class analysis.

Blau and Duncan describe the model from Figure 1 explaining that the link between V and X is showed as a curved line with an arrowhead at both ends in order to distinguish it from the other lines that represent path coefficients. Also, the intention is to show that father's education and occupation are correlated not only because one affects the other, but because common causes

lie behind both. Moreover, it serves to sum up all the sources of correlation between V and X and to indicate that the explanation thereof is not part of the problem at hand. The straight lines running from one measured variable to another represents direct (or net) influences. The symbol for the path coefficients, as P_{YW} carries a double subscript. The first subscript is the variable at the head of the path, or the effect the second is the causal variable. There are also lines with no source indicated, carrying arrows to each of the effect variables. These represent the residual paths standing for all other influences on the variable in question, including causes not recognized or measured, errors of measurement, and departures of the true relationship from additivity or linearity, proprieties that are assumed throughout the analysis. (Blau, Duncan and Tyree, 2008)

In order to assess the importance of each path coefficient from the model, Blau and Duncan and Tyree (2008) suggest that before constructing the diagram we must know or assume a causal ordering of the observed variables. This information is external or a priori with respect to the data, which merely describe associations and correlations. This causal scheme must be complete, in the sense that all causes must be accounted for. We can achieve a formal completeness by representing unmeasured causes as a residual factor, presumed to be uncorrelated with the remaining factors lying behind the variable in question. For this a minimum test of the adequacy of a causal diagram is whether it satisfactorily accounts for the observed correlations among measured variables. In making such a test Blau, Duncan and Tyree (2008) employ the fundamental theorem in path analysis, which shows how to obtain the correlation between any two variables in the system, given the ipath coefficients and correlations entered on the diagram. For example:

$$r_{YX} = p_{YX} + p_{YU}r_{UX} + p_{YW}r_{WX} \text{ and } r_{WX} = p_{WX} + p_{WU}r_{UX}$$

If the path coefficients are properly estimated, and if there is no inconsistency in the diagram, the correlations calculated by the formula must equal (or be close to) the observed correlations. The entire equation for r_{YX} is:

$$r_{YX} = P_{YX} + P_{YU}P_{UX} + P_{YU}P_{UV}r_{VX} + P_{YW}P_{WX} + P_{YW}P_{WU}P_{UX} + P_{YW}P_{WU}P_{UV}r_{VX}$$
$$r_{YX} = .028 + (.228)(.162) + (.228)(.494)(.549) + (.660)(.138) +$$
$$(.660)(.570)(.162) + (.228)(.570)(.494)(.549) = .028 + .037 + .062 + .091 +$$
$$.061 + .102 = .381$$

The calculated $r_{YX} = .381$ is close to the observed value $r_{YX} = .395$.

If we look at Figure 1, among the largest path coefficients in the diagram are those for residual factors, that is, variables not measured. Blau, Duncan and Tyree (2008) believe that the residual path is merely a convenient representation of the extent to which measured causes in the system fail to

account for the variation in the effect variables. The residual is obtained from the coefficient of determination. As an example: if $R^2_{Y(WUX)}$ is the squared multiple correlation of Y on the three independent variables, then the residual for Y is: $\sqrt{1 - R^2Y(WUX)}$. But the size of the residuals is not the best indicator the validity of causal interpretation. Some explanations can help in understanding this important fact:

> Sociologist are often disappointed in the size of the residual, assuming that is a measure of their success in "explaining" the phenomenon under study. They seldom reflect on what it would mean to live in a society where nearly perfect explanation on the dependent variable could be secured by studying causal variables like father's occupation or respondent's education. In such societies it would indeed be true that some are "destined to poverty almost from birth... by economic status or occupation of their parents" (Orshansky, 1963). Others, of course, would be "destined" to affluence or to modest circumstances. By no effort of their own could they materially alter the course of destiny, nor could any stroke of fortune, good or ill, lead to an outcome not already in the cards." (Blau, Duncan and Tyree, 2008)

How do we interpret the correlations and the path coefficients, and what is the difference between them? The correlation r_{YX} = .395 (this is the gross effect) means that a unit change of one standard deviation in the father's status (X) produces a change of almost 0.4 unit in respondent's last job status (Y). The path coefficient P_{YX} =.028 (this is the direct effect) tells us that about 7% (7% it the proportion of P_{YX} from r_{YX}) of this gross effect is a result of the direct influence of X on Y. The reminder (.395 - .028 = .367) is the indirect effect via U and W. In this case, respondent's last status is mostly influenced by his/her education and his/her first status, than it is by father's status. The sum of all indirect effects therefore, is given by the difference between the simple correlation and the path coefficient connecting two variables. As I demonstrated, in this case, the indirect effects on Y are generally substantial, relative to the direct. Blau, Duncan and Tyree, (2008) explain that to ascertain the indirect effects along a given chain of causation we must multiply the path coefficients along the chain. The procedure is to locate on the diagram the dependent variables of interest, and then trace back along the paths linking it to its immediate and remote causes. In such tracing we may reverse direction once but only once, following the rule "first back, then forward". As an example: the effect of respondent's education (U) on his first job status (W). We have r_{WU} = .642, which is the gross effect and the P_{WU} = .570, that is the direct effect. The indirect effects can be found following the paths: from W back to X and forward to U and from W back to X then back to V and then forward to U:

$$r_{WU} = P_{WU} + P_{WX} P_{UX} + P_{WX} r_{XV} P_{UV} .$$

With numbers: .570 + (.138)(.162) + (.138)(.549)(.494) = .629, a value close to the observed one of r_{WU} = .642, however some indirect effects remain that are not explained by these paths going through X and V.

Results for classes

The next tables present the relationship between father's status and respondent's status in terms of social classes. For the privileged class (employers, managers and professionals) respondent's last status is influenced in a greater manner by his education than his first job status (this order is inversed for the entire population). An increase of one standard deviation in the education (U) produces an increment of more than half of standard deviation in Y, an almost half of standard deviation in W. As expected, W (the first status) is influenced more by respondent's education than his/her father's status, while respondent's education is mostly influenced by father's education. Remember that the variables are ordered in a sequence, and this allows me to talk about directional influences in the context of correlations that measure the gross magnitude of the effect of the antecedent upon the consequent variable (see Table 3).

Table 3: Simple Correlations for the Status Variables - privileged class

	Y	W	U	X	V
(Y) Respondent's status - last occupation	-	.464**	.569**	.103*	.200**
(W) Respondent's status - first occupation		-	.400**	.180**	.213**
(U) Respondent's education in years			-	.204**	.355**
(X) Father's status				-	.628**
(V) Father's education in years					-

** $p<0.01$; * $p<0.05$;
Source: STRATSOC 2010 dataset. Own calculations.

Table 4: Status attainment model - privileged class
Table 5: Simple Correlations for the Status Variables - middle class

	Y	W	U	X	V
(Y) Respondent's status - last occupation	-	.649**	.352**	.201**	.189**
(W) Respondent's status - first occupation		-	.367**	.224**	.200**
(U) Respondent's education in years			-	.324**	.395**
(X) Father's status				-	.458**
(V) Father's education in years					-

** $p<0.01$;
Source: STRATSOC 2010 dataset. Own calculations.

For the middle class (supervisors, self-employed, technicians and office workers, skilled workers and service and trade workers) again respondent's first status (W) has the most important gross effect on respondent's last status (r_{YW} = .649). This effect is followed by that of education (U), father's status (X) and father's education (V). W is first influenced by U and then by X and V. For respondent's education (U) the biggest correlation is with father's education. In the middle class the influence of father's education on his status (r_{XV} = .458) is higher than the influence of respondent's education both on his/her first status (r_{WU} = .367) and on his/her last occupational status (r_{YU} = .352). Also we can observe that respondent's first status compared to his last status, is more influenced by father's status and education (r_{WX} > r_{YX} and r_{WV} > r_{YV}). Thus, as individuals move from one occupation to another, father's status becomes less important and other variables help more in explaining the outcome. One of these variables is respondent's education, that acts as a safety net protecting the respondent against downward mobility (Jecan and Pop, 2012).

Table 6: Status attainment model - middle class

	Model 1 - Const. X			Model 2 - Const. U			Model 3 - Const. W			Model 4 - Const. Y		
	B	S.E	Beta	B	S.E	Beta	B	S.E	Beta	B	S.E	Beta
V	1.347*	.055	.458*	.189*	.013	.312*	.066	.065	.024	.012	.048	.005
X	23.513*	.488		.038*	.004	.186*	.097*	.021	.101*	.021	.016	.024
U	-	-	-	9.277*	.146		1.595*	.101	.343*	.557*	.079	.133*
W	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.938*	1.163		.525*	.016	.585*
Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12.345*	.896	
	R^2 = .210			R^2 = .185			R^2 = .160			R^2 = .431		

V - father's education; X - father's status; U - respondent's education; W - respondent's first occupation status; Y - respondent's last occupation status; *p<0.05;
Source: STRATSOC 2010 dataset. Own calculations.

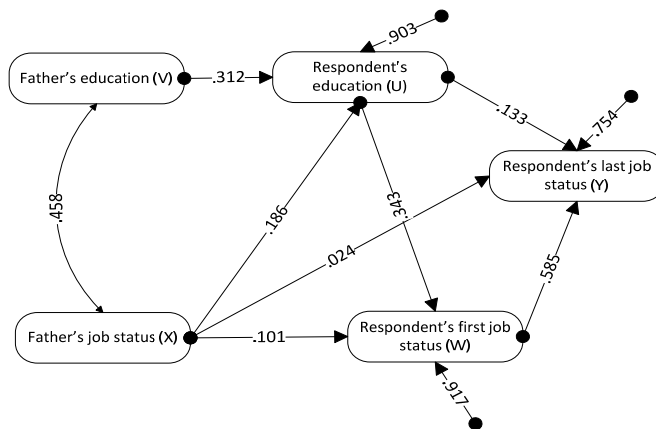**Figure 3: Path Coefficients for the Stratification Process - for the middle class**

Table 6 and Figure 3 contain the path coefficients for the status attainment model applied in the case of the largest class - as number of individuals - the middle class. In this case, for the individual's last occupational status (Y) the most important direct effect is that of his/her first occupational status (W), while father's status (X) does not have a significant importance. In other words, the correlation, gross effect of W on Y is r_{YW} = .649, with a direct effect P_{YW} = .585, that represent 90% percent of the gross effect and the indirect effect is .649 - .585 = .064, explained by respondent's education (U) and father's status. In the middle class, for respondent's first occupational status (W) the most important direct effect is that of the education (U), followed by father's status (X). The indirect effect here is: (r_{WU} = .367) - (P_{WU} = .343) = .024. The goodness of the model, like in the other cases, can be evaluated by using a equation like the next one:

$$r_{WU} = P_{WU} + P_{WX} P_{UX} + P_{WX} r_{XV} P_{UV}$$

or, with numbers:

$$r_{WU} = .343 + .019 + .016 = .378,$$

an observed value close to the observed one r_{WU} = .367.

Respondent's education (U) is best expressed using V and X. In the case of the middle class the residuals are also the highest values, but for U and Y are smaller compared to the privileged class.

Table 7: Simple Correlations for the Status Variables - deprived class

	Y	W	U	X	V
(Y) Respondent's status - last occupation	-	-	-	-	-
	.150**	.316**	.201**	.202**
(W) Respondent's status - first occupation		-	.376**	.125**	.181**
(U) Respondent's education in years			-	.305**	.509**
(X) Father's status				-	.346**
(V) Father's education in years					-

** p<0.01;
Source: STRATSOC 2010 dataset. Own calculations.

The deprived class (unskilled manual workers and farmers) presents some different patterns compared to other social classes. The first observation is that all the explicative values for the respondent's last occupational status are negative. The correlation (or gross effect) r_{YW} = -.150 means that to an increase with one standard deviation to individuals first job status (W) it correspond a decrease of .15 standard deviations in Y. For r_{YU} = -.316 the decrease is even higher, of .3 standard deviations. Also the variables characterizing father's status X and V have important negative gross effects on Y. In other

words, for the less privileged members of the Romanian society, the explanatory variables have lower values (less education and an inferior status for fathers). However, the relationship between father's status and his education is a positive one (r_{XV} = .346) and more important - in absolute value - that the one between Y and U. For respondent's first status (W) his education (U) and father's status (X and V) can help predict the deprived status. As in the other cases, U is explained first by V and then by X.

Table 8: Status attainment model - deprived class

	Model 1 - Const. X			Model 2 - Const. U			Model 3 - Const. W			Model 4 - Const. Y		
	B	**S.E**	**Beta**	**B**	**S.E**	**Beta**	**B**	**S.E**	**Beta**	**B**	**S.E**	**Beta**
V	.704*	.079	.346*	.454*	.038	.453*	-.040	.070	-.026	.001	.007	.005
X	25.818*	.482		.078	.019	.158*	.011	.031	.015	-.010*	.003	-.143*
U	-	-	-	3.265*	.525		.572*	.069	.375*	-.035*	.007	-.243*
W	-	-	-	-	-	-	23.332*	.907		-.003	.004	-.033
Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26.270*	.129	
	R² = .120			R² = .280			R² = .135			R² = .107		

V - father's education; X - father's status; U - respondent's education; W - respondent's first occupation status; Y - respondent's last occupation status; *p<0.05;
Source: STRATSOC 2010 dataset. Own calculations.

Figure 4: Path Coefficients for the Stratification Process - for the deprived class
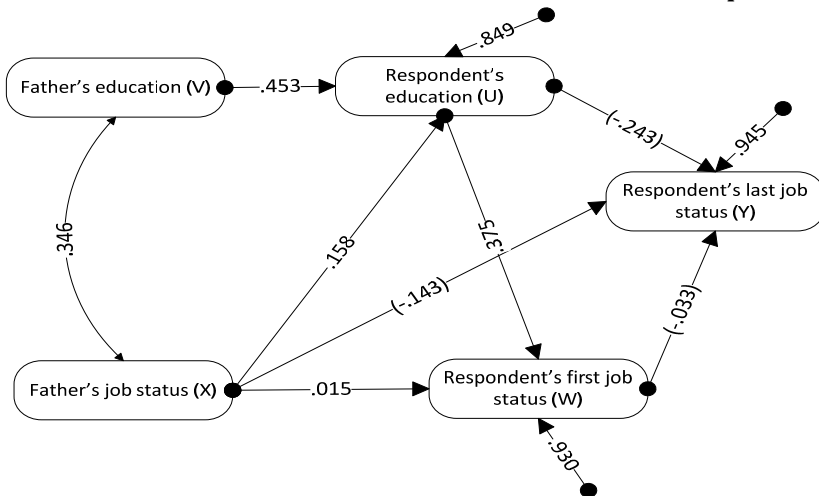
As anticipated by the correlations, in the case of the deprived class many of the path coefficients from the status attainment model are negative. The most important effects on respondent's last occupational status (W) are

represented by his education (U) and his father's job status (X), but these are negative direct effects. Even though W has also a negative effect on Y, this is not statistically significant. One can test the model using all the paths between Y and X:

$$r_{YX} = P_{YX} + P_{YU}P_{UX} + P_{YU}P_{UV}r_{VX} + P_{YW}P_{WX} + P_{YW}P_{WU}P_{UX} + P_{YW}P_{WU}P_{UV}r_{VX}$$

or

$$r_{YX} = -.143 + (-.038) + (-.038) + (-.001) + (-.002) + (-.002) = -.224$$

which satisfactorily accounts for the observed correlations among measured variables r_{YX} = -.201. The most important direct effect on W is that of U (P_{WU} = .375), and it is equal with the gross effect, as the intermediary X is not statistically significant. Another important observation is that for the less privileged the residuals are the largest (compared to the other social classes) and also only 11% of the variance of Y is explained by the values entered in the model (R^2 = .107). As a consequence other unmeasured variables account for the process of attaining a deprived social status.

The previous explanations were concern only with differences based on path coefficients (Betas) observable in the interior of each social class. For a complete understanding, we need to focus on the differences between social classes, which influence the patterns of causality between the explained (dependent) and explanatory (independent) variables. I analyze these patterns using the B coefficients from each model (regression equation), which are not standardized.

Model 1: The first equation, in each of the three social classes, presents the link between father's education and his status (as the dependent variable). Although this model is not central to my argument, it offers a first glance on the relation between status and education. The role of father's education (V) in his status (X) determination is decreasing from the privileged class down to the deprived class.

Model 2: In the second equation, I use X and V to explain respondent's education (U). For the privileged and the deprived only V influences in a significant matter U. However, this influence is more important in the deprived class than in the privileged one. In the case of the middle class both X and V significantly influence U. Another important observation is that the level of education decreases with a high rate from the privileged class (where the constant a= 13.9) to the deprived class (a = 3.2).

Model 3: The third equation explains respondent's first occupational status based on father's status (X), father's education (V) and respondent's education (U). U is the most important explanatory factor for W in all social classes. However, respondent's education influences more the first status in the privileged class followed by the middle class and then by the deprived class. It is worth noting that in the middle class, father's status (X), not only U, has a significant influence on W.

Model 4: The last model is aimed at explaining respondent's last occupational status (Y) based on all the other variables. For the privileged and the middle class Y is influenced, in a significant manner, only by variables related to the respondent (U and W) and not on those related to his/her father. These direct influences are bigger in the middle class compared to the privileged one. For the less privileged ones, the most significant influences on Y come from respondent's education and father's status, but the b coefficients are negative. Putting it in other words, being in the deprived class, or being poor is a direct result of deprived background doubled by a low education.

These findings can be further tested in order to better specify the causalities that link these variables by using alternative techniques of analyses as it is the case of structural equations modelling. Also, multiple measures for each variable that I included in the models can be useful in order to reduce the measurement errors. Unfortunately the dataset does not provide these measures for each variable. Another development of my argument could be based on taking into account also the intra-class not just the inter-class ones. Even more, the research can be improved by including additional variables that can better capture the social and cultural capital of individuals, information than goes beyond relatively simple measures of education and social (occupational) prestige. In this respect, the approach of Bourdieu provides great inspiration, whereas the recent controversies between Goldthorpe, Chan and Mills, on the one hand, and Savage, Devine et al. on the other hand, help clarifying the stakes of differentiating/linking class and social status.

Conclusions

The first conclusion of my analysis on status attainment in Romania for generations born between 1917 and 1985 is rather easy to anticipate: family background matters strongly. The second conclusion brings nonetheless important nuances: status attainment processes differ according to individual's class position. I have a general model where respondent's last occupational status is explained in a very important manner (71%; $r^2 = 0.71$) by variables like respondent's first occupational status, respondent's education and father's occupational status and his education.

This general model (the most complex one) suffers modifications when it accounts for different social classes. Thus for the privileged ones the last occupational status is greatly influenced first by respondent's education and only then by its first status. In the case of the middle class, individual's last status if influenced first by his/her first status, and only after by his/her education. For the deprived class, all influences on the last status are negative ones, but the

largest is that of education, as a precarious education keeps them - with the highest probability - in a disadvantaged position. If the privileged and the middle classes follow the general pattern where the last status is directly influenced only by their first status and their education, in the case of the deprived, their last status is related to their education and to their father's status. In other words this category gets to inherit a precarious situation that further complicates their life.

I put the individual's status in the centre of my research and not his/her father, firstly because the survey was based on respondents who report different aspects related to them and their family. Thus, the social status decomposed in its elements is done for the privileged, middle or deprived class of the individual, as the data on individuals is more reliable than on fathers (and other members of the family). In other words, I looked at the status attainment process inside the social classes from Romania, in order to capture the different patterns of status attainment, but not assuming that the social class is an explanatory variable for my results. In this manner the most complex model for the middle class is best specified by the explanatory variables, followed closely by the same model for the privileged class. The deprived last status is the worst explained by variables introduced in the model and seems to be influenced mostly by exogenous predictors. A complementary approach could revisit respondent's status related to the father's (not individual's) social class, in order to present different social backgrounds, not only different points of arrival.

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APPENDIX:

Table A1: Education

Education	Years of education
without graduated school	0
primary (1- 4 classes)	4
basic (5-8 classes)	8
vocational school	11
level I of high school (9-10 classes)	10
high school (9-12 classes)	12
college or technical post-secondary	14
tertiary education: undergraduate	15
tertiary education: postgraduate	17
master	18
PhD	20

Table A2: ISEI for COR

Occupation (COR)	ISEI (mean) value
Managers and employers, entrepreneurs, mayors	67
Intellectual occupations	71
Technicians or foremen	54
Officials in the administration	48
Service and sales workers	40
Skilled agricultural or in own household	26
Craftsmen and skilled workers	34
Plant and machine operators	30
Unskilled workers	25

BOOK REVIEW

Diaspora Online: Identity Politics and Romanian Migrants. By Ruxandra Trandafoiu. Brooklyn, New York: Berghahn Books, 2013, 224 pages.

IRINA CULIC[*]

Ruxandra Trandafoiu enters the field of international migration through the door of communication studies, by investigating the online cultural and political expressions of Romanian immigrants. Her research site comprises twelve diasporic websites and discussion forums set by Romanians based in Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America, where more than 3,000 messages are perused. The methodological choices are boldly set in the introduction. Diaspora, rather than immigrants, circular migrants, free movers, or something else, is chosen as the working concept of the analysis, although it is not assigned the traditional meaning. For the purpose of the study, diaspora comprises all citizens abroad, holding onto an identity project that was shaped by their impulse to move and the necessity to stay. The author also discusses the practical and ethical challenges of doing ethnography on the net, and of being both subject and object of the analysis. This situatedness undoubtedly shaped the focus of the book, structured around the politics of identity in hybrid spaces.

There is no single identity of the immigrant, and there is no single experience of immigration, tells us the rich online material used by Trandafoiu in this book. The travel from one country to another, actual, intended, or imaginary, unsettles one's sense of being. Diasporic forums are the sites where anxiety, despair, uncertainty, alienation, loneliness, hesitation, as well as joy, hope, wonder, achievement, and reconstruction are talked through, and worked through. In the process, one's identity, country, nation, and culture are re-imagined and re-appropriated, along redrawn lines of class, generation, and locality. Trandafoiu captures these flowing emotions, gestures, and constructions in a vivid and empathic way. She aptly situates historically the latest wave of Romanian immigrants to the West, and follows their typical routes and alterations. The temporality of the process is captured by the many facets of longing, nostalgia, and transformation. Trandafoiu records as well the input of the premigrants and the aspiring (pp. 41-42), alongside immigrants, illustrating the processuality of international

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[*] *Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, e-mail: irina.culic@gmail.com*

migration, both as individual act and as social fact. Immigration is rebuilt through diasporic traces in the cloud, as an open process refuelled by experiences and narratives. Unhappiness, at home and away, pours on internet forums, leading to self-examination, reflexivity, and becoming political (p. 44).

Trandafoiu connects the experience of post-communist Romanian diaspora to instances of immigration documented in the literature, pointing to similarities and highlighting specificities. In the introduction she argues the need to incorporate the study of present Eastern European immigration into the theoretical contributions to the field, and briefly enumerates, through a bullet point list, the openings it may and should bring (pp. 18-19). While these are bold and pertinent, they only reiterate points that have been constantly made in the last two decades, especially by empirical and theoretical work on international migration coming from the disciplinary fields of anthropology, human geography, critical security studies, cultural studies, and sociology (see the work of Aihwa Ong (1996), Cecilia Menjívar (2000), Gloria Anzaldúa (2007), Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Christina Szanton Blanc (1994), Patricia Zavella (2011), Peter Nyers (2003), Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) among many others). The strength of the book comes instead from the capacity to let the immigrants speak.

Organized in four parts and eight chapters, "Departures" (Chapters one and two), "Arrivals" (Chapters three and four), "Politics" (Chapters five, six and seven), and "Second Life" (Chapter eight and Conclusion), the account follows the course of personal and social changes of immigrants, as they traverse the geographic and mental space from homeland, nation, and place to another country, another culture, and another locale. Each chapter is titled by a phrase that indicates "cultural intimacy" (Herzfeld 2005) with the immigrants, going straight to the core of the lived experience they bring online and. Chapter one, "Land without Horizon", explains the beginning of massive post-communist migration to Western Europe by defining it as an act of protest against political elite's failures, and contextualises it historically. Through immigrants' voices online, it amounts to a cultural historical tour, as their reflections reiterate the staples of Romanian national identity tensions, in particular its constitutive relation with the orientalising West. Internet forums also provide a space for mediation, interrogation, and self-reflection in the liquid state of geographic, social, and cultural transition. Chapter two, "Taking the Bull by the Horns" describes the effect of the emigration pandemic, generated by a sick identity, as natural selection: successful immigrants are persons endowed with abnormal capacities. Social envy and stigma push them further to improve, so as to better fit the new environment, transforming them into extraordinary subjects.

Chapter three, "Waking up among Strangers", addresses the process of settlement. The encounter of the other and the everyday adjustment to the new country are articulated as a search for the appropriate word to describe the experience. Integration, adaptation, participation are put forward and discussed in the attempt to capture the transformation. Translation and cultural mediation

are opposed to marginalisation and isolation. Online discussion occasions diasporic mobilisation and convergence against discrimination. It also reveals racism and xenophobia in the strategies of blaming, othering and distanciation that are habitual in the process of adjustment. Acknowledging the immigrant position translates into sharp delimitations, disavowal, and exclusion, manifested in scapegoating the Gypsy and intradiasporic cannibalism. Chapter four, "Nobody Wants to Know Me", discusses the legal status and forms of employment of Romanians in Italy, Spain, and the UK, highlighting the liberal paradox of workforce demand and legal constraints, and the social justice paradox of workers without basic rights. It then looks at the associative models in the three states, culturally populist in Spain, politically representative in Italy, and culturally organizational in the UK (p. 102).

Chapter five, "Brothers, We Need to Do Something!", expands the discussion of online activism, emphasizing the molecular character of the activities of contestation, lobbying and petitioning. Though they stopped short of developing into permanent political structures, Trandafoiu argues that "paradoxes, conflicts and tensions need to continue online because it is through criticism and challenges to any form of authority that online micropolitics can evolve as an alternative and viable form (p. 131). Using the metaphor of purgatory, Chapter six depicts the space of suspension in which immigrants struggle to find their home. Paralleling this nowhere space, the internet is a fitting source of diasporic reflections (p. 136). From this point, the author discusses the legal and practical relationship with the mother country, Romania, by looking at its institutionalized forms, electoral participation, and possibilities to return. In Chapter seven, "America, Romanian Land", the author turns to the specific experience of Romanian immigrants in North America, marked by a different immigration regime, access to citizenship, and role of geographic distance. This and the previous chapter indicate the emergence of a hybrid identity, which accounts for both the home and the new country in the complicated fabric of immigrants' lives.

In the final chapter Trandafoiu provides a more technical analysis of Romanian diasporic websites. She notes the propensity to ethnic branding; the inward orientation serving the particular needs of immigrants, especially the new ones; the formation of fluid online hierarchies, functional in that they allow solidarity, change, and mobilisation; and the crucial role of the webmaster. The Conclusion suggests two avenues for further research: first, the investigation of "the role of memory in the elaboration of diasporic identity projects" (p. 194); second, a closer look at the relationship between the virtual and the material: "how identity is performed on- and offline, at the border between different "scapes," [...] and between cyber- and physical spaces", and the formation and experience of borders (p. 196). At the end, the author lists a number of recommendations, or "rather wishes I feel compelled to make" (p. 197) - they read as a tribute to immigrants, the flesh of this book.

Trandafoiu's study is an achievement, a rich, pleasurable, informative, and evocative rendering of online expressions of the Romanian diaspora. She captures the productive, reflective, and mediating role played by the online space - an arena allowing for community gathering, splitting, and healing. Her work is a valuable contribution to the incipient scholarship on post-communist Romanian emigration, and on recent Eastern European international migration - in a specific configuration of articulation between the local and the global. It is also a strong addition to research employing online data, and taking diasporic online rhizomes as a legitimate strategic research site. In this sense, I suggest that online presences become ordinary facts for geographically immobile people, just as much as they are for diasporic groups and, at a superficial glance, the interactions, flows of emotions, appearances, disappearances, processes of othering, and self-reflective redescriptions are rather similar. Thus, I wished the author discussed a bit more the specificity of diasporic websites, which, as her research indicates, were at the same time sites frequented by not yet migrants too (in author's terms, premigrants). Perhaps an accompanying definition of diaspora is ripe: people who travel daily distances on internet, whose lives are spent behind the computer screen, in spaces that are distant recreations of foreign realms, and whose illusory realities are uncannily similar to the foreign realities of actual immigrants.

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THE AUTHORS OF THIS ISSUE

CRISTIAN BLIDARIU is lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism in Timişoara, holding a *summa cum laude* PhD in Fine Arts (Faculty of Fine Arts and Design Timişoara) in which he is debating the symbolic/ virtual qualities of some of Timişoara's public spaces that have been recently augmented with iconic art and architecture. For the past four years he has been a constant contributor and area editor for ARHITECTURA 1906, the official review of the Union of Architects of Romania (established in 1906). His research is focused on the heterotopian or insular nature of contemporary architecture, focusing on its physical as well as symbolic relations with its surrounding space. He holds several prizes and honourable mentions both for built architecture (a_ta, 2006, 2007) as well as text (a_ta, 2014).

IRINA CULIC teaches Sociology at Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca. Her research investigates Romanian immigration to North America, citizenship policies, minority politics, and sociologies of the state. She taught previously at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, School of Slavonic and East European Studies at University College London, England, and University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, and held a Fulbright senior fellowship at New York University.

ÁGNES GAGYI is a social movements researcher focusing on Eastern European politics and social movements in long-term global historical perspective. Her PhD, defended in 2011 at the University of Pécs, analyzed the Hungarian and Romanian branches of the alterglobalization movement, with a focus on the effects of hierarchical East-West relationships. She is Adjunct Professor at Eszterházy Károly College, Eger, and presently carries out a Fulbright Postdoctoral research at George Masons University, entitled "The Transnational History of Contemporary Hungarian Politics and Social Movements". She is member of the Budapest-based Working Group for Public Sociology "Helyzet", which works together to understand Hungarian modernization within the context of the historical development of the capitalist world system.

MANUEL MIREANU is a PhD student in CEU Budapest, with a thesis on Hungarian and Italian vigilantism. His interests include security and police studies and critical criminology. He published on the methodology of critical security studies and on the contemporary mechanisms of criminalisation.

NGAMBOUK V. PEMUNTA is postdoctoral researcher at the Linnaeus University´s Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies in Sweden. Pemunta is author of several peered reviewed publications and two books *Culture, Human rights and Socio-legal resistance against Female Genital Cutting practices: An anthropological Perspective* (VDM publishers, 2011), *Health and Cultural Values: Female Circumcision within the Context of*

AIDS in Cameroon (Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2011) as well as co-author with Chama-James Tabeyang of *Medical Pluralism and Biomedical Hegemony in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Cambridge Scholar Publishers, 2015). He has had teaching stints at universities in both Europe and Cameroon, and is a consultant for several NGOs in both his native Cameroon and abroad-thereby cross-pollinating between the fields of anthropology and development. His interest in colonial and postcolonial encounters aside, his other research interests include gender, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, environmental policy, ethnography, medical anthropology and social science and medicine.

RALUCA PERNEȘ holds an MA in Sociology and Social Anthropology from Central European University and is a PhD candidate at the Department of Anthropology, University College London. Her research examines the transformation of property regimes and land use in a periurban area in the south of Ghana. She is a junior lecturer at Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj, where she teaches courses and seminars in political anthropology and sociological theories. Her research interests are in the area of state, citizenship, legal pluralism and social inequality.

CRISTIAN POP is researcher at the Cluj-Napoca Branch of the Romanian Academy of Sciences and visiting lecturer at the Sociology Department of the Babeș-Bolyai University, teaching courses on statistical methods and social stratification. He also plays an active role in the Romanian young sociologists and anthropologists platform Sociolink (sociolink.ro). His doctoral dissertation *Social Classes in Romania. A Cohort Analysis* (2013) employed a complex methodological and statistical apparatus in order to map out class-formation and social reproduction in Romania. He authored several articles addressing topics of social stratification, education and social mobility, network analysis, etc.

RALUCA SOREANU is a Marie Curie Fellow in Sociology at the Psychosocial Studies Department, Birkbeck College London, United Kingdom, and at the Institute of Social and Political Studies, State University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her research looks at the creativities of collective action and at emergent social imaginaries. She is a practising psychoanalyst, associate member of the Círculo Psicanalítico do Rio de Janeiro (CPRJ); and of the Instituto de Estudos da Complexidade (IEC), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

GABRIEL TROC is associate professor, PhD. at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Babeș-Bolyai University, teaching courses on Introduction to Anthropology, Theory of Social Anthropology, Roma in Central and Eastern Europe and Postmodernism and Critical Thinking. He earned a PhD in Philosophy (2004) and a master in Cultural Anthropology (1998), both at Babeș-Bolyai University. He was awarded a Fulbright post-doctoral scholarship at UCLA in 2007. His research interests include rural Roma populations, transnational migration, urban development, social stratification and labour relations in post-socialism. He did fieldwork in various rural areas from Romania (Țara Oașului, Sălaj, Teleorman, Delta Dunării). He published a book on postmodernism in cultural anthropology and co-edited one on foreign anthropologists working in Romania. He is a member of the leading board of the Romanian Society for Social and Cultural Anthropology.

JAMES VERINIS teaches anthropology at the Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island. He has recently earned his PhD in anthropology at Binghamton University–New York with the support of a Dissertation Fieldwork Grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation (2009) as well as a Richard Antoun Dissertation Fellowship (2011). He has published several articles on rural economy, immigrant farmers, rural heritage, sustainability and the olive industry in journals such as the *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* and the *International Journal of Heritage and Sustainable Development.*

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